

**A UNIVERSAL DISPLAY? INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF PANATHENAIC
AMPHORAE IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

by

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Museum displays can serve to educate and inform the public about various concepts and classes of objects. However, the ways in which these displays present information is typically filtered through selective interpretive lenses that reflect a variety of biases, including theoretical and institutional ones. As a result, the museum's mission and goals directly affect gallery displays by orienting information so that it is in alignment with the museum's aims. For example, the British Museum of London, a public natural history and archeological museum, is considered to be a universal, or encyclopedic, museum. The creation of universal museums developed alongside imperial powers, whose wealth and influence allowed them to collect a wide variety of specimens, including microbes, plant species, glass, and elements of monumental architecture. Because of the scope of their collections, an encyclopedic museum is expected to comment on many topics using a variety of demonstrative objects. The British Museum, for instance, holds the largest collection of Panathenaic prize amphorae (athletic awards ca. 6th to 2nd centuries BC) outside of Greece. Using Panathenaic amphorae as a case study, this thesis investigates whether the display of the amphorae reflects the British Museum's position as an encyclopedic museum. In order to better comprehend the relationship between the mission of the universal museum and the artifacts it collects, display choices surrounding the British Museum's collection of Panathenaic amphorae are analyzed using summative evaluation techniques, such as curator interviews, head counts, and label evaluation. For comparison, the same summative evaluation techniques were employed at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, which pursues a different mission as it is a university, rather

than a universal museum. The comparison of these two museums highlights the distinction between the British Museum's universal mission and the Ashmolean's teaching mission, and it is determined that the British Museum's display of Panathenaic amphorae does indeed reflect its encyclopedic mission. The large quantity of vases provides the museum with the opportunity to present the vessels in multiple contexts and effectively convey their overall significance—an opportunity that a museum with fewer vases does not have.

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PREFACE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Like our derived word ‘museum’ from the ancient Greek ‘museion,’ the creation of museums originates in antiquity (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 3). In the Greco-Roman world, museums were places frequented by the intelligentsia, where people would go to contemplate matters concerning philosophy and the arts. From the Renaissance through the 18th century, the term ‘museum’ was used to describe private collections of the aristocracy, meant to be viewed by an elite audience of their peers. While the target audience of museums has shifted over time, it was the Enlightenment that prompted a fundamental change in the role of museums. The institutional focus shifted from the viewing of exclusive, private collections to the intellectual enrichment of the average person (Simmons 2016, p. 99). This transition framed the creation of universal, or encyclopedic, museums as imperial powers made new discoveries in their colonial territories, adding ancient and exotic objects to their displays of ‘civilized worlds’ which showcased choice items from their continuously expanding public collections (Simmons 2016, p. 165).

The mission of universal museums was to collect information about *everything*. For example, a universal museum theoretically can comment on everything from plant species, to microbes, to distant stars. Thus, each exhibit is created to convey specific ‘essential’ information that enriches the viewer’s ‘universal’ understanding of the world (Simmons 2016, p. 220; Duncan 1980, p. 448). To better comprehend the relationship between the mission of the universal museum and the artifacts it collects, this research will analyze the display choices surrounding the British Museum’s collection of Panathenaic amphorae using head counts and the analysis of wall texts and object labels.

Produced in Athens from approximately the 6th to the 2nd centuries BC, Panathenaic amphorae are painted ceramic vases that were awarded to victors of the events of the Greater Panathenaic Games (Neils & Tracy 2003, p. 5). The Greater Panathenaic Games were athletic, equestrian, musical, artistic, and civic/military competitions held in the city of Athens every four years. During the Greater Panathenaic Games, athletes from across Greece competed in a variety of athletic and equestrian competitions. Winners of many of these events received Panathenaic prize amphorae. These prize amphorae were filled with olive oil, the amount of which was based on their ranking in the games (Neils & Tracy 2003, p. 29). The contents of one vase was equivalent to several thousand dollars by today's standards (Miller 1991, p. 135). The vase itself was also valuable because its design indicated it was a Panathenaic prize. These vases were decorated with figural scenes on two sides: the first side shows Athena Promachos, depicted as a warrior midstride between two columns, typically holding a spear and aegis shield, while the second side showed the winner's event (Miller 1991, p. 134). All Panathenaic amphorae were inscribed with the phrase, "a prize from the games at Athens," and after the 4th century, the name of the reigning archon (public official) and information about when the oil was collected were listed as well (Clark et al. 2002, p. 127).

Over time, Panathenaic amphorae were excavated from many contexts and eventually made their way into the private collections of wealthy individuals.¹ For instance, when Lord Hamilton became the British envoy to Naples in 1764, he collected more than three hundred vases (Breed 1997, p. 5). Lord Hamilton's Greek vases were acquired by the British Museum in 1772, and they, together with the acquisition of Charles Townley's Greco-Roman sculptures in 1805 and

¹ The excavations performed during the 18th and 19th centuries were not conducted with the same methodologies used today. Although modern archaeologists meticulously document each stratigraphic layer, older excavations were conducted to acquire the buried objects (Bothmer 1987, p. 190).

the Salt collection for the Egyptian galleries in 1817, triggered the development of the Antiquities Department in the British Museum (Dyson 2006, p. 135; Peters 2009, p. 41). Today, the British Museum of London holds the largest collection of Panathenaic amphorae outside of Greece.² As such, one would expect that the amphorae on display to be a representative sample of the awards presented to victors of the Panathenaic Games. In other words, one anticipates that the iconography on the vases depict most, if not all, of the events of the Games. However, it is possible that the vases are not representative (e.g. perhaps one event, like wrestling, is overrepresented) and were selectively chosen for display based on other criteria (e.g. condition, preservation, museum mission).

This thesis seeks to determine whether the British Museum's collection of Panathenaic amphorae that are on display in 2017 reflects the museum's history and position as a universal museum. To address this question, field research was conducted at the British Museum in May 2017. The research consisted primarily of visual analysis of the Panathenaic amphorae display and the evaluation of interpretive materials, such as wall texts, labels, brochures, and guided tours. An observational evaluation of the exhibit was also conducted, which entailed counting heads and carefully noting features that appeared to capture the attention of the visitors. In order to understand why display decisions were made, curators in the Department of Greece and Rome were interviewed about the history of the exhibit.

For comparative purposes, field research was also conducted at the Ashmolean Museum at University of Oxford. The Ashmolean is a university museum with a smaller collection that is

² This claim is based on a search of the Beazley Archive Pottery Database (<http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/pottery/default.htm>) which is the world's largest collection of photographs and information concerning ancient Greek painted pottery. The British Museum's collection consists of 47 whole and fragmentary vessels.

dedicated to education, and thus pursues a different mission than the British Museum. It also contains a collection of Panathenaic prize amphorae.³ The comparison of these two museums highlights the distinction between the British Museum's universal mission and the Ashmolean's teaching mission. In a similar fashion, the Ashmolean's Panathenaic amphorae display was visually analyzed, interpretive materials were assessed, and an observational evaluation of the exhibit was performed. Curators at the Ashmolean was also interviewed to determine why the museum made its current display choices and how the amphorae were displayed in the past. With both of these examples, the British Museum representing a universal museum, and the Ashmolean representing a university museum, a comparative analysis was performed to determine whether the current exhibit of Panathenaic prize amphorae in the British Museum fulfills the institution's universal mission.

This thesis is divided into three sections: the first describes the historical context of Panathenaic amphorae, while the second discusses the general evolution of museums, the specific development of the British and Ashmolean Museums, and the curatorial choices surrounding their respective Panathenaic vase displays. These initial informative sections provide context for the third, which focuses on the results of the field analyses of the Panathenaic amphorae displays in the British and Ashmolean Museums. Taken together, these three sections reveal interconnected ideas of past use, current display, and future interpretation of Panathenaic prize amphorae. Furthermore, it is determined that the British Museum's display of Panathenaic amphorae does indeed reflect the institution's universal mission, while the Ashmolean museum's smaller display is in alignment with its teaching aims. In particular, the British Museum's large quantity of vases

³ Approximately four vases based on a search of the Beazley Archive Pottery Database (<http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/pottery/default.htm>).

provides the museum with the opportunity to present the vessels in multiple contexts and effectively convey their overall significance—an opportunity that a museum with fewer vases does not have. Moreover, these vases allow the British Museum to discuss various facets of Greek culture, including Greek history, vase construction and scholarship, and athletic competition, in each of the five galleries that contain vases. Ultimately, it is hoped that this research will contribute to ongoing conversations concerning display choice and the role of the universal museum.

2.0 PANATHENAIC AMPHORAE

As previously discussed, Panathenaic amphorae are painted ceramic vases that were produced in Athens from approximately the 6th to the 2nd centuries BC. These vases were awarded to victors of the events of the Greater Panathenaic Games, a series of athletic, equestrian, musical, and artistic competitions held in the city of Athens every four years (Miller 1991, p. 81). To place the vases in their proper historical context, this chapter discusses the manner in which they were constructed and the way in which they functioned as prizes for the Greater Panathenaic Games.

2.1 CONSTRUCTION

Panathenaic amphorae are formulaic in both shape and design. Ranging from 60 to 70 cm in height, these vases are characterized by their ovoid bodies, thin necks, and small feet. The shape of the vessel gives the appearance of a heavy well-filled container, which holds true as these prizes were originally filled with olive oil (Frel 1973, p. 6; Boardman 1985, p. 167). In terms of design, Panathenaic amphorae are painted in the black-figure technique with figural scenes on two sides: the first side shows *Athena Promachos*, a warrior midstride between two Doric columns topped with roosters, facing left, and typically holding a spear and aegis shield, while the second side depicts the winner's event (Miller 1991, p. 134).⁴ A floral pattern decorates the neck of the

⁴ The columns alongside the *Athena Promachos* suggest the idea of a *temenos* (sacred space) as would be seen with cult statue inside a temple (Lissarrague 2001, p. 77).

amphora (Boardman 1985, p. 167). All Panathenaic amphorae were inscribed with the *stoichedon*, which is the phrase meaning “a prize from the games at Athens,” and after the 4th century, the name of the reigning archon was listed as well (Bentz 1998, p. 41–61; Clark et al. 2002, p. 127).⁵

While the stylistic design of the amphora differed slightly over its period of use, the construction methods of the vase did not.⁶ Panathenaic vases were formed on a turntable (Clark et al. 2002, p. 81).⁷ Vase formation consisted of several steps: throwing, turning, joining, and burnishing.⁸ The shape of the amphora required that it be thrown in several stages: the body, neck, and foot were created separately, then joined together (Schreiber 1998, p. 73). The pieces were joined using a slip and score method, then turned in order to refine and smooth the shape with a burnishing tool (Schreiber 1998, p. 75–76). The painter would then take over the project—he would incise a design on the vase and use the incisions as a guide to paint figures with a slip. When applied, the slip would appear to be almost the same color as the vase, but the firing of the vase would cause the slip to turn a glossy black color (Rye 2002, p. 24).

⁵ In Greek, the phrase is: *ton Athenethen Athlon* (Boardman 1985, p. 167)

⁶ To create these vases, the potter would first need to find clay with the proper temper (Bentz 1998, p. 27; Rye 2002, p. 16). Attic clay, which is used for all Athenian pottery, is a secondary clay rich in quartz, iron oxide, mica, and feldspars (which allows for plasticity). After the clay is mined, it is brought back to the *kerameikos*, or the potter’s quarter of the city (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 30). Here, it is put into a large pool that allows the clay to separate from other impurities via settling. As the impurities settled to the bottom, the refined liquid clay was drained off into a second pool. This process was repeated several times. The pool was then left to evaporate, leaving behind refined clay. The refined clay was wedged by means of foot-kneading to ensure it was evenly blended with suitable water content (Schreiber 1998, p. 8).

⁷ Note that the turntable was likely turned by an assistant so the potter could work with both hands (Clark et al. 2002, p. 81).

⁸ Throwing consists of centering and forming the vase on the wheel (Clark et al. 2002, p. 146). Turning involves perfecting the shape of the vase (Clark et al. 2002, p. 147). Joining occurs when the vase is leather hard; parts of the vase like the handles and foot were added to the vase with slip (Clark et al. 2002, p. 110). Burnishing perfectly smooths the vase’s surface with a piece of wood or a smooth stone. Burnishing occurs when the vase is leather hard, and it compacts and shines the vase’s walls before painting (Clark et al. 2002, p. 74).

After the slip was applied, the pot would then be fired at 800 degrees Celsius using a three-stage process. In the first stage, the potter would create an oxygen rich environment in the kiln.⁹ When the pots were fired in an oxygenated state, the Attic clay, which was rich in iron oxide, turned red (Clark et al. 2002, p. 77). When the potter closed off the air supply in the second stage, the kiln entered an oxygen reduced state, creating a chemical reaction by which the applied decorative slip turned black. In the third stage, when the kiln returned to an oxygenated state again, the undecorated areas turned red while those covered with the slip remained black. (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 31). When the pottery was removed from the kiln, the glossy black silhouetted figures starkly contrasted with the deep red hue of the clay. Further decoration could be added to the figures through incision and the addition of colored pigmentation that was painted onto the pot's surface (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 31).¹⁰

Although the construction methods remained the same, iconographic elements of Panathenaic amphorae changed over time. The oldest extant Panathenaic amphora (ca. 566 or 562 BC) is the Burgon Amphora (**Figure 1**), currently displayed in the British Museum.¹¹ This amphora bears some of the key features typical of later Panathenaics, such as the image of Athena *Promachos* and the *stoichedon* (Bentz 1998, p. 41, 57). However, the Burgon Amphora lacks the characteristic columns and roosters, and has an eagle on the neck of the vase where the floral pattern is typically located (Bentz 1998, p. 51). Other early examples of Panathenaic amphorae

⁹ Note that the style of the kiln likely derived from western Asia. Its original design was improved by the addition of a side tunnel which allowed heat to travel through the vases (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 30). Other foreign pottery techniques became part of Greek practice. For example, an Egyptian technique such as burying part of the pot in ashes, allowed the inside of the pot to remain a different color. This practice likely became part of Greek pottery practice through artist immigration (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 21).

¹⁰ The added pigmentation was more fragile and prone to damage than the black slip (Speight & Toki 1995, p. 31).

¹¹ The Burgon Amphora (ca. 566 or 562 BC) may date to a period before the reorganization of the Games (discussed in the following section), because the event depicted, the *synoris* (as seen in **Figure 1**), was not an athletic event in the Games at the time of the reorganization (Boardman 1985, p. 168).

differ from later ones in a variety of ways. For instance, the vase interiors were not painted (with the exception of the neck and mouth) (Frel 1973, p. 9).¹² Also, the anatomy of Athena is rendered conceptually as her body is elongated and her head disproportionate (Frel 1973, p. 11; Bentz 1998, p. 41). In some cases, the ways in which the figures are represented allow us to determine the hands of painters of early amphorae.¹³ Vases by the black-figure master Exekias illustrate this as he consistently painted the same shield devices on Athena's shield (Frel 1973, p. 14).¹⁴

The iconographic canon of Panathenaic amphorae was established in 530 BC. The canonical design included the aforementioned floral ornamentation, Athena *Promachos*, Doric columns with roosters, and *stoichedon*. The Euphiletos Painter is credited with painting the first canon vase, whose reverse depicts the *synoris* event—a race of mule and horse-pulled carts (a vase by the Euphiletos Painter is located in the British Museum, see **Figure 2**) (Boardman 1985, p. 167).¹⁵ Although the canon design remained relatively unchanged, the images on Panathenaic vases shifted in response to stylistic periods. In the Archaic period, from 575–530 BC, black-figure was the preferred technique. Although the red-figure technique developed around 525 BC,

¹² Note that in unglazed interiors it is possible to detect the effects of oil due to the fragmentation of the terracotta (Frel 1973, p. 9). [What are the effects?]

¹³ Note that with 30% of vases created in the 500s, the *egrapsen* (painter) and *epoiesen* (potter) signatures are the same person (Boardman 2001, p. 128). In general, scholars of Greek vase painting have identified the 'hands' of approximately 900 artists, and this still does not account for half of the known vases. Of these, about 40 artists signed their work, but these signed examples constitute less than one percent of the total number of vases (Boardman 2001, p. 128). In order to discern the hands of artists on unsigned vases, scholars have often utilized the techniques of connoisseurship. Connoisseur scholars of the early 20th century, notably Sir John Beazley, organized, categorized, and determined the artists' hands on tens of thousands of vases. These 'hands' were most likely determined by using the Morellian method of analysis, where small details like noses, ears, and ankles were often unconsciously delineated by the painter, appearing like 'signatures.' Within the past several decades, this connoisseurship approach to Greek vases has become passé, and present scholarship focuses on contextualizing the artifacts themselves and their corresponding representations (Boardman 2001, p. 136).

¹⁴ Exekias frequently used a gorgon shield device (Frel 1973, p. 14).

¹⁵ Vases created before the Euphiletos Painter do not follow the traditional canon. Although the rooster columns of later vases first appear with Exekias and the Swing Painter (**Figure 3**) around 540 BC, there are other ways in which they deviate from the canon (Boardman 1985, p. 168).

Panathenaic amphorae remained exclusively black-figure (Bentz 1998, p. 123–138).¹⁶ Nevertheless, in the Early Classical period (ca. 490–470 BC), figures became more realistic.¹⁷ Another change occurred in the High Classical Period (450–400 BC) when the figures were depicted as solemn with austere faces and moods. Indeed, this time period is referred to as the ‘solemn period,’ coinciding with a similar movement in sculpture (Boardman 1989, p. 12; Bentz 1998, p. 138–167).¹⁸

The canon changed, however, in the Late Classical period (ca. 400–300 BC). Vases begin to be dated by the archon, whose name is listed beside the right column (Bentz 1998, p. 59).¹⁹ The stature and proportion of Athena also changes, she becomes slender and tall with a smaller head, like Praxiteles’ sculptures of the period. Also, the dress is more realistic, and the figures display a greater variety of facial expressions (Boardman 1989, p. 13; Bentz 1998, p. 41–45). In the 360s, the letters turn horizontal, and between 359 and 348 BC, Athena faces right instead of left (Boardman 1985, p. 169; Bentz 1998, p. 41–43). Furthermore, the shape of the amphorae also changes, as they acquire large lips and sloping shoulders, as well as thin necks and ankles (Bentz 1998 p. 27–31). The vessels begin to be painted interiorly with slip to minimize the flaking that occurs when terracotta is in direct contact with oil (Frel 1973, p. 9). Another shift occurred in the Hellenistic period (ca. 300–100 BC), as Panathenaic amphorae become more embellished with added colored ornamentation (Boardman 2001, p. 122). In the 2nd century, the final century of production, a return to the Late Classical style is attempted, with Athena returning to her slender

¹⁶ Interestingly, there are a number of black-figure Panathenaic amphorae painted by red-figure artists (Boardman 1985, p. 169).

¹⁷ As can be seen in the vases of the Kelophrades Painter and the Berlin Painter (Boardman 1989, p. 13).

¹⁸ See vases from the Achilles Painter and Kleophon Painter (Boardman 1989, p. 12).

¹⁹ Putting the archon’s name on the vases made the archon responsible for supervising olive oil donations (Tiverios 1997, p. 167).

design. However, the production quality of the pottery is lower and these vases do not successfully reproduce the earlier Classical models (Frel 1973, p. 30; Bentz 1998, p. 167–199).²⁰

Around 1,400 prize vases are estimated to have been completed by Athenian potters for the Greater Panathenaic Games every four years, and a mere 1% of these survive (Bentz 1998, p. 17; Neils & Tracy 2003, p. 29). Indeed, there are approximately 200 extant vases that are inscribed with the phrase “prize of the games at Athens,” which are considered to be true Panathenaic vessels (as opposed to miniature Panathenaics that have been found and served as souvenirs from the Games) (Hamilton 1997, p. 137; Bentz 1998, p. 19–23).²¹ Although the existing sample is relatively small, there is much that Panathenaic amphorae can tell us about religion, athletics, and competition in ancient Athens. In order to understand how Panathenaic amphorae functioned within their original cultural context, the next section describes the events and traditions of the Panathenaia, as well as the monetary and social value of the vessels themselves.

2.2 GAMES AND USE

In the ancient Greek world, athletic competitions took place within the context of the Panhellenic Games. There were two circuits in which athletes could compete: stephanitic games and

²⁰ The last dated vase is from 312/11 BC, but there is evidence that amphorae are still produced in the 3rd and 2nd centuries (Boardman 1985, p. 169).

²¹ In addition to miniatures, other Panathenaic-like amphorae have been discovered in Asia Minor, southern Russia, and Alexandria (Egypt). Although these vessels are similar in form and appearance to Panathenaic amphorae, the clay is different and they lack the necessary description and emblem of Athena. It has been hypothesized that these vases, called pseudo-Panathenaic amphorae, were made as souvenirs or by migrant Athenian potters (Boardman 1985, p. 168; Bentz 1998, p. 19–23).

chrematitic games. In the stephanitic, or ‘crown,’ games, victors received a crown that demonstrated their victory.²² The Olympic Games were part of the stephanitic circle, and a victor at Olympia received an olive garland in honor of Zeus. In chrematitic, or ‘prize,’ games, the victor received a monetary prize for his victory. The Panathenaic Games, games for ‘all Athenians,’ were among the chrematitic games (Kyle 1997, p. 115; Bentz 1998, p. 11–13).

The Panathenaic Games were held during the Panathenaia, the major religious festival of Athens. Scholars formally recognize the origin of the traditional Panathenaic Games as the year 566 BC during the archonship of Hippokleides and under the tyrant Peisistratos, who reformed the festival (Boegehold 1997, p. 97). This reform instituted the four-year cycle of the festival and the introduction of Panathenaic prize amphorae (Frel 1973, p. 3).²³ In the first three years of the cycle, called the Lesser Panathenaia, the festival featured Athenian military and tribal demonstrations (Kyle 1997, p. 116). In the fourth year, the Greater Panathenaia, the Games were held and open to all Greek competitors, regardless of citizenship (Kyle 1997, p. 117). The fame and prizes of the Greater Panathenaic Games attracted competitors from across the Mediterranean region (Frel 1973, p. 7).

More than mere sport, the Panathenaic Games served a religious function. As the name suggests, the Panathenaic Games honored Athena, the patron goddess of Athens, and they were celebrated in late summer in honor of her birth. The Games especially commemorate her role in the Gigantomachy, or the war between the gods and the giants (Robertson 1997, p. 56).²⁴ Like

²² While a crown may not seem to compare to the monetary prizes of the chrematitic games, victors also received honor, fame, an increase in social capital, free meals for life, and sponsorship opportunities from local businesses (Swaddling 2008, p. 95).

²³ It is believed that the Burgon Amphora (the oldest extant Panathenaic amphora) falls within this time-period (Frel 1973, p. 5). It is displayed in the British Museum in Room 13 (see **Figure 1**).

²⁴ Particularly her slaying of the giant Enkelados (Robertson 1997, p. 56).

other festivals, myth factors greatly into the origin of the Panathenaic Games (Robertson 1997, p. 28). For instance, the foundation for the Panathenaia is attributed to Erechtheus, a legendary king of Athens.²⁵ Theseus, another legendary king and hero of Athens, is thought to have been the first reorganizer of the Games in connection with his purported unification of Attica (Simon 1997, p. 23).

The religious aspect of the Games only enhanced the significance of individual involvement, competition, and prizes. Ten overseers of the Games (called *athlothetai*), one from each tribe, were appointed by the reigning archon to administer the various events of the nine-day festival (Simon 1997, p. 13).²⁶ During the first three days of the Games, the *musikos agon* (musical and dramatic competitions) took place. Adult male contestants could engage in a recitation competition (oral presentations of excerpts from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*); flute and kithara playing; or in choral performance events (Simon 1997, p. 16; Bentz 1998, p. 16). The fourth and fifth days of the festival were for the *gymnikos agon* (athletic competitions) (Bentz 1998, p. 13). Like all festival events, these were reserved for men. However, in the 5th century, categories for boys and youths were added as well (Frel 1973, p. 5). There were a variety of athletic competitions, such as footraces, the pentathlon, and heavy events, all of which were single competitor events.²⁷

²⁵ Note that the *apobatês* race is said to have been instituted by the hero Erichthonios (Erechtheus) (Robertson 1997, p. 57).

²⁶ There could be overlap between days one through seven, though days 8–9 were consistent.

²⁷ These foot races included the *stadion* (similar to our 200-meter dash), the *diaulos* (double *stadia* race), the *dolichos* (a long distance race), the *hippios* (a four *stadia* race), and the *apobati* race. The *apobati* is a race in which a hoplite (an armed Greek soldier) races alongside chariots, mounting and dismounting at various points in the race. This event, which fluctuated in popularity throughout the history of the games, becomes more significant in the later part of the 4th century. The pentathlon consisted of five events: the *halma* (the long jump), *diskos* (the discus throw), *akon* (the javelin throw), the *stadion*, and *palê* (wrestling) (Boegehold 1997, p. 97). The ‘heavy events’ of the Panathenaia were the *pyx* (boxing), *pale* (wrestling), and the *pankration*. The *pankration* is best thought of as an ancient Mixed Martial Arts-style fight, where only eye gouging and biting were prohibited (Boegehold 1997, p. 97). At the end of the 4th century, only professionals continued to compete in *pankration* events, and the prize for this event became greater than any other prize (Swaddling 2008, p. 75).

Days six through seven and were devoted to equestrian contests, such as four-horse chariot races, javelin events from horseback, the *synoris*, a race of mule and horse-pulled carts, as well as the *apobati*, a hoplite/chariot race (Boegehold 1997, p. 97; Bentz 1998, p. 15–16).²⁸ The eighth day was set aside for tribal contests, which places the Panathenaic Games in a unique niche among the Panhellenic Games. No other Panhellenic festivals restricted any events of the festival to ‘citizen only’ participation. An example of restricted events were the *pyhhric* dances, believed to be instituted by Erechtheus, and *Euandria* (Boegehold 1997, p. 97). The *pyhhric* dances (war dances) are thought to have derived from the events of the Lesser Panathenaia, in which tribal competitions served as military displays (Kyle 1997, p. 116). The purpose of the *Euandria* event is less clear. *Euandria* translates to ‘manly excellence,’ but no clear description of the event exists. It is believed to be a team event for Athenian citizens and might possibly have involved choral movements or acrobatics (Boegehold 1997, p. 97). There was also a competitive tribal cavalry display (Neils & Tracy 2003, p. 25).

On the night of the eighth day, a torch race along the Sacred Way, a processional road in Athens, began the festivities of day nine, which served as the culmination and final celebration of the festival (Neils & Tracy 2003, p. 17).²⁹ On this final day, the procession of spectators and participants would gather at the *leokoreion*, the marshalling point, and travel to the steps of the temple. Here, the *peplos*, a ceremonial garment created for Athena during the three previous years, was given to the cult statue. The new drapery contained images of her mythological history, particularly her role in the Gigantomachy (Robertson 1997, p. 58). Animals were then sacrificed in the name of the goddess, and the participants and spectators feasted (Robertson 1997, p. 37).

²⁸ The four-horse chariot race occurred between both colts and grown horses, and the *synoris* race was officially established after the 6th century, albeit not always common (Boegehold 1997, p. 97).

²⁹ This torch race also honors Hephaistos in the games (Robertson 1997, p. 64).

On the last day, prizes were distributed by the *athlothetai*. There were three kinds of prizes distributed to the victors: monetary, inscriptions, and *testimonia* (selected fragments from Greek literature).³⁰ The latter two were not common, and most scholarship on the games focuses on the monetary prizes (Hamilton 1997, p. 137). Like the stephanitic games, there were also symbolic crowns awarded to the victors during the festival, but as these crowns were mere substitutes for the prizes, they were not recorded as having significant value (Kyle 1997, p. 118). Winners from the *musikos agon* received silver and gold, winners of the *Euandria* received shields, and victors of the athletic and equestrian events received Panathenaic prize amphorae (Miller 1991, p. 81; Bentz 1998, p. 18).³¹ These vases were filled with valuable olive oil from Athena's sacred grove of olive trees, which were imbued with religious significance (Bentz 1998, p. 24–27). The olive oil itself was versatile, as it could be used for fuel, cooking, and cleansing the body—all of which added to its worth (Frel 1973, p. 3; Swaddling 2008, p. 95). Tradition decreed that the first of two best men in any event received a larger prize than the second. It was the winner of the *tethrippon* (four-horse chariot race) that received the most amphorae, specifically 140 vases. Since each amphora contained between 38–39 liters of oil, this resulted in a total of approximately 5,600 liters of oil (Frel 1973, p. 5). In a lower-class event, like the boys' *stadion*, the winner received about

³⁰ As discussed in an earlier footnote, there were other non-tangible winnings that ought to be considered. The winners of the Games would receive a variety of prizes beyond what were distributed at the Panathenaia. Victors could be rewarded by their state or hometown with fame, statues, commemoration, civic receptions, public feasting, free meals for life, and the promise of an elaborate burial, as well as sponsorship opportunities and significant social capital that allowed them to advance politically. Aristocrats, for example, decidedly took part in the Games and other associated events as the participation provided a forum for the expression of political rivalry, both in the Lesser and Greater Panathenaia (Valvanis 2009, p. 394). Furthermore, some states paid for the training of their athletes in return for the civic honor conferred by victory in the Games (Swaddling 2008, p. 95).

³¹ There is a record of an individual receiving a Panathenaic Prize amphora for a *musikos* event. Although the vase is undersized, it still bears the necessary inscription to indicate it is in fact a prize from the games. There are several possibilities as to why this might be, but there are no generally accepted theories (Shapiro 2014, p. 227). Approximately five extant vases defy the standard custom, and although scholars have discerned exceptions in chronology that may account for this, these anomalies continue to confound scholars (Hamilton 1997, p. 139).

1,994 liters of oil. If one liter of oil can be estimated at five dollars, the total worth of the boys' *stadion* prize (oil and vase) would be approximately \$10,000 (Miller 1991, p. xii–xiii).³² It follows that the grand prize for the *tethrippon* could approach half a million dollars. These winnings were considered duty free, and were often sold to individuals in Magna Graecia for even more profit (Swaddling 2008, p. 95).³³

These vases, so clearly labeled as prizes of Athens and emblazoned with Athena's image, also served the Athenian state. When competitors returned to their hometown, they brought the fame of Athens along with them as "these transportable civic symbols publicized Athens as powerful, divinely favored and wealthy" (Kyle 1997, p. 123). In thanksgiving for victories, the amphorae were often dedicated at religious sanctuaries throughout the Mediterranean, having been found archaeologically at sites throughout Greece (e.g. Sparta, Olynthus, and Athens), Egypt (e.g. Naukratis), Italy (e.g. Taranto, Chiusi, and Vulci), Cyprus (e.g. Kouklia), and North Africa (e.g. Taucheira in Libya) (Frel 1973, p. 6). The vases also were used as grave goods—serving as trophies for the dead (Frel 1973, p. 8). For example, the athlete at Taranto was buried with four Panathenaic amphorae, one at each corner of the tomb (Swaddling 2008, p. 95).³⁴ Indeed, most of the extant Panathenaic vases were found in funerary contexts in the Kerameikos cemetery (Frel 1973, p. 7; Bentz 1998, p. 95–111).³⁵

³² Note that it has been posited by Young that Miller's calculations may be low (Young 1984).

³³ Also note that prize donors received higher social status for the contribution of their prizes to the games and to society, as no chrematitic game could be put on without the donation of prizes (Kyle 1997, p. 107).

³⁴ It is believed he was either a discus or javelin thrower based on the analysis of the human remains (Swaddling 2008, p. 95).

³⁵ Funerary use of Panathenaics extends throughout the Mediterranean, having been found in southern Greece, Etruria, Cyrenaica, Egypt, Asia Minor, and Crimea (Frel 1973, p. 7).

Moving beyond the construction and function of Panathenaic amphorae, the next section discusses the historical developments of museums and ways in which the vases were collected and displayed after antiquity.

3.0 MUSEUM COLLECTIONS

Far from being a modern phenomenon, museums have their origins in antiquity and their evolution continues today, with museums undergoing various changes in display theory and motivation. In order to understand current display choices, this chapter begins with a discussion of the history of museums, then focuses on the development of the British and Ashmolean Museums and their respective displays of Panathenaic amphorae.

3.1 HISTORY OF MUSEUMS

The definitions of ‘museum’ have evolved alongside the development of the museum itself. Ancient museums were known as a ‘Place of the Muses’ where individuals could discuss ideas, perform experiments, and see beautiful things. The Alexandrian Temple of the Museum (established ca. 280 BC), for instance, functioned as a school, research institution, and library (Abt 2006, p. 116).³⁶ Based on similar sites and ancient descriptions, it also likely had a shrine to the muses, place for communal meals, observatory, and zoo, as well as a botanical and meditation garden (Simmons 2016, p. 37).

In 1755, Dr. Samuel Johnson refined the definition of museum, designating it a “repository of learned curiosities” which reflected the knowledge produced between the people and objects (Simmons 2016, p. 1). In 1946, the International Council of Museums published an official

³⁶ It was also referred to as a *museaum*, which indicated the combination of the Temple of the Muses with Library of Alexandria (Simmons 2016, p. 34).

definition: “The word ‘museums’ includes all collections open to the public, or artistic, technical, scientific, historical or archeological material, including zoos, and botanical gardens, but excluding libraries, except-in-so-far as they maintain permanent exhibition rooms” (Simmons 2016, p. 4). This definition expanded in 1951 to include establishments dedicated “...for the purpose of preserving, studying, and enhancing by various means and, in particular exhibiting to the public...” (Simmons 2016, p. 4). The definition was adapted yet again in 2007 to include that the institution had to be non-profit (Simmons 2016, p. 5; Orloff 2017).

Just like the definitions of museums, collecting habits have changed over time. Pre-museum collections typically contained objects connected with social prestige, emotional experience, magic, and curiosity (Simmons 2016, p. 11; Zyturak 2017).³⁷ These ancient collections were often passed down through family lines (Simmons 2016, p. 23). For example, Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey* contain descriptions of objects and discussions of their ownership history, demonstrating that these objects were collected by several individuals over generations (Simmons 2016, p. 27). In the Roman period, collections demonstrated status and were usually displayed in the home of their owner (Liveriani 2015; Simmons 2016, p. 40). In the Middle Ages, people collected because they believed that the intrinsic power of the objects could be transferred to their owner (Simmons 2016, p. 46). Additionally, the Church, which was the center of learning in the Middle Ages, collected valuable objects, relics, and related items so that they could be venerated

³⁷ Note that ancient Greek ‘museums’ had treasuries associated with them, which displayed the wealth of a city, flaunted civic pride, showcased spoils of war, or emphasized the piety of citizens (Shaya 2015; Simmons 2016, p. 29). However, the oldest known space dedicated to display is the *pinakotheke*, a temple picture gallery located on the Acropolis at Athens (ca. 5th century BC) (Simmons 2016, p. 30). Later, the Alexandrian Temple of the Museum (ca. 280 BC to AD 272), functioned as a school, research institution, and library (Simmons 2016, p. 34). Based on similar sites and ancient descriptions, we can presume that it also had a shrine to the muses, place for communal meals, observatory, zoo, and a botanical and meditation garden (MacLeod 2014; Simmons 2016, p. 37).

according to religious belief (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 5).³⁸ Collecting preferences shifted yet again in the Renaissance, with the resurgent interest in classical antiquity driving the desire for collections of Greco-Roman artifacts (Dyson 2006, p. 160).³⁹

In the 1600s, a new form of collecting involved the display of objects in private Cabinets of Curiosities (Gurian 2002, p. 76; Simmons 2016, p. 64). The objects and their display communicated information on many levels, leading to a variety of Cabinets of Curiosities with exotic objects being particularly popular (Zyturak 2011, p. 2; Simmons 2016, p. 93, 99). Accumulation, definition, and classification were the main aims of these Cabinets (MacGregor 2007; Simmons 2016, p. 79). These efforts were not standardized, and the collections could be categorized according to a variety of traditional and non-traditional systems. The result of this practice was that each Cabinet differed widely from the next. In a similar fashion, detailed catalogues compiled for Cabinets were formed sometimes haphazardly, and not according to any uniform guidelines. The lack of clear guidelines on catalogue creation often reflected the worldview of the owner, which was typically formed by a combination of education and experience. For example, they could choose to classify by date of acquisition, color, or most to least favorite objects (MacGregor 2007; Simmons 2016, p. 65).⁴⁰

A famous example of a Cabinet of Curiosities is the Medici collection. The collection was displayed in cabinets, entire rooms, and along the long hallways of the Medici residence (Acidini Luchinat 1997; Simmons 2016, p. 72). Although this famed collection was technically private,

³⁸ The Crusades added to ecclesiastical collections as Crusaders often brought foreign objects home and donated them to the Church (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 5).

³⁹ Classical sculpture was considered the most popular item to collect. Although Greek vases were collected during the Renaissance, their popularity did not peak until the middle of the 1700s (Dyson 2006, p. 160).

⁴⁰ Note that museums in the 17th and 18th century museums were formed out of private Cabinets of Curiosities (Gurian 2002, p. 76; Simmons 2016, p. 72).

individuals could see it as early as the 16th century if a servant was well-tipped (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 27). The word ‘museum’ was first applied to the Medici collection in 1615 in connection to its encyclopedic nature (Simmons 2016, p. 72). Other collectors also claimed to possess encyclopedic Cabinets. The French Chemist Pierre Borel (1620–1671), for example, believed his Cabinets were a microcosm of the universe (Simmons 2016, p. 121).

By 1700s natural history museums replaced *naturalia*-based Cabinets. Classification and comparison of objects via scientific exploration were concerned with finding the natural laws that governed humanity and the universe (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 6). This Enlightenment-driven classification system also helped with organizing the display of specimens (MacGregor 2007; Simmons 2016, p. 123). It is around this time, in 1727, that the first published work on museology appeared, called *Museographica* or *Guide to the Correct Concept and useful Application of the Museum or Chamber of Rarities* by Kaspar Friedrich Jenequel (Hamburg). In general, this book provided advice on the acquisition, classification, and care of collections (MacGregor 2007; Simmons 2016, p. 131).

As museums became more popular, private Cabinets of Curiosity fell into three categories: history, art, and science. Collections became more encyclopedic and focused on the macrocosm, and scientific methods were applied to cataloguing knowledge (Cuno 2011; Simmons 2016, p. 95). It was these specialized Cabinets that formed the foundations of the collections of early public museums.⁴¹ For instance, the British Museum (which opened in 1759) followed this pattern, purchasing its original natural science collection from Sir Hans Sloane and the majority of its original Greek vase collection from Sir William Hamilton (Dyson 2006, p. 135). Another example,

⁴¹ Until the early 1800s, museums added to their collections by purchasing either from Cabinet collectors or from excavations in Italy (presumed Roman copies of Greek originals) (Dyson 2006, p. 133).

the Louvre, is a product of the French Revolution wherein the royal Cabinet du Roi and the Cabinet d'Histoire were declared the property of the French people, renamed *musée*, and made available to the public (Simmons 2016, p. 125).⁴²

Generally, 19th century European museums expanded their collections through the acquisition of collections previously held by churches, palaces, or private collectors (Simmons 2016, p. 150). Most museums centered their collections on standards formed around Mediterranean civilizations, such as Greek vases and sculptures, Roman copies of Greek sculptures, and Egyptian artifacts. Additional objects were also obtained through archaeological excavations as the British Museum's purchase of the Elgin Marbles in 1806 encouraged excavation of the eastern Mediterranean for Greek art (Dyson 2006, p. 134). Likewise, the excavations at the site of Vulci in northern Italy flooded the market in the 1820s with Greek vases from Etruscan tombs (Dyson 2006, p. 162). The first public museum of classical archaeology, the Munich Glyptothek, featured marbles from the Temple of Aphaia on the Greek island of Aegina as the main attraction. The Glyptothek eventually purchased the best Greek vases acquired from Lucien Bonaparte, who as Prince of Canino owned the land on which the site of Vulci was located (Dyson 2006, p. 135).

Over the course of the 19th century, museums (like Munich) became increasingly specialized and diversified (Simmons 2016, p. 140). Also at this stage, institutions began to focus on the ways that museums created context for their objects. For example, in natural history museums, taxidermy and dioramas became more prominent (Zytaruk 2011, p. 4; Simmons 2016, p. 161, 164). In the latter half of the 19th century, all museums began to be viewed as research institutions and producers of scholarship (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 257; Simmons 2016,

⁴² Note that in the late 1700s, the Louvre's collection of objects was tailored towards finery (McClellan 1994; Simmons 2016, p. 94).

p. 165). They also had to respond to a changing audience. As the middle class became more educated and affluent, museums created displays that were more accessible to the public. Furthermore, objects were organized less by aesthetic needs and more by typology (Dyson 2006, p. 167).

The World Wars of the 20th century, especially World War II, also prompted a museological shift. Through the confiscation of private collections, Germany and Italy's museums grew substantially, although these expansions were not planned particularly well. German museums were censored, and art that was considered degenerate was removed from museums. Furthermore, many museums and objects were destroyed in the war (Simmons 2016, p. 185; Pearson 2017). Nevertheless, before the outbreak of World War II, classical ideals experienced a resurgence in popularity. The Greek marbles were considered the pinnacle of a museum's collection, with Roman productions as second best because they were considered to be Greek copies.⁴³

In general, the 20th century was the largest period of change for museums, as many museums were formed around communities and met the needs of diverse cultures. American museums, for example, placed considerable emphasis on the conveyance of ecological principles, the acknowledgement of minority groups, and research and educational projects—all of which contributed to the transformation of the museum into a multifaceted institution (Simmons 2016, p. 200; Landkammer et al. 2017; Orloff 2017).⁴⁴ Additionally, technological developments, such as indoor lighting and increased production of large sheet glass, created larger display cases (Simmons 2016, p. 179). Other innovations such as the typewriter, and then desktop computers,

⁴³ This popularity is seen in the harsh cleaning of the Parthenon Marbles in 1937 (to 'restore' them to pristine whiteness) and the creation of the Duveen Gallery for the Elgin Marbles in 1962 (Dyson 2006, p. 170).

⁴⁴ Note that 75% of museums in the US were formed after 1950 (Simmons 2016, p. 179).

exponentially allowed for the spread of information through new media such as online cataloging and database creation (Kupietzky 2007; Simmons 2016, p. 179).

In the 21st century, museums are expanding their traditional definitions and notions of display, utilizing new technology, and different spaces. For example, the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary art houses artwork too large for traditional galleries in industrial warehouses (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 291). Another example is the Eden Project which has created biomes in an old china clay quarry, where visitors can view the plants and enjoy the space while hearing stories, listening to music, and viewing art (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 295). In 2015, the British Museum collaborated with Samsung to create a virtual reality exhibit. Visitors could view a virtual Bronze Age round house and interact with artifacts that were scanned three-dimensionally into the program. These efforts expanded the ideas of what museum display could be as they present objects in a new, virtual context (The British Museum 2015).

3.2 HISTORY OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

The British Museum originated with the purchase of the collection of Sir Hans Sloane, a polymath who was a doctor, collector, and scholar. By the time of Sloane's death in 1753, he had acquired more than 80,000 items (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 58). Sloane's collection began with plants and specimens from Jamaica, where he acted as the physician for the island's governor (Simmons 2016, p. 113).⁴⁵ Sloane's collection consisted of 'manmade' ethnographic items, often from first contact encounters. These pieces had been held in high esteem, collected for him by

⁴⁵ Sloane was a skilled doctor and administered to the poor free of charge, encouraging others to do the same (Wilson 2002, p. 13).

world travelers and even in and out of the hands of pirates (Wilson 2002, p. 15). While Sloane was particularly interested in his natural history collections, he also collected art to provide a breadth of interest to different scholars (Wilson 2002, p. 17). After Sloane's death on January 11, 1753, the original trustees of his collection appealed to the royal family as instructed in his will, but because of a lack of royal interest, they looked to Parliament instead (Miller 1991, p. 43).

Sloane's collection and library were purchased by the British government a few months after his death. On April 6, 1753, the House accepted the payment proposal in Sloane's will of £20,000 for his collection. They agreed to raise the funds by lottery, and thus the British Museum was born (Wilson 2002, p. 21). In addition to Sloane's library, two additional libraries were also purchased: the Harlien library and the library of Sir Robert Cotton. The libraries were considered necessary for the complete study of the specimens of the Sloane collection (Simmons 2016, p. 113). Together, these purchases represent the genesis of the world's first national library and museum, and they were placed in the Montagu House (the site of the present museum) (Wilson 2002, p. 22, 26).

In the beginning of the museum's development, there were three departments: (1) Coins, Medals, and Manuscripts; (2) Natural and Artificial Productions; (3) Maps, Drawings, Globes, and Printed Books (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 59). However, one of the chronic problems that plagued the museum was a lack of funding. By 1760, they had already overspent their funds on renovations, and still had to pay the salaries of staff and other yearly expenditures (Wilson 2002, p. 41). These financial troubles were compounded by occasions of impropriety, such as the actions of Sir Joseph Banks, a museum trustee who dispersed the ethnographic collection of Captain Cook's first voyage in the Pacific outside the museum purview. The objects were moved to Bank's private estate and among circles of his acquaintances (Wilson 2002, p. 45).

Although a public museum, the British Museum required visitors to submit ticket applications until 1785 and remained difficult to visit in the early 1800s due to the abbreviated open hours of the museum and rushed tours (Simmons 2016, p. 153). There was a consistent debate concerning the admittance of lower-class individuals to the museum, because there was fear they were not trustworthy, would damage items on display, and could not be corralled through the tour (Wilson 2002, p. 36). However, after the Great Exhibition in 1851, which presented the technological accomplishments throughout England and the world, the museum's attendance rose dramatically, with greater public demand for access (Wilson 2002, p. 99). Much of the staff worked as tour guides, as cataloguers, and as sorters of gifts (Wilson 2002, p. 49).

The purchase of the Hamilton vase collection in 1772 and the purchase of the Townley Marbles (a collection of Roman sculptures) in 1805 encouraged the addition of the Antiquities department, which was created in 1807 (Dyson 2006, p. 136). In response, Neoclassical-style renovations to the museum began in 1823 by Robert Smirk (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 59). Another major purchase, the Elgin Marbles, were sculptures from the Athenian Acropolis that were acquired from the Ottoman Empire by Lord Elgin. Elgin sold the marbles to the British Museum in 1816, and these prestigious objects were given their own space in 1852 (Dyson 2006, p. 141). Charles Newton (1816–1894) also procured ancient objects from the Ottoman Empire, such as the sculptures from the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (from modern Bodrum, Turkey), which were purchased in 1846 (Dyson 2006, p. 137). Newton, who first identified the Mausoleum site, worked diligently to acquire more sculptures (Dyson 2006, p. 138). He later became a curator for the museum from 1861–1888, and by the time he retired, the British Museum was considered to have “the largest and most representative collection of original Greek sculpture in the world” (Dyson 2006, p. 140). At the end of the century, space was lacking, and it was decided to move

the natural history collections to South Kensington. By removing this material, the museum's already established encyclopedic mission was disrupted for the first time (Wilson 2002, p. 184). This move, however, provided space for the expansion of the Antiquities department.

The World Wars had a profound effect on the British Museum. During World War I, the museum was strained by a lack of employees, so ex-staff members were asked to return to work to care for the collection (Wilson 2002, p. 210). The government allowed the museum to remain open to provide amusement during war time. During threats of bombing, valuable museum materials were evacuated to the countryside (Wilson 2002, p. 211). As threats of damage increased, women volunteered as packers between February and May 1918. When the museum opened a special exhibition on Armistice Day on November 11, 1918, more than 100,000 visitors came to view it (Wilson 2002, p. 212).

Sir John Forsdyke prepared the museum for the onslaught of World War II. When on August 23, 1939 the museum learned the inevitability of the war, packers moved and catalogued the collection at 7 am the next morning. On the first day, more than twenty tons of material were moved to safe houses in Nottinghamshire and a railway tunnel at Aldwych (Wilson 2002, p. 249). When the war began, most of the museum was closed, with reduced library services and only a small photographic exhibition on display. Throughout the course of the war, aside from small incendiary bombs, seven high explosive bombs fell on the museum. The heaviest damage was sustained on the night of May 10th/11th 1941, when dozens of incendiary bombs fell and damaged more than eight galleries (Wilson 2002, p. 251). One of these galleries was the Greek and Roman

Department, which was fully repaired with the rest of the museum in the 1960s (Department of Greece and Rome 2017).⁴⁶

In general, the reconstruction of the galleries was beneficial as it allowed for chronological display of material and greater outreach (Wilson 2002, p. 271). In general, the museum began to invest in community outreach, educational services, and a membership program for museum friends (Wilson 2002, p. 284). Museum staff increased by 400 members from 1971–1975, which finally provided the museum with staffing needed to run the institution properly (Wilson 2002, p. 278). In the 1970s, the concept of museum planning was implemented, leading to the restructuring of the administration and the consideration of the future of the museum (Wilson 2002, p. 306). The following decade resulted in a large increase in funds from grants to support major purchases for the collection (Wilson 2002, p. 311). The turn of the century is noted for the development of international relationships, which has allowed for international exhibits and the lending of objects around the world. This has resulted in a greater knowledge of foreign cultures, networking with contemporaries, as well as item lending and borrowing (Wilson 2002, p. 322; MacGregor 2004). Furthermore, the Great Court, which opened in December of 2000, allowed the museum to reconfigure its space to improve circulation, retain the reading room, and make a better use of space for galleries and storage. Today the British Museum uses its collections and improved facilities to further its institutional aims. According to its website, the British Museum’s mission continues to be one with a universal goal: “The aim of the British Museum is to hold for the benefit of humanity a collection representative of world cultures and ensure that the collection is housed

⁴⁶ For example, in 1962 the Elgin Marbles were returned to the Duveen Gallery, which had an award-winning lighting installation (Wilson 2002, p. 270).

in safety, conserved, curated, research, exhibited., and made available to the widest possible public” (The British Museum 2003).

Shifting to the history of a specific display, namely that of the museum’s Panathenaic amphorae, one can see clearly see the museum’s encyclopedic mission at work. As previously mentioned, the British Museum holds the largest collection of Panathenaic amphorae outside of Greece, and the ways in which these objects have been displayed has changed over time. In order to better understand the display history, two curators of the Department of Greek and Roman antiquities, Dr. Judith Swaddling and Dr. Peter Higgs, were interviewed on May 10, 2017.

Swaddling and Higgs stated that the vase collection was originally arranged by date rather than shape, with Panathenaic amphorae displayed alongside other contemporary Greek vessels. It was not until the 1980s that the decision was made to display objects thematically in the galleries.⁴⁷ According to Swaddling and Higgs, the large number of vases in the museum’s collection allows the curators to arrange them chronologically or by subject matter. The ground floors contain vases that are ordered chronologically, as seen in **Figures 3, 6 and 7**, which depict Rooms 13, 19, and 20 respectively. The upper floors of the museum contain vases grouped by subject matter as seen by **Figure 6** (Room 69). The information regarding the vases on display is conveyed through wall text with large type in order to make the information more legible, though not necessarily covering all topics for a more holistic approach.⁴⁸ In general, there has never been any strict policy governing the display of Panathenaics, and the museum galleries developed organically over time.

⁴⁷ Currently, Room 13a (**Figure 4**), which closed in 2000, contains the Greek vases that are not on display (including a number of Panathenaic amphorae). When vases are loaned to various exhibitions, objects from 13a serve as replacements. The Panathenaic amphorae, for example, are often loaned to other museums or are part of traveling exhibitions. The prize or trophy element of these vases makes them more versatile than the average vase. As a result, these vases are typically part of sport-themed exhibitions that occur during the Olympic years.

⁴⁸ **Figure 17** shows the topics discussed in the wall texts and object labels.

However, in the future, Swaddling and Higgs mentioned that there is interest in organizing the vases according to burial groups in order to give the objects better context and convey more information than can be communicated through the object labels and wall texts. Overall, the information provided by the curators provides a better understanding of current display choices and future pursuits of universal display.

3.3 HISTORY OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

To provide context and contrast for the materials discussed in the British Museum, we now turn to the Ashmolean Museum as its collection demonstrates the difference in mission between the two museums. The Ashmolean Museum, founded in Oxford in 1683, was the first public natural history museum. The foundational collection of the museum, called ‘Tradescant’s Ark,’ was compiled by father and son, both named John Tradescant (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 57). The pair were gardeners and their employment by members of the aristocracy allowed them to collect a wide variety of specimens. John (the elder) Tradescant was appointed to his first major client Robert Cecil, first Earl of Salisbury, where he worked in the gardens at the Hatfield House. His duties prompted him to travel to the Netherlands to find the proper plants for the garden (MacGregor 2001, p. 6). He also travelled to Paris to meet with the king’s gardener, who was himself a collector—it is believed that this meeting sparked Tradescant’s passion for collecting (MacGregor 2001, p. 8). While Tradescant held various gardening positions, his most influential position was in serving the first Duke of Buckingham, George Villiers. Letters written by Tradescant were

sponsored by the Duke and sent to various ambassadors, merchants, and sea captains, asking them to collect man-made and natural rarities (MacGregor 2001, p. 8).

After the Duke of Buckingham was assassinated in 1628, Tradescant bought the Lambeth property for his family, and his collection was housed there until it was moved to the Ashmolean (MacGregor 2001, p. 9). Tradescant was then employed by King Charles I to attend to the royal gardens in 1630 (MacGregor 2001, p. 9). He died in 1638, within a year of his final appointment as Physic Garden curator in Oxford (MacGregor 2001, p. 9).

At the time of Tradescant the Elder's death, John Tradescant Jr. was in Virginia collecting specimens (MacGregor 2001, p. 9). Elias Ashmole, who became involved with the project in 1650, encouraged the younger Tradescant to make a catalogue of the collection (MacGregor 2001, p. 10). The catalogue, *Musæum Tradescantianum*, was England's first museum catalogue, and it was published in 1656 with the assistance of Ashmole and Dr. Thomas Wharton, who helped compile and fund it (MacGregor 2001, p. 12). Tradescant gave his collection to Ashmole in 1659, but it appears he regretted it, because in his will, created in 1661, the collection was to be offered to Cambridge or Oxford and at the discretion of his wife, Hester (MacGregor 2001, p. 16).

Tradescant Jr. died in 1662 and Ashmole took action to reclaim the gift, even though Hester had already begun to sell objects from the collection. The court sided with Ashmole: "...ultimately the Court of Chancery found in favour of Ashmole on the basis that the deed of gift was irrevocable without the agreement of the beneficiary" (MacGregor 2001, p. 16). Ashmole even bought the house next to Hester, where they remained disagreeable neighbors until Hester died in 1678 (MacGregor 2001, p. 16). Before her death, Hester eventually gave the collection to Ashmole, who immediately gifted it to Oxford along with his own book and coin collection with stipulations to how the collection should be treated (MacGregor 2001, p. 15).

Robert Plot, the first professor of Chemistry at Oxford, administered the museum, along with the chemistry lab, which was his primary duty (MacGregor 2001, p. 20). Museum guidelines printed in 1714 said that only one group could enter at a time and they paid according to the time spent in the museum (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 57).⁴⁹ Underkeeper Edward Lhwyd cataloged and arranged the collections, and succeeded Plot as museum Keeper in 1690 (MacGregor 2001, p. 23). After Lhwyd's death in 1709, successive curators did not abide by Ashmole's initial rules, which forbade the admittance of 'common folk' for fear that they would endanger the collection (MacGregor 2001, p. 24).

By the 1750s, the museum was in the worst state of its history, because of several Keepers that did not remain in the post for more than a year. Although George Huddesford retained the post, in his greed he did not care for the collection. Instead, he collected his annual salary of £50, but spent no time improving the collection (MacGregor 2001, p. 26). In an act of nepotism, Huddesford ensured that his son, William, would follow him as Keeper (MacGregor 2001, p. 27). However, William Huddesford revamped the museum when he took his post in 1755, and worked to conserve collections devalued by neglect (MacGregor 2001, p. 28). New items, acquired during Captain James Cook's second expedition to the Pacific (1772–1775), entered the collection soon thereafter (MacGregor 2001, p. 32). Decades later, John Shute Duncan was appointed as Keeper in 1823, and began caring for the upper floor of the museum which had since been ignored (MacGregor 2001, p. 36). In 1826, new rules for museum were drawn in a 51-page introduction of *Introduction to the Catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum* (MacGregor 2001, p. 37).

In the latter half of the 19th century, the museum struggled again as it lost many of its main holdings in transferring objects to other collections in the university, like the Bodleian Library and

⁴⁹ In 1660, in a tract, there is evidence that children were allowed in the museum (MacGregor 2001, p. 12).

the University Museum. Keeper John Phillips (1854–1870) attempted to give more texts, numismatics, and antiquities to the Bodleian Library as the museum teetered toward closure, only to have the offer declined. After this development, the museum began rebranding itself by accepting collections of Anglo-Saxon antiquities that were rejected by the British Museum (MacGregor 2001, p. 54).

In 1884, Sir Arthur Evans became Keeper of the museum (MacGregor 2001, p. 54). He submitted a six-part plan in which the museum would become a museum of archaeology, housing specimens inappropriately placed elsewhere in the university (MacGregor 2001, p. 56). The museum received objects from the Bodleian Library and the University Museum. More than 2,000 items flooded the museum every year, and soon space for the collection was wanting, which was remediated by creating an extension to the University Galleries (MacGregor 2001, p. 58). Evans left the post in 1908 to pursue excavations at Knossos. Because of Sir Arthur Evan’s excavations at Bronze Age sites in the Aegean, the collection of Cycladic, Minoan, and Mycenaean collections are the most comprehensive in the world outside of Greece (MacGregor 2001, p. 60).

Also associated with the museum was Sir John Beazley (1885–1970). He utilized the ‘Morellian method’ of painter attribution, but adapted it for identifying the work of ancient vase painters. His method is now termed the ‘Beazley Method’ (Smith 2005). His photographs, notes, and drawings formed an entire archive in which he identified more than 700 red-figure painters and 500 black-figure painters from 10,000 vases in various collections across the world (Rowse 1985). Beazley’s archives were purchased for the Oxford’s Classics faculty in 1964, and were then moved to the Ashmolean Museum upon his death in 1970. These resources now reside formally in the Beazley Archive and are made available in the online database (The Beazley Archive 2013).

In 1993, it was decided that the Ashmolean's collections should be integrated into the university's teaching curriculum. As a result, most curators also have teaching positions or lectureships at the university (MacGregor 2001, p. 74). The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology became the building for general collections, its contents including some of the original 'Tradescant Ark.' Other items are currently housed in various locations across campus (Alexander & Alexander 2007, p. 58). In addition to emphasizing its teaching mission, the museum also repositioned itself to serve a wide range of museum goers.⁵⁰

Several building projects initiated during the early 2000s have provided more space for galleries and an opportunity to display items not frequently seen by the public. Another way in which the museum has expanded is through its internet presence, as current information concerning collections, exhibits, and educational opportunities is available online (MacGregor 2001, p. 79). Furthermore, the most recent renovation in 2009 has not only physically changed the building, but also contributed to a shift in display strategy. The new theme: 'Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time,' seeks to demonstrate the connections between the different cultures of the collection through 39 galleries (Wodehouse 2015, p. viii). This choice eschews the traditional chronological and culture-specific categories into which exhibits are typically categorized. Instead, this approach favors grouping objects according to their use or meaning. As a result, the focus is on the typology of objects and not on the cultures that produced them. This approach is better suited to educational museums that have small assemblages of material from various sources instead of large displays of 'universal' representation. It also aligns with the stated mission of the museum: "The mission of the Ashmolean Museum is to make its collections of art and archaeology

⁵⁰ The museum's teaching mission is demonstrated not only through the education of children, but adults as well: "In addition to some 26,000 school children each year over half of whom were guided, the Education Service was providing tours for 10,000 adult visitors annually by 1999..." (MacGregor 2001, p. 76).

available to the widest possible audience, now and in the future by exhibiting, preserving and interpreting its objects for study, enjoyment and inspiration, and to the promote the understanding of them by teaching and researching at the highest level” (The Ashmolean Museum 2014).

In order to better understand how the display of Panathenaic amphorae and other Greek objects in the collection shifted in response to the Ashmolean’s new education-based mission, two curators, Dr. Anja Ulbrigh and Dr. Marianne Bergeron, were interviewed on May 10, 2017. Gallery 16, ‘The Greek World,’ was recently redesigned and completed in 2014 after five years of renovations. The current space is one-third of its original size and there are both thematic and chronological display cases in the room. The aim of the room is to demonstrate the diversity of Greek culture by focusing not only on ‘typical’ Athenian displays, but also on objects from Corinth and Sparta. The room also achieves this by discussing the history of the Greeks, both in their homeland and abroad. As a result, the types of Panathenaic vases displayed are not proportional with the number produced, as seen in **Figure 16**. The function of the gallery reflects that of the wider museum, namely to provide a teaching space for Oxford University. This is also shown in the many donations of Sir John Beazley’s vases to the Ashmolean Museum. In gifting his vases to the teaching museum, these vases were added to the plethora of objects used for educational purposes. In the future, the museum hopes to have rotating displays. However, the museum only has a few staff volunteers, therefore its database is slow to be updated and information is often misfiled, making the process of change more difficult. The small size of the institution certainly affects all facets of its operations, from museum mission, to gallery size, and number of volunteers.

Building upon the previous discussion of museum development and the evolution of the British and Ashmolean Museums, the following chapter presents an analysis of the Panathenaic amphorae

displays in both museums through museum display evaluation, utilizing headcounts and textual analysis, to determine whether the British Museum's display is in alignment with the museum's universal mission. The information from the Ashmolean's display puts the results from the British Museum in context by demonstrating the differences in museum mission.

4.0 ANALYSIS

Museum evaluation exists to discover and address the needs and expectations of the visitor while accomplishing the museum's goals (Orloff 2017). Utilizing museum evaluation practices in this study is essential for determining if the display of Panathenaic amphorae is in alignment with the universal mission of the British Museum. There are three kinds of museum evaluation used to assure the effectiveness of the exhibit in bridging the needs of the visitor and goals of the museum. Front-end evaluation is the testing of ideas in the planning stage, formative evaluation examines programming during the design process, and summative evaluation determines the overall effectiveness of the exhibit (Borun & Korn 1999a, p. VII). Overall, exhibition research and evaluation concerns itself with good design, readability, sampling, validity, content analysis, and statistical testing of the exhibit (Borun & Korn 1999b, p. 89).

Visitors bring their own personal experiences to the museum, which means that the exhibit must be accessible to viewers with diverse backgrounds and experiences (Korn 1999b, p. 6). Front-end evaluation allows exhibit designers to test concept ideas during the initial planning phase (Korn 1999b, p. 5). The research done at this stage not only informs the prospective exhibit, but other future exhibition projects (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 3). The important areas to consider are the motivations, expectations, and perceptions of the visitor, as well as barriers to visiting and the physical space of the exhibit and its use (Lord 2014, p. 11). There are many potential sources for this background information, such as interviews, surveys, historical data, photographs, observations of behavior patterns, archival materials, and comparison to similar programs (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 3). To understand the perspective of the visitor, evaluators typically

conduct interviews with open-ended questions so that visitors can describe their experiences (Korn 1999b, p. 6).⁵¹

Formative evaluation is performed to indicate the improvements that can be made during the design process. The exhibit can already be installed for this stage of evaluation, with the understanding that it will be changed based on the results (Lord 2014, p. 10). Formative evaluation investigates the social and physical environment, interpretive techniques, and display, as well as content and storytelling (Lord 2014, p. 13). This can be done by looking at any exhibit components systematically and without bias, such as labels, gallery guides, and interactive displays (Korn 1999b, p. 7).⁵² For example, label testing is usually done at this stage and focuses on legibility, readability, and comprehension. Labeling is frequently not tested, but it is the most inexpensive and straightforward thing to evaluate (Lord 2014, p. 14). This can be assessed by determining if the visitors can understand the words or phrases on the label, and whether they can summarize the content of the label (Korn 1999b, p. 8). These components measure the visitors' reactions to the prototypes and can lead to improvements to the exhibit during the formative process.

Summative evaluation determines the effectiveness of the exhibit and produces suggestions that cannot be implemented during the life of the exhibit (Korn 1999b, p. 5). This form of evaluation seeks to discern the effectiveness of the exhibit and all of its individual components.⁵³ It considers the outcome of all the design factors, such as the flow of traffic (which can only be seen after the exhibit is installed) (Korn 1999b, p. 8). Other aspects of the museum exhibit, such

⁵¹ Types of front-end questions consist of: "What meaning emerges from their encounter?... Are memories awakened as visitors look at objects? If so, what are they?" (Borun & Korn 1999, p. 6)?

⁵² Types of formative evaluation questions consist of: "Are the instructions clear? Are the labels legible? What general meaning are visitors creating from their experience?" etc. (Borun & Korn 1999, p. 7).

⁵³ Types of summative evaluation questions consist of: "What did the visitor learn? Did the visitors read the labels? Which ones? For how long? Which components hold visitors' attention?" (Borun & Korn 1999, p. 8).

as touring or other programming, are scrutinized through this evaluation as well (Korn 1999b, p. 9).

Summative evaluation focuses on the same key areas as front-end evaluation, specifically the motivations, expectations, and perceptions of the visitor, as well as barriers to visiting and the use of physical space in exhibits (Lord 2014, p. 15). Ideally, summative evaluation addresses the issues raised in the front-end evaluation, and demonstrates other areas for improvement. Summative evaluation can be performed through tracking individuals, time lapse photography, focus groups, and interviews (Hood 1999, p. 15). Visitor's actions and interview responses can be coded for discussing qualitative data in a quantitative fashion (Korn 1999a, p. 26). Visitors can be observed through counting those that come in the door (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 53), as well as tracking a range of visitors' movements and behaviors (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 57).⁵⁴ Patron interviews can provide rich, clear data, and in-depth exploration of topics (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 65). To get the best sample size, it is best to sample at different times and on different days when public programming is offered and also when it is not offered (Hood 1999, p. 16). With a diverse sample, the results of the evaluation are the most effective for mapping museum trends in a variety of situations.

For any evaluation to be effective, the museum needs to understand the cultural, historical, political, and social contexts of museum visitors and communities (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 7). Community demographics, for instance, can affect the effectiveness of an exhibition (Lord 2014, p. 5). Thus, the results of the evaluation, if presented as statistical information, can show if relationships in the data are significant (Borun & Korn 1999b, p. 89). A comparative analysis can

⁵⁴ There is another kind of behavioral sampling, called focal individual sampling, which means that an observer looks at one person's movements (Diamond et al. 2009, p. 63).

also be performed between the museum's information versus the exhibit results in the following categories (Korn 1999a, p. 32): physical use of the exhibition/building, visitor motivation and expectations, demographics, quality of the exhibition visit, and achieved objectives (Lord 2014, p. 15).

The purpose of an exhibit is to change the way visitors think, encourage them to formulate questions and to be curious. This is the definition of exhibition success, and museum evaluations help determine whether the museum has met its goals (Friedman 1999, p. 4). While museum evaluations can be tedious and costly (especially as there are a range of ways to conduct visitor evaluations), there are many diverse circumstances, exhibit settings, and scenarios where visitors are studied (Korn 1999b, p. 5).

Using summative evaluation techniques, this thesis seeks to determine whether the British Museum's Panathenaic amphorae exhibit reflects the museum's history and position as a universal museum. To collect the necessary information, field research was conducted at the British Museum and at the Ashmolean Museum for comparative purposes, which yields the conclusion that more vases allow for more opportunities to make the discussion of the vases more holistic. At each location, the Panathenaic amphorae displays were visually analyzed, and their interpretive materials (wall texts, object labels, brochures, and guided tours) were evaluated based on the variety of topics discussed.

Regarding the analysis of interpretive materials, many different categories of evidence were considered in order to address the quality of the information. At the British Museum, this included labels, wall texts, brochures, materials available in the gift shop, a guided tour entitled 'Eye-Opener Tour of Ancient Greece,' and a self-guided audio tour. At the Ashmolean Museum, a smaller museum with an educational mission, the interpretive materials were sparse and limited

to labels and wall texts, tours were not available and there were not a lot of additional brochures for patron use. The displays of Panathenaic amphorae at each institution were then visually analyzed, looking at the events displayed and their visibility. The object labels were also qualitatively evaluated based on content. Additionally, headcounts were performed in each exhibit, counting the individuals who entered the room and noting whether they stopped specifically at a vase with a Panathenaic amphora. In context with the museums' individual missions, it was expected that the British Museum's materials and exhibits would demonstrate it to be a universal museum and the Ashmolean's materials and exhibits would demonstrate it to be a university museum.

4.1 SAMPLE AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION

Due to the British Museum's abundance of objects, the museum has two different exhibit formats: on the ground floor, exhibits are arranged according to culture as seen in Rooms 13 (Greece 1050–520 BC), 19 (Athens and the Acropolis: 400–430 BC), and 20 (Greeks and Lycians: 400–325 BC). On the upper floors, exhibits are arranged by topic such as Room 69 (Greek and Roman Life). The British Museum's nine Panathenaic amphorae are spread among these rooms and displayed according to the gallery themes. The variety of gallery themes allows for the vases to be exhibited in many contexts, where commentary can address each topic relating to the vases. In each of these rooms, head counts (**Figure 7**) and label evaluations were performed to determine how much traffic the rooms receive over the course of an hour. This information provides a basic

understanding of the frequency of viewing that these rooms receive and how much attention is directed towards the cases with Panathenaic amphorae.

The layout of each room appeared to have an impact on whether individuals quickly passed by or stopped at the cases as they made their way through the gallery towards the exits. With the entrances to the room parallel to each other, Room 13 (Greece 1050–520 BC) primarily contains vase displays, as seen in **Figure 8**. There are display cabinets around the perimeter of the room, with two large displays in the middle of the room, and the remainder of the space taken up by the descending staircase leading to Room 13a, which is no longer in use (**Figure 2**). The Panathenaic amphorae are in one of the two large display cases in the center of the room, located closer to the stairs that descend to 13a. This room contains large descriptive wall texts describing the history of black-figure vase painting and its relationship with Athens. The two Panathenaic amphorae in this room are contained in this case. The case does not have a number assigned to it, but the placards are entitled: ‘Athens’ and ‘Athenian Black-Figure Vase Painting.’ One of the two amphorae is the Burgon Amphora—the oldest extant Panathenaic amphora (**Figure 1**)—and the other is a vase attributed to the circle of the Princeton Painter (**Figure 9**). Because the Burgon Amphora is on display, its presence is one indication of the effort dedicated to universal display—showing the evolution in style that occurred over the course of the Archaic and Classical periods. On May 19, 2017, a head count observation was performed from 11:05 am–12:05 pm. Two hundred and ninety people passed through the room, with 46 people stopping at the case containing Panathenaic amphorae. Twenty-one of these individuals were part of the daily ancient Greece tour, which was evident because xx. It should also be noted that the famous Achilles and Penthesileia amphora by Exekias was in the same case as the Panathenaic amphorae. This vase, painted by a black-figure master, is featured on the audio tour, which likely accounts for the high viewing number.

Room 19 (**Figure 10**) contains sculptures and two main display cases. This room is called ‘Greece: Athens,’ and it discusses the ruins and discoveries of the Athenian Acropolis. With the entrances across the room, people entering the room had to pass by the display cases, as a result, approximately 75% of visitors took time to peruse the cases when moving through the gallery. The three Panathenaic amphorae are in one case next to the Caryatid from the Erechtheion. The vases are located along the back of the display case, with smaller vases and figurines in front. The descriptive labeling of these vases discuss the Panathenaic games, describe the images on the vases, and the meaning of Athena’s shield device. Head counts of Room 19, called ‘Greece: Athens,’ were performed on May 16th from 12:42–1:15 pm (the observation ended when the room was closed due to it being understaffed) there were 133 people that passed through and 7 individuals who paid specific attention to the three Panathenaic amphorae. This will be discussed in greater detail below.

Room 20, called ‘Greeks and Lycians: 400–325 BC,’ contains six separate cases, each addressing a different theme (**Figure 11**).⁵⁵ Two cases contain Panathenaic amphorae: Case 1 is called: ‘The Human Body 430–330 BC’ and Case 5 is called ‘Athenian Pottery.’ Case 1 contains a label that uses the image on the Panathenaic amphora to describe the new canon of human proportions:

Lysippos of Sikyon, Greece was a prolific sculptor whose career may have lasted from the 370s to about 310 BC. Working mostly in bronze, Lysippos created a new canon of proportions whereby the head was one eighth the total height of the figure. Lysippos’ most

⁵⁵ The case numbers and titles are: 1) The Human Body 430–330 BC; 2) Luxury; 3) Persia, Lycia and Karia; 4) Metalwork; 5) Athenian Pottery; and 6) Pottery of the Greek World.

famous statue, the Apoxyomenos, only survives in later marble copies, and shows an athlete scraping his oiled body with a metal tool (*strigil*).

Case 5 places the Panathenaic amphora in context with other Athenian vases describing its athletic *pale* (wrestling) scene as well as taking advantage of the specificity of the case name to describe a family of potters: Bakchios and Kittos. Room 20 ‘Greeks and Lycians 400–325 BC’ was evaluated from 10:05–10:54 am on May 20, 2017. The room was closed at 10:54 to accommodate the understaffed docents. Within this period, 58 people passed through the room, with 8 of them stopping at cases that held Panathenaic vases.

The ‘Greek and Roman Life’ exhibit in Room 69 is one of the thematic rooms. This gallery room (**Figure 12**) is massive with three long aisles of display cases lining the walls, and a staircase display featuring an assemblage of Roman glass, which, like the display of Greek vases, emphasized the varying ways in which the objects were used in daily life. The entrances to the room are situated diagonal to one another across the room, and it is impossible to reach either without passing through one of the display case aisles. Two cases, Case 18 and Case 24, contain Panathenaic amphorae. Case 18 (**Figure 13**) is named ‘Boxing and Wrestling,’ and contains a Panathenaic amphora with a *pyx* scene. The case description discusses sport as militaristic practice common among Greeks and Etruscans. The only the boxing event on the amphora is shown, and other boxing and wrestling objects are in the case—figures, another small vase, and athletic equipment. Case 24, called ‘An Athenian Festival,’ is an example of a typical display format (**Figure 14**). It contains various vases and/or related athletic objects pertaining to different Athenian events. The objects are staggered and on different levels with individual labels and a larger wall text at the back of the case. When a head count evaluation was performed on May 10,

2017, 277 people passed through from 1:16–2:16 pm. However, due to the room configuration, it was not possible to track the individuals who stopped at Cases 18 and 24.

Shifting to the Ashmolean Museum, Room 16 (entitled “The Greek World 1000–100 BC”) contained one case with two Panathenaic amphorae (one being a pseudo-Panathenaic amphora).⁵⁶ This gallery (**Figure 15**) had a large open space with four entrances. Because of the open nature of the room, it was much easier for museum patrons to pass from room to room, ignoring the material that did not capture their attention, as will be discussed later.

The sample interpretive material from the Ashmolean Museum is quite different than that of the British Museum. In alignment with the theme ‘Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time,’ the amphorae are displayed in a case that describes ancient sport specifically in terms of training and competition. For instance:

Young Greek men spent time training at the gymnasium, a place of both physical and intellectual education. After exercising, athletes would clean by sponging oil on their skin and scraping off the grime with a metal implement called a strigil.

Competing in athletic games was a great honor for a youth. The Greeks believed that sporting excellence, physical beauty and good character converged in the ideal male.

These object labels mention that the vases are prizes (or ‘pseudo-prizes’), list to whom they are attributed, and provide a brief description of the image. These descriptions are not as detailed as

⁵⁶ Pseudo-Panathenaics are much smaller than the traditional Panathenaic amphorae and contain elements of the traditional canon with the exception of the *stoichedon* (Valvanis 2009). There is only one true Panathenaic amphora in the case, the other is a pseudo-Panathenaic. Its small sized caused me to look over it and I spent half an hour scouring other galleries for where the second listed Panathenaic could be.

those in the British Museum, and they do not cover a similar range of contextual information, such as pottery traits or descriptions of Panathenaic events. When performing the head counts for Room 16 on May 9, 2017 from 1:28–2:28 pm, 228 people passed through the room with 8 people stopping to look at the Panathenaic amphorae case, which also contained other materials regarding ancient sport.

Finally, the remaining question as to whether the Panathenaic amphorae in the collections of the British Museum are a representative sample of awards presented to victors was addressed in a different manner. The percentage of vases on display ($n=9$) in the British Museum that correspond to each event were compared to percentages calculated by Richard Hamilton (1996) based on drawings of extant Panathenaic amphorae ($n=166$) (**Figure 16**). Note that these calculations could not be performed for the Ashmolean sample because of its small size ($n=2$). The boxing, wrestling, chariot race, and ‘other’ categories, correspond closely with Hamilton’s percentages while running, *pankration*, riding, and pentathlon vases percentages differ. Most notable is the lack of running vases on display, especially since Hamilton claims that it is the most commonly depicted Panathenaic event. The distinction between *pankration*, riding, and pentathlon vases is negligible since the British Museum possesses a greater proportion of these event vases. However, these number are skewed by the drastic difference in sample size between Hamilton’s analysis and the British Museum’s display number. Through this analysis, it can be asserted that the British Museum does display the universality of the events of the Panathenaia, except for the lack of ‘running’ event amphorae.

4.2 RESULTS

The observations of head counts and label analysis support projected findings that the British Museum's display of Panathenaic amphorae reflects its mission as a universal museum. The Panathenaic amphorae at the British Museum were displayed in rooms dedicated to Greek history or culture, in cases with other related objects, and interpretive materials intended to educate the public about ancient athletics and the Panathenaic Games. Because there are four rooms with Panathenaic amphorae that adhere to different themes concerning various aspects of ancient life, the British Museum provides the visitor with a more well-rounded perspective of the information surrounding the significance of the vases. Label content covers a variety of topics all related to either the vases themselves or historical events surrounding the vases.

With nine Panathenaic amphorae on display in the British Museum, wall texts provide multiple opportunities to discuss topics associated with Panathenaic amphorae, such as Panathenaic athletic events, the histories of Athens and Greece, information derived from vase scholarship, the canon of the vases, and the construction of the vases. There appears to be a correlation between the number of Panathenaic amphorae present in a room and the opportunity for various discussion threads pertaining to the vases (**Figure 17**). For example, Room 19 of the British Museum, the room with the greatest number of displayed Panathenaics (3), contains the most diverse information, as it covered all categories (ancient sport, the history of Athens/Greece, vase scholarship, canon, construction) except for construction descriptions. Each topic received more than five sentences of description. Room 14, however, contains no Panathenaic amphorae. The room is very small with only two display cases, yet it possesses wall texts that describe the construction techniques of red- and black-figure vases. The devotion of this room to the discussion of this topic makes up for three rooms (Room 19, 20, and 69) not discussing this topic. All object

labels concerning the Panathenaics discuss the sports depicted on the vases, and most rooms (Rooms 14, 13, 19, 20) discuss vase scholarship obliquely by labeling vases with the attributed painter and/or potter. Room 20 discusses this directly through the roles of Bacchios and Kittos as related potters.

At the Ashmolean Museum, the Panathenaic amphorae were displayed thematically with vases and other objects from different cultures and time periods. As a result, there was a smaller number of vases and less contextual information on labels. Additionally, the Ashmolean Museum's labels and wall texts discuss all of the aforementioned topics except vase construction. However, with the two vases there are only two labels for each vase, which stands in contrast to the British Museum which usually had two or three labels per vase. While the main wall text discusses the history of Athens and Greece (note that the theme of the room is the history of Greece), two sentences at most are dedicated to other topics, and therefore it does not provide the same depth as the British Museum descriptions.

The Ashmolean Museum's smaller sample size and thematic display serves the museum's teaching mission, and its small assemblages stand as parts of a universal whole. The Ashmolean lacks, however, the true universality and comprehensive variety of the British Museum, which enables the British Museum to impart upon its visitors a sense of the bigger, more 'universal,' picture (e.g. the British museum's exhibit on ancient Egyptian antiquities is known for its systematic and focused display) (Peters 2009, p. 40). Furthermore, the Ashmolean's renovation in 2009 reflects a new museological theory which eschews the traditional chronological and culture-specific categories into which exhibits are typically categorized. Instead, this approach favors grouping objects according to their use or meaning. Because of the very open floor plan, with each room having multiple entrances and exits, it is quite easy for audiences to pass through each room,

in effect treating the museum like a gallery, ironically in alignment with overarching theme of the museum: 'Crossing Cultures, Crossing Time.'

Overall, the vases held by the British Museum are used in a variety of displays, both chronological and thematic, and are thus able to illustrate the different facets of ancient life, such as athletic events, the history of Athens and Greece, vase scholarship, and vase canon. The Panathenaic events on display correspond closely to the proportion of extant vases, except for the running events. This gap, however, could be easily remedied if the museum would place two running amphorae from storage on display, as that would make its proportions mirror an accurate representation of extant Panathenaic amphorae. Nevertheless, the displays spread across five rooms and six cases ultimately provide an encyclopedic understanding of the vases and their socio-historical contexts.

5.0 CONCLUSION

As the British Museum holds the largest collection of Panathenaic amphorae outside of Greece, one would expect that the amphorae on display are a representative sample of the awards presented to victors of the Panathenaic Games. When compared to the smaller collection of the Ashmolean Museum, the British Museum's collection certainly appears to be more universal, showing the hands of different artists through the history of the Panathenaic Games, displaying a representative sample of various events, and discussing a breadth of related information from production to dispersal.

Universal museums have recently come under intense scrutiny, primarily because their collections were amassed by imperial powers at the expense of the colonized (Cuno 2008 p. 35). There are those that who support universal museums because they offer a breadth of displays that can only be seen otherwise through world travel (MacGregor 2004; Cuno 2008 p. 40). Are there truly universal museums when all museums aim to expansively share and display information, particularly when many of the possession of objects for the sake of universality is contested (O'Neill 2004 p. 196; Simmons 2016, p. 221)? Do these critiques apply to a 'university museum' like the Ashmolean, which contains objects collected during the same British imperial era from the same geographic region (the Mediterranean)?

The use of Panathenaic amphorae for this project serves not only as a case study, but also lends itself to the informal exploration of broader ideas of what is considered 'universal'. The British museum seeks to be a *universal* encyclopedic museum, and the Ashmolean is connected to a *university*. Yet both portray their collections differently based on the same idea of comprehensive knowledge. If the universe is ever expanding, does that mean the display of universality is infinite

as well? It certainly appears to be the case—with each museum grasping a different tenet of the principle. Although comprehending it seems to be a limitless task, the work of these museums attempts to capture what it means to be universal with the finite material display of human work that is imbued with multivalent meanings impressed upon it by the users of the past and the viewers of today.

FIGURES



Figure 1. Views of the Burgon Amphora (ca. 566 or 562 BC). Displayed in the British Museum in Room 14 (photos by author).



Figure 2. Vase attributed to the Euphilotos Painter (530–520 BC). Displayed in the British Museum Room 69 Case 24 (photo by author).



Figure 3. Vase attributed to the Swing Painter (ca. 550–501 BC). Displayed in the Ashmolean Museum Room 16 (photos by author).



Figure 4. Room 13a in the British Museum, closed since 2000 (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).

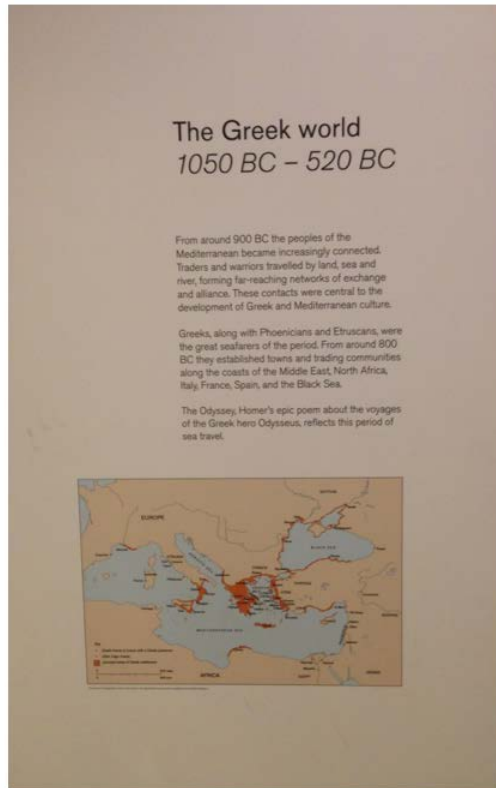


Figure 5. Wall text in Room 13 in the British Museum (photo by author).

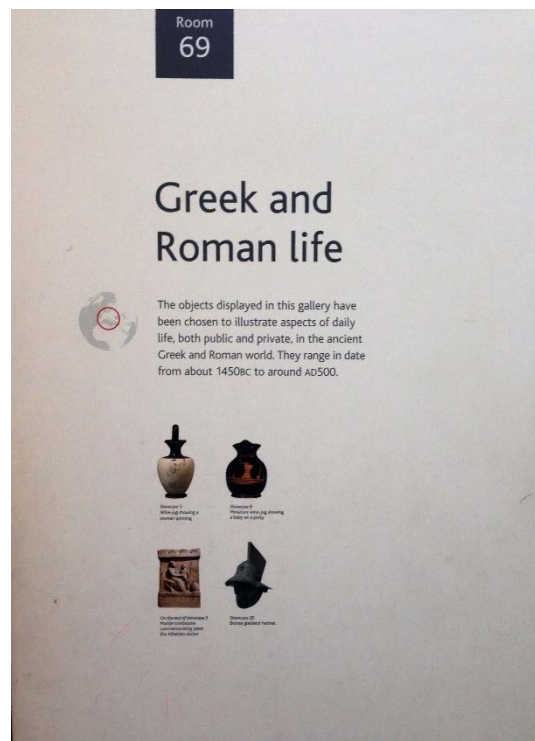


Figure 6. Wall text in Room 69 in the British Museum (photo by author).

Museum & Room Number	# of PA	Head Count		Time Frame
		Total	PA Views	
BM Room 19 (Greece: Athens) May 16, 2017	3	133	7	12:42-1:15pm (Room Closure)
BM Room 20 (Greeks and Lycians: 400-325 BC) May 10, 2017	2	58	8	10:05-10:54am (Room Closure)
BM Room 13 (Greece 1050-520 BC) May 10, 2017	2	290	46	11:05am-12:05pm
BM Room 69 (Greek and Roman Life) May 10, 2017	2	277	N/A	1:16-2:16pm
ASH Room 16 (The Greek World 1000-100 BC) May 9, 2017	2	228	8	1:28-2:28pm

Figure 7. Head Count Table of the British and Ashmolean Museums (table by author; ASH= Ashmolean Museum, BM= British Museum, PA= Panathenaic amphorae).



Figure 8. Room 13 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).



Figure 9. Vase attributed to the Princeton Painter (ca. 550–540 BC). Displayed in the Ashmolean Museum Room 16 (photo by author).



Figure 10. Room 19 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).



Figure 11. Room 20 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour). 11

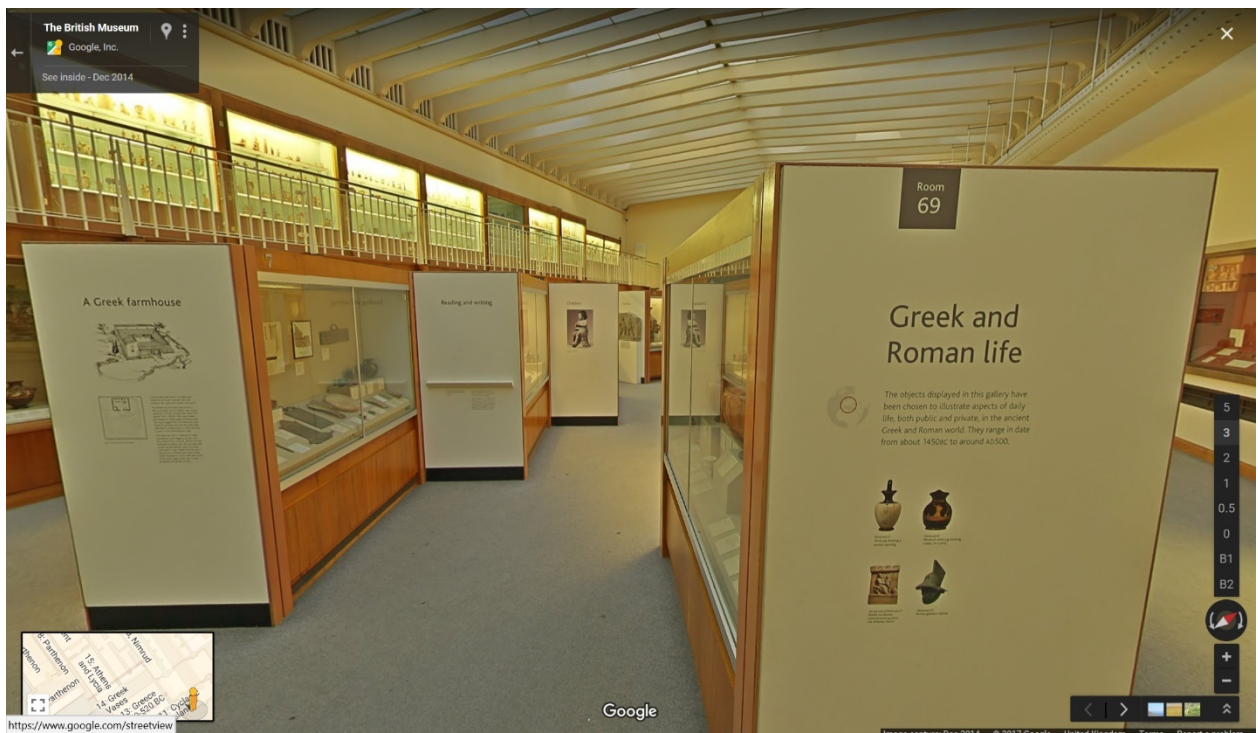


Figure 12. Room 69 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).



Figure 13. Room 69 Case 18 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).



Figure 14. Room 69 Case 24 in the British Museum (British Museum Google Maps Virtual Tour).



Figure 15. Room 16 in the Ashmolean Museum (Ashmolean Room 16 n.d.).

	Total Inscribed PA #	Running	Boxing	Pankration	Wrestling	Chariot Race	Riding	Pentathlon	Other
Total Inscribed PA #	166	39	19	6	23	34	12	12	20
Percentage		23.5%	11.4%	3.6%	13.9%	20.5%	7.2%	7.2%	12.0%
BM Total Inscribed PA #	9	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
BM Percentage		0.0%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%	22.2%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%
Ashmolean Total Inscribed PA #	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Ashmolean Percentage		50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%

Figure 16. The percentage comparisons for vase events displayed in the British and Ashmolean Museum

(table by author with information from Hamilton 1997, p. 137–162; BM= British Museum, PA= Panathenaic amphorae).

PA Info Topics	BM Room 14	BM Room 13	BM Room 19	BM Room 20	BM Room 69	Ashmolean Room 16
# PA Displayed	0	2	3	2	2	1 +1 Pseudo
Ancient Sport	0	2	2	2	3	1
History of Athens/ Greece	1	2	3	0	0	1
Vase Scholarship	1	1	1	3	0	2
Canon	0	0	2	2	0	1
Construction	1	1	0	0	0	0
Total Topical Commentaries	3	6	8	5	3	5

Figure 17. Topical Label Analysis Table (by author; BM= British Museum, PA= Panathenaic amphorae).

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