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The Aphrodite of Arles
BRUNILDE SISMONDO RIDGWAY

PLATE 23

Despite intensive and recent studies on the subject, our understanding of Hellenistic sculpture remains imperfect. In particular, it is still difficult to identify works in a classicizing style, which often are attributed to the Classical period proper. It is perhaps worth recalling here that the Aphrodite of Melos, which looks now so obviously Hellenistic in her rendering, could be considered a fourth-century work as late as 1930; and controversy is still rife over such statues as the Stephanos Athlete, the Idolino, and the Esquiline Venus. I have periodically attempted to redate some ancient works, with varying degrees of evidence and of success; I should like to make here one more suggestion as regards the dating of the so-called Aphrodite of Arles.1

The type is named after a marble copy found in 1651 in the area of the Roman theater at Arles. This remains the most complete of the few replicas we possess, and its history deserves brief attention because of the circumstances of discovery and subsequent events.2 The statue was found by workmen digging a well for a priest living in the area of the theater. The head was found first, at a depth of over six feet, and spurred further excavation which subsequently yielded the torso and the draped legs of the figure. The arms, with whatever attributes they may have held, were never found, despite renewed excavation in 1684 at the request of King Louis XIV to whom the statue had been donated. This extensive search in the area of the original discovery seems to confirm that the head belongs to the torso with which it was found, despite the fact that no true join exists between the fragments. This conclusion is of considerable importance, since all other replicas of the type are headless; yet this single extant head has inevitably affected our stylistic evaluation of the type, since it greatly resembles the Knidia.

It had been assumed that no major repair work had been carried out on the Arles statue at the time of its transfer to Versailles, except for the integration of the composition through the addition of arms and attributes. The sculptor François Girardon, who had been in charge of restoration, as we learn from the Royal accounts, was not simply interested in replacing the missing limbs of the mutilated figure. He was also responsible for settling the question of identification which had been debated since the finding of the work, with public opinion oscillating between Artemis and Aphrodite. By giving the Arles statue a mirror in the left hand and an apple in the right, Girardon followed the royal preference and performed what may be considered a hermeneutic “prosthesis” of long-lasting effect (pl. 23, fig. 1).

Because of the somewhat polemic nature of his restorations, Girardon seems to have disregarded whatever evidence for the original pose the frag-

1 The concepts expressed in this article were presented, in lecture form, at the Third Middle Atlantic Symposium in the History of Art 1973-1974 in April 1974, and the text of that lecture was released for publication in the second issue of Studies in Art History published by the Graduate School and the Department of Art of the University of Maryland, College Park, Md. The present article aims at developing the argument more rigorously and with the help of documentation which would have been out of place in a lecture. I have also profited greatly from discussing my theory with various colleagues and students, and I wish in particular to record here my indebtedness to Carlos A. Picón, Haverford ‘75, whose many helpful suggestions have been incorporated in my text.

For brevity’s sake, in discussing comparative material I shall refer the reader, not to the best, but to the most convenient source of illustrations: G. Lippold, Die griechische Plastik, in W. Otto, Handbuch der Archäologie, vol. 6 part 3:1 (Munich 1950), henceforth quoted as Lippold.

2 My main sources on the history of the discovery are E. Michon, “La Venus d’Arles et sa restauration par Girardon,” MonPiot 21 (1913) 13-45, and Ch. Picard, Manuel d’Archéologie Grecque, vol. 3 part 2 (Paris 1948) 462-88. Michon summarizes the various opinions and the discrepancy of the early accounts as to the number of fragments in which the Arles statue was found: some say three, others four, and others as many as five. The sculpture was transported from Arles to Paris in 1684, and from Paris to Versailles in 1685. The two works mentioned above are also the most informative about the vicissitudes of the cast in Arles, I shall henceforth refer to them as Michon and Picard respectively.

A list of replicas of the Arles type can be found in P. Montuoro, “Una replica dell’Afrodite di Arles, nel Museo Mussolini in Campidoglio,” BullCom 52-53 (1924-1925) 113-32 (see especially 118-20), and in D. Mustilli, Il Museo Mussolini (Rome 1939), 89 no. 11. Of the replicas, the statue once in the Cesi Collection and now in the Louvre has been restored twice with different heads, and there is some dispute on whether the one at present on the figure is truly pertinent.
mentary statue might have retained. This fact became apparent in 1911, when Jules Formigé made known to the scholarly world a cast of the statue taken at Arles prior to its removal to Paris and subsequently to Versailles. The cast itself had obviously been integrated with a set of arms and perhaps with attributes more appropriate to an Artemis. It had also been severely damaged by some garrison soldiers in 1796, and suffered further at a later unspecified period. It was subsequently repaired and covered with a thick layer of painted stucco, which could not be removed. Among the repairs, most noticeable are perhaps the breasts, which were given a peculiar hemispherical shape, and part of the feet and base, which may be responsible for the present backward lean of the cast.

But the value of Formigé’s discovery, which at the time caused considerable sensation, was to prove the extent of Girardon’s alterations on the Arlesian marble. The cast differs from the statue in Paris in several respects: the right shoulder is higher, the right leg more prominent, the head less inclined. But the most crucial modification was Girardon’s removal of two struts still visible on the cast: a large one over the right hip, just before the beginning of the drapery, a smaller one over the right shoulder, which Girardon utilized to carve the tip of the flowing head ribbon on that side. This decorative fillet was not an arbitrary addition, since the statue preserved the other end of the band on the left shoulder; scholarly sources, however, agree in accepting a different function for the original strut. In eliminating these supports, Girardon must also have removed a layer of surface from the entire naked torso, with the result that the Aphro-

dite in the Louvre appears now significantly more slender and less matronly than the cast.

The presence of the struts and the different position of the right shoulder have thrown doubts on the correctness of Girardon’s restoration of the general pose. In particular, a replica of the type, found in Rome in 1921, has shown that the right arm (here preserved to the wrist) was held away from the body and bent upward at the elbow, remaining at considerable distance from the head. This second replica, although the most complete after the Arles statue in the Louvre, lacks the left forearm at the point of emergence from the drapery, and the head; what remains of the neck suggests, however, that the head might have been more erect than in Girardon’s restoration. The treatment of the naked torso is sensitive and conveys a rather matronly image; the drapery, by contrast, appears dry and simplified, especially in the folds around the left forearm. The carving of the back is thoroughly perfunctory and suggests that the statue was meant for installment in a niche or against a backdrop.

This replica in Rome still retains a long strut from right biceps to wrist, obviously meant to ensure the safety of the raised arm; it shows, however, no strut on the right hip. The occurrence of this support on the Arles statue has been variously interpreted, and some scholars have deduced from it the presence of another figure, perhaps a small Eros playing alongside his mother. None of the other replicas, however, supports this reconstruction, and it is more probable that even the second strut was meant to increase the safety of the right

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3 For a photograph of the cast see Michon, fig. 3 on p. 34. Some early drawings of the Arles statue before its transfer to Paris also show such details; see e.g., the engraving by M. Ogier reproduced by P. Montuoro (supra n. 2, 123 fig. 3). The large strut over the right hip is quite visible in both cast and drawings; the smaller strut, over the shoulder, is not so clearly discernible, but is mentioned in contemporary descriptions, for which see both Michon and Montuoro.

The cast must have been originally repaired also in the area of the chipped nose and ear lobe, and it may have been integrated as an Artemis. We are told that J. Sautereau had utilized the smaller strut over the right shoulder to rest against it a spear which continued downward to join the larger strut over the hip (Picard, 470 n.1). The inclination of the head, which differs from statue to cast, remains problematic, since Picard points out that the cast too had been repaired after the damage suffered during “la Terreur” (Picard, 468 and n.3); on this point see also Michon, 18 n.1, and 21-22, on the backward lean of the cast. This scholar has also gathered several descriptions of the Arles statue before and after Girardon’s restorations, which bring out the difference in the appearance of the nude parts after the repairs.

4 Replica in Rome: Capitoline Inv. 2139; Mustilli (supra n.2), and Montuoro (ibid.) offer extensive comments on this statue and on the general type; most recently, the piece has been discussed by H. von Steuben in Hellig, Führer (1966) no. 1725. P. Montuoro describes the peculiar attachment surface for the left forearm and suggests that the separately inserted piece must have been broken and repaired in antiquity (116-17, fig. 2). I wonder whether the exceptional complexity of the attachment may have been required by the weight of the object held in the left hand, since the Athens replica, soon to be discussed, also shows a complicated system of attachment at that point.

None of the sources on the Capitoline statue suggest that its head might have been more erect than in the Arles replica (as restored?), but this impression is certainly conveyed by the long stump of the neck, and may have been partly conditioned by the setting of this particular copy, which obviously must have stood in a niche and could not be seen from all points, as indicated by its sketchily carved back.
arm, since parallels can be found among other statues with similar technical devices.  

The real contribution of the Roman find is to provide a replica unspoiled by modern restorations, and to show that the right arm could not have been held near the head to arrange a lock or place an object within the line of reflection of the hypothetical mirror restored by Girardon. Unfortunately, the other replicas of the type give no further information. The so-called Aphrodite Cesi also in the Louvre has been completed with a non-pertinent head; it must also be considered a somewhat different variant, since long locks appear over the back of the figure. A statue in the Palazzo Margherita in Rome is almost entirely modern, and only the draped legs can be considered ancient; similarly a replica in the Trèves Provincial Museum is limited to a fragment of drapery from the knees down. The best copy, though simply a headless and armless torso, was found in Athens in the area of the ancient theater (pl. 23, figs. 2-4). The draped parts are almost entirely missing, with the exception of some folds around the left arm and a portion of the mantle on the back extending from the right hip to the left elbow. This torso, meant to be inserted onto the draped lower part, had head and arms carved separately and held in position by metal dowels, of which only the cavities now remain, partly exposed. A large chip has removed most of the surface of the lower abdomen and similar damage in the area of the collarbone extends the scar to the top of the right shoulder; both breasts are chipped near the nipples, of which the right has completely flaked off.

Despite this damage and the loss of its other component parts, this piece of sculpture remains the most impressive of the replicas. Its workmanship is excellent and has been generally assigned to the late Hellenistic period. The anatomy is firm but opulent, with full breasts and realistic bulges of flesh, especially in the vicinity of the right armpit. The back is more superficially rendered, yet the pronounced hip-slung stance is reflected in the uneven depth of the spinal furrow, and the shoulder blades differ in accordance with the arm position.

It would be pointless to repeat here all previous arguments for the dating and identification of the original. Suffice it to say that most scholars agree in attributing the work to the youth of Praxiteles, and only one, to my knowledge, has lowered this dating to the end of the fourth century B.C. The basic reasons for this attribution may be summarized as follows: (1) The stance of the Arles type is similar to that of the Wine Pourer, and that satyr is usually considered an early creation of the Athenian master. (2) The Aphrodite is semidraped, and this rendering would have been a "regression" after the Knidia, which had been shown entirely revealed. The Arles type must therefore precede this daring innovation. (3) The head type is so close to the Knidia as to confirm the attribution to the same master.

These arguments can be countered, and others can be adduced in support of a classicizing date. To begin with the pose, already von Steuben has remarked that "gegenüber der balancierten Haltung des Satyrs, wirkt die der Aphrodite schwer und ungelöst." In particular, we lack the flow of mo-

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5 P. Montuoro, 122 n. 1, quotes a very good comparison: an Aphrodite torso from Miletos in Istanbul, G. Mendel, Catalogue des Sculptures, Musée Impérial Ottomans 1 (1912) n. 126, 332-33, with drawing. The possibility that the hip strut may have supported an Eros is mentioned by Picard, 474, n.2. Other authors had suggested that the right arm was lowered along the body, but this theory has been disproved by the Capitoline replica.

6 Athens, Nat.Mus. 227; BrBr 300; Picard 461 fig. 184 and 462 n.3 with previous bibliography. The left forearm was attached in position by means of a long metal tenon running horizontally from the prepared surface into the area of the elbow; this tenon was in turn secured in place by two more metal attachments, as shown by two holes carved on the outer surface of the arm, over the drapery, and intersecting the first hole perpendicularly from the side; a third hole below these two preserves only part of its circumference, and must have extended to the inserted piece which is now lost. Aphrodite Cesi: A. Mahler, "Une replique de l'Aphrodite d'Arles au Musée du Louvre," RA 40:1 (1902) 300-303, pl. 12; E. Michon, RA 41:1 (1903) 39-43.

Palazzo Margherita torso: EA 2080 (text, vol. 7, 1913, col.
tion from limb to limb: the left leg is so thoroughly hidden under the drapery as to remain unconnected, in rhythm, with the chiastic response of shoulders and arms. The outswinging hip hardly affects the course of the linea alba or the rendering of the abdominal muscles. Finally, far from having that slightly off-balance inclination which we associate with Praxitelean statues, the Arles Aphrodite seems vertically weighed down and anchored to the ground by her vast "skirt."

The second argument would be valid if it could be proved that no draped or semi-draped Aphrodite was ever carved after the Knidia. That this is not the case is clearly shown by a whole series of partially nude figures, from the Capua to the Melos Aphrodite, to mention only the most famous renderings. What is here significant, however, is the approach to partial nudity at a time when fully naked figures were created. As is well known, the Classical sculptors refrained from showing the female nude, and either adopted particular contextual situations to justify statues in various stages of disrobing, or reverted to transparent drapery which revealed more than it covered.

The Knidia broke with previous conventions, but the presence of a water jar and of a mantle still gave the composition the suggestion of a specific, explanatory situation. The anatomy of the famous statue betrayed the unfamiliarity of sculptors with the rendering of the female nude: despite lyrical exaggerations in ancient epigrams and other literary sources, the replicas of the Knidia show a rather unfeminine body, with narrow hips and firm musculature. Only the second century B.C., with its increased plasticity of forms and almost impressionistic treatment of surfaces, could succeed in reproducing the female nude in all its dimpled and voluptuous appearance. By contrast, the eclectic first century B.C. either returned to a classical simplicity of forms (such as the Aphrodite from Cyrene), or it even attempted to cast a naked female body in a style proper to a period when such rendering would have been unusual—witness the controversial Esquiline Venus, which has often been dated to the early fifth century B.C.

In a concomitant trend, semi-draped Aphrodites increasingly used their drapery as a foil to their more naturalistic naked torsos. Already the late fourth century Capua Aphrodite wore her mantle low enough to show the inception of the pubic triangle. The second century Venus from Melos stresses contrasts of surfaces and textures and rises with a fully feminine torso from the rough "stem" of her mantle. By the first century, drapery is used either to cover entirely (like the famous Venus Genetrix by Arkesilaos), or to create genre situations, as in the Callipygos in Naples. In brief, both trends seem to move increasingly from initial restraint to all-out naturalism and plasticity, reaching a peak of eroticism around the middle of the second century B.C. and from there moving either toward Classicizing renderings or to tasteless exaggerations.11

If this all too summary outline can be accepted,  

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8 It may even be argued that, before the Knidia, the naked torso of the Arles type might have been considered too daring a representation for a goddess. Pliny's anecdote (NH 36:20) about Praxiteles "peddling" a draped and an undraped Aphrodite to Kos and Knidos is probably fictitious, but may reflect the surprise the ancient world must have felt at the sight of the totally revealed Knidia. As for the statue bought by the citizens of Kos, the Plinian text may suggest that it was not partly draped, like the Arles type, but totally veiled.

9 According to C. Blinkenberg, Knidia (Copenhagen 1933), the specific pose of the statue, with right hand over the pubic area, was a dictat of a cult which had absorbed much of the Oriental tradition on the fertility role played by Astarte and related deities. Praxiteles' innovation, seen in this light, would be no more than a masterly response to the specifications of his commission. On the other hand, N. Himmelmann-Wildschütz ("Zur knidischen Aphrodite I," MarbWinckPr [1957] 11-16) has argued that totally naked images of Aphrodite existed before the Knidia, and that these used nudity as an attribute in religious context. However, all the instances quoted by the German scholar seem limited to vases painting and the minor arts, even though they may reflect actual small-scale idols. The full-scale marble Knidia must have been unusual, to create the sensation it seems to have provoked.

10 For this type of body see in particular the replicas of the Knidia in the Louvre and in the Term. This point is discussed by R. Carpenter, Greek Sculpture (Chicago 1960) 216-18.

11 I cannot overemphasize the complete arbitrariness of my approach. I fully realize that the sequence I have established makes sense purely because I have followed what may be termed a logical train of thought, but may find no correspondence in actual events. However, scholars disagree so widely in dating the various Aphrodite types, that I believe no objective basis for an absolute chronology exists and therefore my stylistic examination may be as valid as any other. According to my suggestion, the "Naked Trend" would be represented, after the Knidia, by the Capitoline Aphrodite (ca. 200), of which the Medici Aphrodite, with her younger appearance, more plastic facial features and more pronounced turn of the head, would represent the development around 180-160 B.C. The same facial rendering and full fleshness are found in the Crouching Aphrodite which is now no longer considered by Doidalsas of Bithynia and is therefore left floating in time (A. Linfert, AstrMitt 84 [1969] 158-64). I could visualize her compressed version of the Capitoline Aphrodite's pose as occurring around 150 B.C. The Cyrene Aphrodite would be the product of the Classicizing years around 100 B.C., while the Severizing Esquiline Venus must have been created some time during the first century B.C.
the Aphrodite of Arles could only fit at the end of the development. Her breasts, as revealed by the Athens replica, are too full and feminine to compare with the Knidia’s, and her hips are wider in proportion to the shoulders. She therefore displays the rather opulent anatomy which presumes the naturalistic renderings of the second century, even if slightly toned down by a classicizing approach. Her garment does not provide the textural contrast typical of the period of the Melos Venus, nor is it worn low enough to be suggestive and provocative, as in the late fourth century Capua Aphrodite. In addition, the statue seems to have been meant exclusively for a frontal view, as suggested not simply by the perfunctory treatment of the back (which could be imputed to the specific copyists who made the replicas) but also by the very arrangement of the mantle, which rides high enough to cover the buttocks.

The mantle itself provides, perhaps, the strongest clue for revising the statue’s chronology. It is fairly linear and static, not only in the Paris replica which was “scarified” by Girardon, but also in the Capitoline and the other copies. We note, in particular, the lack of those tension folds along the right leg and thigh, which one would expect, given the strong pull of the garment toward the proper left. On the contrary, the material here clings to the leg and outlines it with almost vertical folds, as if the garment were a peplos hanging from the waist and not a himation wrapped diagonally around the lower part of the body. It is interesting, in this respect, to contrast the Aphrodite’s rendering with that of classical statues wearing a comparable mantle: the Athena from Velletri, the Hera Borghese, or even the early fourth century Aphrodite from Epidauros, significant because it, too, may reproduce an armed Venus, as postulated for the Arles type. In all these examples, the outer contour of the leg is indented by a series of catenaries caused by the swing of the mantle toward the opposite side. The Arles type shows an unbroken contour, interrupted only by a stylized pattern to indicate the bend of the knee, which is appropriate for transparent, but not for heavy, drapery, and is much more typical of the fifth than of the fourth century B.C.

Comparison with the above-mentioned statues is also helpful to illuminate the peculiar way in which the Arles type wears her mantle. The garment goes from her left hip, across the front, to her right side; it then swings over the buttocks and around the left elbow, is wrapped over the left forearm and falls perpendicularly toward the ground. But what holds it in position over the left hip? At first glance it looks as if it were the left elbow, because some material appears caught in a bunch between hip and arm on that side. But that part of the mantle cannot belong to the heavy roll encircling the thighs because of the noticeable distance between the two, and the obvious downward turn of the folds within the thick roll. If the two are separate, and the “bunch” belongs with the swag over the left arm, then nothing, not even the position of the leg, could hold the heavy mass of cloth in place, and the arrangement is illogical and unnatural, even if aesthetically pleasing. Note, for instance, how much more plausibly the Hera Borghese holds her himation in basically the same arrangement; or how the Themis of Rhamnous supports most of the roll’s weight with her arm, though part of the garment rises in a peak to the level of her belt. It could be argued that this implausible rendering is due to a misunderstanding

12 Indeed, such textural contrasts can be found even earlier; cf. the Classical Aphrodite recently found in the Athenian Agora, which probably dates from the end of the fifth century B.C.: E.B. Harrison, “New Sculpture from the Athenian Agora, 1959,” *Hesperia* 29 (1960) 369-92; the Aphrodite in question is discussed on pp. 373-76, together with many parallels, and illustrated on pl. 82.


14 Cf. the profile view illustrated by P. Montuoro (supra n.2) pl. 2. The smooth area over the thigh and the angle pattern at the knee recall the standing figure of the Hesegos stele, Lippold, pl. 72:2. This profile view also underlines the peculiar dipping of the drapery over and in between the feet of the Aphrodite: the doughy quality of the garment at that point is in direct contrast with the transparency suggested by the folds over the thigh, and seems an inconsistency out of keeping with the textural interests and coherence of the fourth century B.C.

15 It is unclear whether the mantle tip is wrapped around the left arm or simply over it; the Paris replica would suggest the first alternative.

16 Hera Borghese: see supra n.13; cf. also the Agora Aphrodite already mentioned in n.12.


Other famous types seem to have an impossible arrangement of the mantle, but the original composition usually provided explanation for the draping; for instance, the Capua Aphrodite (Lippold, pl. 101:3) held her mantle swag through the raising of her left foot and the edge of the shield once resting against her knee; the Nike of Samothrace (Lippold, pl. 126:4) had her garment kept in position by the wind, and the Melos Aphrodite (Lippold, pl. 130:3) not only raised her left leg, but held the mantle in place with her right hand.
of the Roman copyist, but too much agreement exists among the replicas of the Arles type, from the simplified version in the Capitoline, which leaves no doubt as to the wrapping of the mantle, to the excellent torso in Athens. Here, of course, the lower part of the figure is missing, and no visual connection is possible between the "bunch" and the roll; yet direct observation shows that the "bunch" forms the direct continuation of the material over and around the arm, and therefore cannot be part of the waist roll, which near the hip takes a distinct downward course.

Another point of interest, not made clear by the replicas, is whether the cascade of folds below the left elbow is entirely part of the mantle tip coming from behind, or whether some of it belongs with the heavy roll and forms therefore the other end of the himation. This second explanation is suggested by the uninterrupted hem of the "skirt" which appears in all replicas where this detail is still preserved. In this case, only the upper part of the zigzag pattern would be created by the cloth over the arm which would overlie, as a separate layer, the much greater and fuller lower part. If this interpretation is correct, it is all the more surprising that the garment could remain in position over the left hip, without being pulled down by the weight of its folds. In sculptural terms, however, the heavy mass of pleats along the outer contour of the figure functions, visually and technically, as a support, strengthening the statue's ankles and contributing to the impression that the Aphrodite's heavy garment anchors her to her base.

This last feature, with its broadening effect on the composition, may help in determining a possible date for the type. Let us consider, for comparison, the Melos Poseidon, an unquestionable original of the last quarter of the second century B.C. This statue, as recently analyzed by J. Schäfer,\(^\text{17}\) shares many technical features with the Aphrodite replica in Athens. Here, too, the naked torso was carved separately for insertion into a draped lower part, and the back of the statue shows tool marks and perfunctory carving. Stylistically, the Poseidon's basically classical pose is frontal, and the façade-like composition stretches from the shaft of the trident at our left to the cascade of folds and the protruding elbow on the opposite side, as if the sculptor had intentionally given the widest possible spread to his creation. The Arles Aphrodite, with her wide garment and frontal appearance, creates the same façade-like effect, an impression that not even the bent right knee manages to dispel. On the contrary, her free leg protrudes only slightly, while her lower left leg is all but impossible to visualize under the folds. This approach seems fully in keeping with first century B.C. style, which concentrated on one-sided compositions, contours and silhouettes, more than on three-dimensionality and volume.\(^\text{18}\)

One final point remains to be countered: the close similarity of the Aphrodite of Arles' head to the Knidia. Unfortunately, only the copy in Paris retains this important feature, and it is dangerous to discuss on such limited evidence. It has also been suggested that considerable difference exists between the marble head and the plaster one of the original cast.\(^\text{19}\) Finally, though remote, the possibility remains that the head does not belong to the Arles statue, since no true join exists between the fragments. I shall, however, proceed on the assumption that the head is pertinent.

Its similarity to the Knidia cannot be denied. But Praxiteles' masterpiece had such impact that no female statue created afterwards could be completely exempted from its influence. Even the Melos Aphrodite, who appears somewhat different in frontal view, echoes the Knidia's classical profile when seen from the side. Classicizing heads in particular retain the hair style, and it can even now be disputed whether specific pieces should be considered variants or true replicas of the Knidia itself.\(^\text{20}\) The Arles head type alone, therefore, is no


\(^{18}\) It is interesting to compare the Arles type with a photograph of the Knidia in the Vatican at the time when the Museum authorities had felt it necessary to cover her nudity with a tinted garment gathered around the legs: (BMCCollege slide collection, Pancoast 1927-1928) the bent leg is seen to protrude considerably more through this artificial garment than the leg of the Arles type does in the original composition; yet the Arles type is supposedly earlier, therefore less three-dimensional than the Knidia. Girardon, in restoring the Arles marble, is supposed to have removed some of the original surface from the legs, thus reducing the projection of the right knee; however this criticism of "flatness" applies also to the un-retouched Capitoline copy where even the left knee is visually suggested under the drapery.

\(^{19}\) Picard, 476: he suggests, however, that this impression may be influenced by the angle of vision.

\(^{20}\) On this point, cf. R. Carpenter (supra n.10) 172-73. D. Haynes has recently shown that the head British Museum 1314 belongs to a veiled figure, yet that same head had been considered a variant of the Knidia or even a fragment of the original Knidia itself: AA 1972, 731-37.
crucial argument against a late Hellenistic date.

More interesting is the fact that the theater at Arles has yielded a second female head which has also been judged Praxitelean and dated even earlier in the career of the master. A recent article by F. Croissant, to which I must refer for all details, denies the Praxitelean connection and attempts a higher chronology, suggesting that the head, which preserves a peculiar bust line, should be attributed to the so-called Aphrodite Grimani type, after the well-known statue in Berlin.21

It is impossible to enter here into a detailed discussion of the various points raised by the French scholar. Suffice it to note that the Arles bust (as I shall call it to distinguish it from the Aphrodite of Arles type) is known in only three replicas: the one from the Arles theater, a second in a private collection, of undisclosed provenience, and a third one found in Athens in 1889, in the area of the Tower of the Winds. This last had been disfigured by a cross carved in the center of the face, and was found out of context (pl. 23, figs. 5-6). The rather rare type can be recognized because of its distinctive hair style: its hair strands are pulled back from the temples and gathered over the nape in a chignon formed by three large knots.22 Such a coiffure, as Croissant notes, is very unusual in the fourth century and finds no comparable renderings until the Venus of Melos: yet he suggests a date at the turn from the fifth to the fourth century B.C. for the prototype of the Arles bust.

I should like to stress the coincidence of two relatively rare types—the Arles Aphrodite and the Arles bust—being found not only in the same towns, Arles and Athens, but even within the same general context. Both the Arles finds come from the Augustan theater; the Athenian torso was found in the theater of Dionysos, while the replica of the Arles bust, from the vicinity of the Tower of the Winds, could easily have come from the Street of Tripods and thus be indirectly connected with the theater itself.

The Roman date of the Arles theater is undisputed: it was a gift of Augustus to the city of Arlate, a Celtic town under Greek-Massiliote tutelage which had been colonized by Caesar in 46 B.C. and again founded by Augustus in 40 B.C. as Colonia Julia Paterna Arletae Sextanorum. According to a recent study,23 the Celtic town had absorbed Greek influence only in architectural forms, pottery and coinage, but not in sculpture which had remained throughout in local Celtic style. With the arrival of the Romans, classical statuary was brought in, as attested especially by the finds from the theater. The statues were often paired in matching pieces: two sileni functioning as fountains, two dancing maenads, all in an eclectic Hellenistic style. There was also a portrait of the Emperor Augustus, usually dated around 20 B.C., and, as mentioned above, the Arles Aphrodite and the Arles bust. This latter may not be from a second figure of Venus, as has been suggested; the “slipped strap” arrangement of her garment (as inferred from the neckline) may suggest perhaps an Artemis comparable to that from Gabii.24 This rich sculptural decoration, evoking themes and concepts appropriate to the Roman theater, is the direct complement of the richly articulated, permanent Roman stage. But it is not improbable that Augustus, in embellishing his theater, had looked at some monuments in Athens for inspiration. When were these latter set up, however?

I find it unlikely that an Aphrodite statue would be set up within the Theater of Dionysos in classical times. References in fourth century literature may suggest an association of the Goddess with Dionysos because of the subject matter of the plays;25 this is, however, different from the actual erection of statues of divinities within the area. When Lykourgos built the first permanent stage for the theater, he had the building embellished with statues, but those represented the three great playwrights whose works he had codified in canonical transcriptions. On the other hand, a monument to Venus would have been well in keeping
général des bas-reliefs, statues et bustes de la Gaule romaine,
(Paris 1907-1966) nos. 2526, 2531, 2533, 2534, 2529; the Aphrodite of Arles and the “Arles bust” which formed her counterpart are nos. 2516 and 2530; the statue of Augustus is nos. 1694, 7809. More references can be found in Kleiner (supra n.23).

22 Croissant, 69: “plutôt que d’un chignon, il s’agit a vrai dire d’un rouleau horizontal qui rassemble les trois masses de cheveux autour du ruban, et d’on s’échappe, par en-dessous, l’extrémité des courtes mèches bouclées retombant sur la nuque.”
24 Artemis of Gabii: Lippold, pl. 83-34. The other sculptures from the Arles theater are illustrated in E. Espérandieu, Recueil (in Plato’s Symposium (in particular 177c), and even earlier, fifth century allusions exist for the association of the two gods (c.g. Oedipus Coloneus 693).
with the religious practices of the first century B.C.,
when Roman taste and patronage were beginning
to spread her cult in connection with the theater.
In particular, we know that both Sulla and Pompey
were devotees of the goddess, and that the latter
erected a temple to her which dominated the sum-
ma cavea of his theater in Rome.26

I should like to suggest that the Arles Aphrodite
type (and also her "counterpart" represented by the
Arles bust) was created in the first century B.C.
in Athens, perhaps specifically to be set up in
the theater. My suggestion is based primarily on a
stylistic examination of the figure: her degree of
partial nudity, her frontal façade-like composition,
hers mature fleshy anatomy, her irrationally-draped

mantle, her strong facial resemblance to the Knidia,
all speak in favor of such a date. Her style would
be in keeping with sculptural tendencies current in
Athens at that time, the period of the Neo-Attic
school and of classicizing masters like Eubuleus
and Apollonios. It may even be claimed that the
excellent torso in Athens is the prototype from
which all replicas originated; its date in the late
Hellenistic period has never been disputed on
technical grounds. It may never be possible to re-
construct exactly the circumstances in which the
statue was made and set up, but it is hoped that
my suggestion may prompt a reconsideration of
the problem.27

26 On the Lykourgan building program see F. Mitchell,
"Lykourgan Athens: 338-322," Lectures in Memory of Louise
Taft Semple—Second Series (1970) 1-52; see especially 41 and
47: the statues erected by Lykourgos to embellish the theater
are mentioned by Plutarch, Moralia 841F.

On the connection of Aphrodite and the theater in Roman
times, and in particular on the theater as a place of cult, see
J.A. Hanson, Roman Theaters-Temples (Princeton 1959) es-
pecially 43-55. See also Ch. Picard, "Sur le rôle religieux des

27 Many scholars have claimed that replicas and variations of
the Aphrodite of Arles type already existed in the mid-Hellenis-
tic period; if this were the case, obviously the prototype would
have to date from an earlier, Classical, phase. None of the
statues mentioned, however, seems to me a true replica of the
Arles type. Some of them are undisputed Roman works, and
such evidence does not affect my argument. Others are un-
questionably Hellenistic, but I would question their derivation
from the Arles type. I shall quote only the most relevant (other
references can be found in P. Montuoro, 131 n.1).
The Priene statuette (Th. Wiegand and H. Schrader, Priene
[Berlin 1904] fig. 469) holds her mantle in a different, and
rational, way, swinging over the left forearm. Another statuette
(ibid. fig. 467) holds the garment in position with the left
elbow and is obviously an Anadyomene type.

Peter C. Bol has recently published again the marble sculp-
tures from the Antikythera wreck, among which one resembles
the Arles type (Die Skulpturen des Schiffsfundes von Antiky-
thera, AthMitBeihfe 2 [1972] no. 45, 45-47, pl. 23:4-5). Since
the wreck took place shortly before the middle of the
first century B.C., such an attribution, if confirmed, would
strongly weaken my argument. However, Bol admits that the
Antikythera statue is one of the variants farthest from the
prototype: the arm position has been altered, the proportions
have been elongated and the hip swing has increased: p. 47:
"im ganzen entfernt sie sich aber doch noch am weitesten von
dem Vorbild, so dass ohne die Statuetten (from Priene) as
Bindeglied der Weg zu ihm zurück kaum mehr zu finden
wäre.

Finally, one more statuette, in Delos, seems fairly close to
the type, but no date is given for the find, and it could well belong
to the period when the island fell under Athenian influence,
after 166 B.C. The piece is most recently discussed by J. Mar-
cadé, Au Musée de Delos (Paris 1969) 230, no. A 5438, pl. 43;
but since it was one of the early finds, little information is
available as to its original context. A much freer "interpretation"
is instead considered the small headless statue from the stoa of
the Poseidonias of Berytos, A 4157, pl. 43. Note the rendering
of the mantle over the legs, and the raised hem, which seems
influenced by the iconography of male draped figures. Many
other statuettes of Aphrodite in Delos use the mantle roll around
the hips in conjunction with a pillar.

Since semi-draped figures existed from the late fourth century,
I believe that the examples listed above are insufficient evidence
to retain the traditional fourth century dating of the Arles type,
and must be considered variants of a different prototype.