



*Exc cere*



# A STATUETTE OF PRIAPUS: MEN – AND WOMEN – IN THE CABINET OF ANTIQUITIES AND THE KUNSTKAMMER

## Phallic Antiquity

The copper engraving shows a grotesque figure (fig. 1): an upright muscular man with a lascivious grin and the comb and wattles of a rooster. His most prominent feature, though, is an abnormally large, erect member, which he ostentatiously displays by gathering his gown to his waist. His left arm is bent, his right slightly outstretched. In his left hand he holds a pyramid-shaped bell, and in his right a pouch from which two small phalli dangle. Two additional phalli are attached to the underside of his member by a ring. The engraving comes from Lorenz Beger's *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, a splendid, richly illustrated presentation of the antiquities collection of Friedrich III/I to a learned European audience around 1700.<sup>1</sup> A comparable publication does not exist for the Berlin *Kunstammer*.

The focus of antiquities collections followed the changing cycles in the study of antiquity. The relationship between ancient reference cultures and respective modern reception cultures can (and could) be reconstructed on the basis of the surviving material artefacts and intangible goods. For example, in its short promotional profile of the collections in the Berlin Palace, the *Lexicon von Berlin* from 1806 – subtitled “A Handbook for Locals and Foreigners” – mentions only “an important collection of 333 Etruscan vessels” that had been acquired as the “Hennin Collection” in Paris the year before.<sup>2</sup> In Prussia, these authentic Greek vases contributed to the Etruscan craze around 1800 that found expression in the establishment of the Etruscan Cabinet in Potsdam Palace.<sup>3</sup> Ultimately, the enthusiasm for all things Etruscan as a complement to Greek culture was the reason the vases were looted by Napoleon's troops and disappeared to Paris in 1806.<sup>4</sup>

By contrast, the *Priapi simulacrum*, or effigy of Priapus,<sup>5</sup> belonged to a body of smaller ancient objects, statuettes, and apparatuses that together with coins, medals, cut stones, urns, large statues, and busts made up a large part of the Baroque antiquities collection that was separated from the *Kunstammer* under Beger's direction [●1696 vs. 1708].<sup>6</sup> The bronze statuette of the ithyphallic<sup>7</sup> fertility and garden god was a tintinnabulum, or wind chime, which the Romans usually hung at the entrances to houses. Countless examples have survived, their numbers multiplied by those discovered in Pompeii and Herculaneum from the mid-eighteenth century on. The tinkling *ithyphalli* were considered fertility symbols, and as so-called *fascina*, they offered apotropaic protection from the evil eye.<sup>8</sup>

In the *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, the transmission of antiquarian knowledge is structured by fictitious dialogues between the studious Archaeophilus on the one hand and Dulodorus as Beger's alter ego on the other. Their discussions reveal a great fascination with phallic objects. For example, the dialogue about ancient lamps begins with a small ithyphallic male figure in a hood, although the collection contained far more impressive pieces. The lamp had entered the holdings from Xan-

◀ 1 | *Priapi simulacrum*, illustration from Lorenz Beger, *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, 1701.

- 1 Heres 1977 contains an excellent survey of the history of the Berlin Antiquities Collection before the founding of the Altes Museum in 1830. On Beger and his thesaurus, see the essays in Wrede/Kunze 2006, pp. 83–152.
- 2 Gädicke 1806, p. 339.
- 3 See Giersberg 1998, p. 94.
- 4 On the context, see Savoy 2011, esp. pp. 117–48, as well as the CD-ROM, pp. 391–429.
- 5 See Beger 1696/1701, vol. 3, pp. 266–8.
- 6 For a selection of the small bronze objects that have survived from this period of the collection, see Berlin und die Antike 1979, cat. vol., pp. 48–51, cat. nos. 43–50 (Ulrich Gehrig); Hildebrand/Theuerkauff 1981, pp. 130–6, cat. nos. 51–7 (Ulrich Gehrig).
- 7 Ithyphallic: having an erect penis.
- 8 See e.g. Kuhnert 1909; Johns 1982, esp. pp. 61–76.



2 | Phalli, illustration from Lorenz Beger, *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*, 1701.

ten or Kleve on the Lower Rhine during the age of the Great Elector.<sup>9</sup> The thesaurus used additional tintinnabula and statuettes (fig. 2) to convey knowledge about the cult of Priapus, which was gleaned from ancient authors and linked textual traditions to the material tradition of the collection's objects. The thesaurus also included images engraved on coins, such as a specimen from Naxos, and above all the half-metre marble statue *Priapus deus generationis* (fig. 3).<sup>10</sup>

Travellers shared this fascination. In 1687, the Dutch philologist Jakob Tollius visited the *cimeliotheca* (treasure chamber) in the Apothecary Wing of the Berlin Palace [●1685/1688]. Tollius had served as a professor at Duisburg University, which had been founded by the Great Elector and was opened in a ceremony attended by John Maurice of Nassau. Of the “very beautiful ancient images” he viewed in the palace, he singles out a herm of Priapus, the guardian of gardens, its member “amputated”, holding “three or four small phalli in a basket under his arm” (as well as a bundle of additional phalli thrown over his left shoulder). Tollius carefully recorded the Greek inscription on the herm’s base: *TΩ ΤΗΣ ΓΕΝΕΣΕΩΣ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΙ* (loosely: “To the Guardian of Creation”).<sup>11</sup> For Beger, the sculpture was so important that he chose to include an additional engraving of its rear side in his thesaurus. Based on the inscription, he calls Priapus the *deus creationis* – the god of creative or procreative powers.

In 1706, the Austrian traveller Count Rindsmaul and his companions viewed the statue in the Cabinet of Medals and Antiquities in the Berlin Palace, which had recently been re-

designed by Andreas Schlüter. The first room in the collection (987), devoted to *funeralia*, contained urns and other objects “used for funerals in ancient times”; the second (986), focusing on *theologica*, showed sacred images and objects; and the third (985), dedicated to *historica*, contained a coin and medal collection, as well as a series of portrait busts [●1696 vs. 1708].<sup>12</sup> The Austrians viewed this collection in the morning and did not move on to the *Kunstkammer* until the afternoon; the latter was connected to the Cabinet of Antiquities by a corridor between the stairway and the open space of the Knights’ Hall. In its second room (“consisting of religious things”) – probably on a tour given by Johann Carl Schott, Beger’s nephew and successor – they saw a series of “idols”. The first object Rindsmaul mentions is the “*Priapus deus generationis* with his *schene Braut*”.<sup>13</sup> Literally, *schene Braut* means “beautiful bride”, but here the exact connotation, probably vulgar, is not entirely clear.

Beger successfully acquired the herm of Priapus and other antiquities from the estate of Giovanni Pietro Bellori, a Roman art scholar. They arrived in Berlin in 1698. In the 1720s, Friedrich Wilhelm I donated the sculptures from this collection to Saxony, which explains why a reproduction

9 See Beger 1696/1701, vol. 3, pp. 435–6 (*Lucerna aenea virum penulatum referens*); Bothe 1979, pp. 293–8; Berlin und die Antike 1979, cat. vol., pp. 46–7 with cat. no. 39 (Rolf Bothe).

10 See Beger 1696/1701, vol. 3, pp. 427–9 (*Phalli*); 264–5 (*Priapus saltans*); vol. 1, pp. 432–4 (*Naxus* [Baccho sacra]); vol. 3, pp. 261–4 (*Priapus deus generationis*).

11 Tollius 1700, p. 45.



of the illustration from the thesaurus, now titled *Un Priape*, appeared in *Recueil des marbres antiques qui se trouvent dans la Galerie du Roy de Pologne à Dresden*, a sumptuous volume of plates published in 1733 by the antiquities collection of Augustus the Strong (fig. 3).<sup>14</sup> The memory of the herm remained alive in Berlin. For example, in a footnote to a text published in 1786, Friedrich Nicolai refers to a description of the Dresden antiquities, to which he adds a few of the unnamed objects (including the Priapus) that had been donated by Prussia decades earlier.<sup>15</sup> Later archaeological research showed that the sculpture was an Italian forgery of an antiquity, made in the second half of the sixteenth century. Today, the Priapus is clearly designated as such in the Dresden sculpture collection.<sup>16</sup> Stylistic criticism aside, its inauthenticity can hardly have come as a surprise, as the inscription alone was suspiciously attuned to the humanist tastes of the early modern age. The piece impressively confirms the fascination with phallic antiquity: people only forge things for which there is a demand [◆ Availability].

### Female Voices?

The marble sculptures given to Dresden were particularly well suited for princely self-promotion through the medium of antiquities – both within and beyond the narrower confines of a collection. In 1742, Friedrich II made up for their loss by purchasing the sculptures of the Polignac Collection, but these were used primarily as palace and garden decorations in Charlottenburg and Potsdam and did not make their way back to the cosmos of the Berlin collections on any significant scale until the founding of the (Altes) Museum.

Nevertheless, the smaller pieces acquired from Rome, which inspired the Baroque antiquarian interests of Lorenz Beger and others, remained in Berlin. Among them was the bronze tintinnabulum *Priapi simulacrum*, which became the focus of attention among the phallic representations. In 1741, for example, during a visit to the *Kunstammer*, Johann Andreas Silbermann, after being handed off from one guide to the next [● Around 1740], discovered in the second room of the Cabinet of Antiquities

an idol called the Lappenkönig [in the right-hand margin: “probably Priapus”]. It is cast from lead and around 1½ feet tall with an almost normal sized member. The director told me that when the Russian emperor Tsar Peter viewed the Cabinet of Antiquities and arrived at this idol, he genuflected three times and kissed its member with the greatest devotion in the presence of his wife Elisabeth.<sup>17</sup>



3 | *Un Priape* (with a portrait of the emperor Probus and his wife, also from Berlin), illustration from Raymond Leplat, *Recueil des marbres antiques qui se trouvent dans la Galerie du Roy de Pologne à Dresden*, 1733.

12 See the fragmentary description by Johann Carl Schott, probably begun in 1703–05, in Heres 1987, pp. 13–27; quotation in the manuscript fol. 4r.

13 Hagelstange 1905, p. 205.

14 Leplat 1733, plate 154.

15 See Nicolai 1786a, p. 801, n. 2 (with reference to pages in the *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus*).



The proximity of the different sections of the collection, which was practical for visitors, is reflected in Silbermann's initial lapse in calling the room the "Cabinet of Art" (Kunstammer). His correction to "Cabinet of Antiquities" is in line with the actual formal division of the institution.

Whether scholars like Beger and Tollius or princely, aristocratic, or middle-class travellers like Peter the Great, Count Rindsmaul, and Silbermann, all of the visitors who marvelled at the *Priapus deus creationis* (or *Lappenkönig*<sup>18</sup>) with its rooster features and ithyphallic paraphernalia – and who were thus treated to the "spurcissimam Ethnicorum stultitiam" (the heathen's dirtiest folly)<sup>19</sup> – were men. While in the *Thesaurus Brandenburgicus* this male fascination with phallic antiquity was still cloaked in scholarly Latin terms, interesting facts about Priapus were published for an educated German-speaking elite in reference works such as Benjamin Hederich's *Gründliches Lexicon Mythologicum*. Finally, tribute was paid to the deity in English in Richard Payne Knight's *Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus* (1786).<sup>20</sup>

At the same time, the reference to the wife of Peter the Great, whose actual name was Catherine I Alexeyevna (fig. 4), marks the first time a female visitor is identified by name in the male-dominated sources.<sup>21</sup> The anecdote Silbermann heard from his guide seems to have been part of the standard repertoire of stories told on such tours. It is also found, in more pointed form, in the memoirs of Wilhelmine of Bayreuth, who dates the couple's visit to 1718:

The next day everything worth seeing at Berlin was shewn to him [Czar Peter]; and among the rest, the cabinet of medals and antique statues. There was among the latter, as I have been told, one that represented a heathen divinity in a very indecent attitude: it was with the ancient Romans an ornament of their nuptial chambers. It was considered as a very great rarity, and passed for one of the finest that was ever found. The czar admired it much, and ordered the czarina to kiss it. She wished to excuse herself; but he grew angry, and said to her, in broken German, *kopf ab*; which signifies: "I shall have your head cut off, if you do not obey." The czarina was so alarmed at this, that she submitted to whatever he required.<sup>22</sup>

Peter the Great requested this and other statues as gifts, along with the Amber Room, which became the subject of numerous legends in the twentieth century. Priapus, at least, must have returned to Berlin. Aside from the question of whether the anecdotes told by Silbermann and the margravine of Bayreuth in her memoirs refer to the same object, the margravine certainly did not witness the scene as a nine-year-old girl, but must have based her account on court gossip that had solidified into a narrative. In her characterization of the "barbaric court" of the travelling tsar, she stylized the story to satisfy the tastes of the francophone Enlightenment.<sup>23</sup>

Thus far, Wilhelmine is the only *female* voice to have been discovered in the seventeenth and eighteenth-century sources on the Berlin Kunstammer. Nevertheless, women played diverse roles in the history of the collection. They created many of its objects, such as the much-admired selection of paper cuttings (though Friedrich Nicolai did not identify the artist, the Dutch woman Johanna Koerten, until 1786).<sup>24</sup> They originally owned many of the items that assumed canonical status, including the "exotically" mundane "small Chinese women's shoes" and the princely "harp-shaped piano that the duchess of Orleans [Liselotte of the Palatinate, sister-in-law of Louis XIV] presented as a gift to the deceased queen of the House of Hanover [Sophie Charlotte, wife of Friedrich I]".<sup>25</sup>

16 See the SKD online collection at <https://skd-online-collection.skd.museum/Details/In dex/371736> (accessed 31 August 2021). For an overview of Renaissance and Baroque forgeries of antiquities, see e.g. Paul 1981, pp. 13–110.

17 Silbermann 1741, p. 43.

18 At least in the Rhenish dialect, the word *Lappenkönig* – literally "king of rags" – referred to a peddler of cloth (Rheinisches Wörterbuch, vol. 5 [1941], col. 125); Silbermann's reference, however, is probably to the figure's wattles, or *Kehllappen*. Beger also discusses these in detail.

19 Beger 1696/1701, vol. 3, p. 266.

20 See Hederich 1741, cols. 1665–8; esp. Knight 1786.

21 Or, originally, Marta Samuilovna Skavronskaya. When referring to "Elizabeth", Silbermann (or his informant) perhaps had in mind the daughter of Peter and Catherine, who was at the centre of the government crisis in Russia around 1740 and staged a coup d'état in late 1741 to make herself empress. Incidentally, the statuette of Priapus was not made of lead.

22 Wilhelmine of Bayreuth [Wilhelmina of Bareith] 1828, p. 35.

23 For the quote, *ibid.*, p. 45; see Kloosterhuis 2011, pp. 107–8.

24 Nicolai 1786a, p. 799; see Dolezel 2019, pp. 88–90.



Finally, they belonged to the circle of donors, which included Charlotte of Liegnitz-Brieg-Wohlau, whose marriage to the duke of Holstein-Sonderburg-Wiesenburg was slightly scandalous and ended in divorce. Charlotte was distantly related by marriage to the Great Elector, and in 1684 gave him a precious box for his birthday.<sup>26</sup>

There is nothing to suggest that *female* visitors were denied access to the collections.<sup>27</sup> Such visits were a natural part of courtly practices for persons attached to the princely family, especially for female nobility such as Queen Louise, who on a Sunday in May 1805 viewed a model of the Swiss Alps in the company of her husband [● Around 1800].<sup>28</sup> Accounts of other collections by female writers have survived and include the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who, after visiting the Vienna collection in 1716, wrote that its curators seemed to have been “more diligent in amassing a great quantity of things than in the choice of them”. Although she did not wish to “trouble” the anonymous male recipient of her letter with a “catalogue of the rest of the lumber”, she highlights, among the automatons, one she “thought worth observing ... a crawl-fish, with all the motions so natural, it was hard to distinguish it from the life” [■ Crab Automaton].<sup>29</sup> By contrast, in an entry in her travel diary describing her 1755 visit to the legendary Museum Kircherianum in Rome, Wilhelmine of Bayreuth focuses exclusively on the antiquities, which was typical for Grand Tour travellers.<sup>30</sup> As regards Berlin, the sources remain mute on the aristocratic and middle-class women who visited the collection – surely a minority among the mainly middle-class male visitors.



4 | Grigory Semyonovich Musikiysky, *Catherine I of Russia*, 1724, The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.

## Visiting Practice and Gender Policy

In terms of the politics of the human body, crude jokes such as the forced kissing of the bronze Priapus, whether witnessed or performed, probably seemed slightly out of date in a European courtly context at this time. However, they might still have been welcome at the court of the Soldier King, if mostly in homosocial male circles. And in the gardens of Peterhof Palace, the residence of the Russian tsar, prank fountains continued to squirt water at passers-by. Even Catherine was used to such things. At the execution of one of her lovers, Peter the Great “led the empress around the gallows as if on a walk”, as Stanisław II August Poniatowski, the last king of Poland, claimed to remember in a passage in his memoirs (once again a male source).<sup>31</sup>

But the kiss was also the radical culmination of the polysensory perceptual scenarios surrounding collection objects at the time.<sup>32</sup> The cursory, summary viewing of entire groups of objects such as coins, turned ivory, and shells – as well as the act of visually grasping individual pieces through a focused gaze – were among the perceptual practices suggested by the properties of the objects themselves or by prompts from the guides. Some objects and object presentations offered olfactory “affordances” – cues to visitors to engage through their sense of smell. One of them was a Far Eastern bedframe, whose “wood ... gave off an exquisite smell, though this had faded through the ages.”<sup>33</sup> The appealing acoustic features of the Pomeranian Art Cabinet [◆ Cases, Boxes], by

- 25 Tschirnhaus 1727, pp. 286 and 281.  
 26 See Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 105v.  
 27 Women were also allowed to visit the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, and the Fridericianum Museum in Kassel, but not, for example, the Kunstkammer in Bern. See Zaunstöck 2020, pp. 34–5, 44, with reference to additional literature.  
 28 See Dolezel 2019, p. 166.  
 29 Wortley, n.d., pp 78–9.  
 30 See Wilhelmine of Bayreuth 2002, pp. 81–2.  
 31 Stanisław II. August von Polen, n.d., vol. 1, p. 225.  
 32 See, e.g., Classen (Constance) 2007.  
 33 Anonymus B, fol. 1r.  
 34 Ibid., fol. 10r.



contrast, included not only an organ that “play[ed] by itself when wound up”,<sup>34</sup> but also a “gilt ball” that “emitted a beautiful bright sound” when picked up and shaken [■ Shattered Die].<sup>35</sup> Here, the manipulation of the object activated a sound, but in other cases, such as the fox with two tails, the tactile interaction invited by the object prompted visitors to confirm its authenticity [◆ Availability]. Such practices were not confined to the collection rooms. As Count Rindsmaul writes, during an inspection of other princely chambers in the palace the “castellan” asked him and his companions “to pick up the guéridons to see how heavy they are”. Discovering a damaged spot, the count disparagingly notes that the silver candlestick tables were made of silver-plated stone, although they looked solid.<sup>36</sup>

In the anecdotal kissing scene with the ancient Priapus, an erotic affordance hinted at tactile and gender-specific interactions with collection objects. We only learn of Catherine’s presence because male court society makes the tsarina the butt of an obscene joke. Thus, specific viewing practices mentioned in male sources suggest the presence of female *Kunstzimmer* visitors. These practices are associated with a group of more or less obscene objects which, in contrast to the prototypical *Gabinetto Segreto* of erotic antiquities in Naples, were dispersed throughout the collection and were connected not by organizational criteria such as inventories or spatial presentations, but by a specific form of interaction.<sup>37</sup>

Representations of women could be found alongside phallic objects in the Cabinet of Antiquities and among the *Kunstzimmer*’s artificialia. They included a nude sleeping Venus carved from boxwood<sup>38</sup> and the handle of John Calvin’s penknife “in the shape of a woman”. In subsequent descriptions (despite the figure being clothed), this implement was interpreted erotically as depicting “a beautiful lady”.<sup>39</sup> The reference to “an Italian lock with sharp spikes on the front, used by jealous men in Italy to lock their wives when they left the house”, foreshadows the curious spread of “historical” chastity belts in the Victorian era of the nineteenth century – complete with the stereotypical macho southern European.<sup>40</sup> In 1694, a group of travellers from Rostock University thought that the “emblem of the armoury” was a “round wooden powder horn, carved with the figure of a naked woman with a fox between her legs and its tail in her hand”.<sup>41</sup> The group led by Count Rindsmaul was of the same opinion and was reminded of the “emblem of Dresden” – a bridge sculpture showing a “small unclothed manikin holding his hand over his nakedness”.<sup>42</sup> By contrast, the “emblem of the *Kunstzimmer*” revealed anti-Catholic sentiment: “A monk writing on a nun’s belly. One looks through a telescope into a box, which contains many other rare things.”<sup>43</sup> Already in 1696, the Italian Catholic friar Alessandro Bichi discovered “paintings that were quite lewd, some of which seriously violated monastic discipline and chastity”.<sup>44</sup>

What linked the artificialia and the naturalia was the phenomenon of pareidolia, the human tendency to see representational images in patterns or formations. Such *ludi naturae* (whims of nature) included, for example, “a stone that look[ed] like a naked woman when turned over”; another object that resembled the stony genitalia of what is described in discreet scholarly Latin as the “Lapis vulva it[em] priapus”; and finally, the gargantuan fruit of the coco de mer palm, which graced almost every curiosity cabinet in the period – “a large Maldive coconut that resembles the human *posterioribus* [hind quarters]” (fig. 5).<sup>45</sup> In the German-language inventories, the collection of striking whale penises, which were difficult for lay visitors to decipher, were concealed behind educa-

35 Silbermann 1741, p. 39. The reference is probably to “chime dice” – hollow dice with small pieces of metal inside.

36 Hagelstange 1905, p. 214.

37 On the context of what follows, see also Sangmeister/Mulsow 2018.

38 See Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 100r; Inventar 1694, p. 195; Hildebrand/Theuerkauff 1981, pp. 86–7, no. 19 (with ill.).

39 Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 96v; and Anonymus B, fol. 7r. See Hildebrand/Theuerkauff 1981, pp. 182–3, no. 98 (with ill.).

40 Küster 1756, col. 546. On this topic, see Classen (Albrecht) 2007.

41 Kohfeldt 1905, pp. 46–7.

42 Hagelstange 1905, pp. 211 and 204–5; see also p. 218.

43 Küster 1756, p. 20. It is not entirely clear why all of these emblems (*Wahrzeichen*) are linked to erotic imagery. See DWB, vol. 27 (1922), cols. 1016–30, the article “Wahrzeichen”, esp. under II, 3, g, h, k, and II, 5. Noteworthy in this context is the rich body of contemporary erotic clocks; see e.g. Prignitz 2004.

44 Bichi 1891, p. 27.

45 Anonymus A, fol. 35v; Tschirnhaus 1727, p. 286; and *ibid.*, p. 287. See also Schramm 1744, col. 151.

46 Inventar 1694, p. 3, and Inventar 1685/1688, fol. 110r.





tionally exclusionary Latin terms such as “priapus ceti” or “membrum virile of young whale”.<sup>46</sup> Three such specimens were among the *naturalia* donated by Berlin to the Francke Foundations in Halle (fig. 6) [◆Canon and Transformation].<sup>47</sup>

Here, caution was advisable from a patriarchal standpoint, especially with regard to the process of middle-class identity formation, in which “sexuality ... was an *effect with a meaning-value*”.<sup>48</sup> As one male visitor writes in his travel notes based on comments from his male guide, “a stag’s antler in the shape of a male member” was shown only to “male persons”. Concerning the “member of a whale fish”, the same traveller explains: “This is very long, and when it is shown to women, they are told it is the nose of a whale, and they are very surprised at the size.”<sup>49</sup> Revealingly, this information strategy, rooted in sexual politics, had its counterpart in the approach to a circumcision knife, whose use was summed up in the following words: “With this, Jews cut off the boys’ noses down below.”<sup>50</sup> Here, male sexual fears merge with the religious resentment of the Christian majority society and the unease caused by the alterity of cultural practices.

5 | Coco de mer in the exhibition of the Chamber of Art and Curiosities at Trausnitz Castle.

<sup>47</sup> According to August Hermann Francke’s *Specification* (Specification 1700, p. 2, no. 14), three whale penises were transferred from Berlin to Halle, and it is very likely that they were identical with the “three priapi ceti” in Gründler’s *Catalogus derer Sachen* (AFSt/W XII-158/12, p. 20, 3.G) as well as with the three specimens currently on display in Halle. However, due to missing labels and inventory numbers, this cannot be conclusively proved.

<sup>48</sup> Foucault 1990, p. 148, emphasis by the author.

<sup>49</sup> Küster 1756, col. 547; and Anonymus B, fol. 9r–v.



In the guidelines for collection visits in Halle, one finds a gender-based tailoring of visiting practices that implies that women were an audience to whom things were not shown (or to whom erroneous, obscene information was imparted). This is linked to concerns about social status:

For persons of high estate and women, special attention must be given to their comfort, preferences, and sensitivities, so that they do not hear too many things that are completely unknown to them or unpleasant. The viewing of skeletons, embryos, and the like should not be obligatory. Rather, everything possible should be undertaken to suit their tastes and disposition.<sup>51</sup>

Although this passage paints the picture of women of high rank as potential visitors, there is too little information in the sources for us to determine whether distinctions were drawn between maidens, married women, and widows. Such gender categories were heteronomously defined, yet widely internalized in the female lifeworlds of the early modern period.

The late Enlightenment defused the obscene objects and phallocratic imagery by studiously ignoring the striking eroticism and embedding it in the implicit naturalness of classical iconography. In Jean Henry's *Allgemeines Verzeichniss* from 1805, we only find references to “whole coconuts: two from the Maldive Islands”. Among the antiquities was “a respectable collection of small statues in bronze”, of which “Priap” is simply described as one of the most outstanding.<sup>52</sup> According to Henry, in presentations of the collection consideration needed to be given to the “the higher needs of an educated audience”,<sup>53</sup> which included women. Certainly, as Henry argued in his disputes with the administration, women also fell into the pedagogically delicate category of “the most

6 | Whale penises in the Cabinet of Artefacts and Natural Curiosities of the Francke Foundations in Halle.



50 Ibid., fol. 7r–v. On the historical sexual interplay between noses and penises, see e.g. Bakhtin 1984, pp. 86–7; Himberg 2001.

51 Cited in Zaunstöck 2020, p. 43, n. 13.

52 Henry 1805, pp. 12 and 15.

53 Ibid., p. 4.



uneducated persons”,<sup>54</sup> but it was precisely these broader strata of the population that the presentations needed to target.

Together with the other antiquities, the bronze tintinnabulum depicting the *Lappenkönig* was transferred to the newly founded museum. Today it is kept in the Collection of Classical Antiquities under the inventory number Fr. 1972 b (fig. 7). The 21-centimetre statuette with its rooster-like head no longer has its bell or moving phalli. Like the marble *Priapus deus generationis*, it is an early modern forgery.<sup>55</sup>

Translated by Adam Blauhut



7 | Early modern Priapus statuette, Antiquities Collection of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

54 Jean Henry to Carl Friedrich von Beyme, 10 April 1805, cited in Dolezel 2019, p. 206.

55 See the entry for Fr. 1972 b in the *Antike Bronzen in Berlin* database with a list of archaeological literature at: <http://antike-bronzen.smb.museum/>.