

A TERRACOTTA HERAKLES AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY

(PLATES 86–88)

A TERRACOTTA FIGURINE in the Archaeological Collection of The Johns Hopkins University can be shown to be a product of a late Hellenistic or early Imperial workshop located in Smyrna. It will be seen that the piece was inspired by a major statue whose prominence must be recognized and whose relationship with the Vatican Laocoon must be reappraised. The Hopkins figurine thereby exemplifies two precepts that have consistently characterized Mrs. Thompson's scholarship: that small-scale works of art have a delight all their own, and that they can often further our investigations in the major arts. This study is dedicated to her in appreciation for the generous spirit in which she has always shared with her students her wisdom and her time.¹

The figurine is of unknown provenience (Pls. 86, 87:a).² Broken away are the left arm, the right leg, and most of the left leg. The right arm, extending from below the shoulder to above the wrist, has been reattached. The figurine is moldmade with the back completely modeled. The left thigh and the torso are hollow. Before firing, a pointed tool was used to roughen the curls and to delineate crisply the edges of the eyelids. The fabric is a hard-baked, reddish clay on which no slip or color survives. Black glaze is visible across the joins where the left arm and right leg were attached. Other spots of black glaze are on the underside of the left leg where the shin would have rested upon a base.

A nude, stocky male with protruding stomach is kneeling with thighs widespread, the left thigh slightly higher than the right. His left thigh presses upon the left lower leg. His torso turns towards his left, while his left shoulder and breast are inclined towards his left hip. The right arm is uplifted with the elbow bent; the left arm was held close to the left side. The head is set almost directly upon the torso without a neck and is directed downward. The face has a prominent ridge across the forehead, arched eyebrows, jowly cheeks, and an open mouth. The expression is one of exaggerated intensity, and this effect is heightened by the turbulent locks of hair which are rendered as short curls with rough surface.

The identity of our figurine is not difficult to establish; the basic type, which we shall investigate, is that of the infant Herakles struggling with the serpents. The myth is first mentioned by Pindar (*Nemean* 1.33ff.) and is also recounted by Theocritus (*Idylls*, 24.19) and Philostratos (junior, *Imagines* V). Herakles was the son of Zeus and Alkmene, but his

¹ I would like to thank Mrs. Thompson and Madame Besques for taking the time to look at photographs of this piece for me.

Works frequently cited will be abbreviated as follows:

Besques = S. Mollard-Besques, *Musée national du Louvre: Catalogue raisonné des figurines et reliefs en terre cuite grecs, étrusques, et romains* III, Paris 1972

Brendel = O. Brendel, "Der schlangengewürgenden Herakliskos," *JdI* 47, 1932, pp. 191–238

Higgins = R. Higgins, *Greek Terracottas*, London 1967

Lippold = G. Lippold, "Herakliskos," *RömMitt* 51, 1936, pp. 96–103

² JHU inv. no. 9200. Height 12 cm.; height of head 3.6 cm.; width between legs 7 cm.

ostensible mortal father was Amphytrion. To test or to reveal the child's parentage, Hera, or some say Amphytrion, sent snakes to attack the baby Herakles and his twin brother Iphikles as they lay sleeping. Iphikles was terrified and thereby betrayed his mortal nature but the undaunted Herakles overwhelmed the snakes and therewith manifested his divine origin.

Noteworthy technical features of the Hopkins figurine are the reddish clay, hard-baked surface, the use of molds for both the front and the back, and the absence of a vent hole. The retouching by hand underlines the care with which the figurine was executed. All these features link our figurine with the exceptional koroplastic center of Smyrna, a city which was located approximately 65 miles south of Pergamon on the site of the modern city of Izmir. The earliest city was abandoned not long after its destruction in about 600 B.C. by Alyattes of Lydia. Lysimachos, following a dream of Alexander, established a new city on near-by Mt. Pagos between 286 and 281 B.C., and this city prospered until A.D. 178 when an earthquake devastated the area and terminated koroplastic production. Thus the Hellenistic and Roman terracottas made in Smyrna can be securely dated between about 280 B.C. and A.D. 178.³

No scientific excavations of Hellenistic and Roman Smyrna have ever been carried out. In the 19th and early 20th centuries uncontrolled excavations yielded large numbers of terracottas which were sold through dealers who often ascribed to Smyrna terracottas from other sites.⁴ For this reason indisputable proveniences are almost completely lacking for Smyrna terracottas. Even those believed to have been made in Smyrna and exported to other markets such as Pergamon,⁵ Delos,⁶ Athens,⁷ and Troy⁸ generally lack dated contexts. Despite these difficulties, study of those figurines purchased near Smyrna by early collectors has established a reliable profile, now generally accepted, of the characteristics of Smyrna terracottas.⁹ They are made of a hard-baked reddish clay and are moldmade, including the back,

³ Besques, pp. 153–155.

⁴ S. Reinach, "Les terres cuites de Smyrne," *Mélanges Graux*, 1884, pp. 143ff., especially pp. 145, 153, 158, and P. Gaudin (in Besques, p. 154) could conclude only that the terracottas were found on the slopes of Mt. Pagos. Other early collections of Smyrna terracottas are P. Perdrizet, "Terres cuites de l'Asie Mineure," *MonPiot* 4, 1898, pp. 209–220; J. Sieveking, *Die Terrakotten der Sammlung Loeb* II, Munich 1916, p. 46, pl. 107; W. Froehner, *Terres cuites d'Asie de la collection Julien Gréau*, Paris 1886, p. 28, pls. 29, 103; *idem*, *Terres cuites grecques. Collection J. Gréau*, Paris 1891, nos. 663–1106, pp. 149–222.

⁵ E. Töpperwein, *Pergamenische Forschungen*, III, *Terrakotten von Pergamon*, Berlin 1976, pp. 86–87, 172 where they are dated late Hellenistic on stylistic grounds.

⁶ A. Laumonier, *Délos*, XXIII, *Les figurines de terre cuite*, Paris 1954, no. 357, pp. 24, 133, pl. 38, where they are dated to mid-2nd century B.C. on stylistic grounds.

⁷ D. B. Thompson, "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas, IV: The Early Second Century B.C.," *Hesperia* 32, 1963, no. 21, p. 313, pl. 83 from the foundation trench of the Stoa of Attalos. Töpperwein (*op. cit.* [footnote 5 above]) suggests that a Herakles head from Athens is of Smyrna fabric (see D. B. Thompson, "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas, V: The Mid-Second Century B.C.," *Hesperia* 34, 1965, no. 4A, pp. 56, 70, pl. 18).

⁸ D. B. Thompson, *Troy, Supplementary Monograph 3, The Terracotta Figurines of the Hellenistic Period*, Princeton 1963, pp. 14, 25, 64 and nos. 70, 140, 141, 160–162, 184, 190, mostly dated on stylistic grounds to the 2nd–1st centuries B.C.

⁹ Besques, pp. 155–156; Reinach, *op. cit.* (footnote 4 above), pp. 143–149; G. Chase, "Nine Terracotta Heads from Smyrna," *Classical Studies Presented to Edward Capps*, Princeton 1936, pp. 58–60; Higgins, pp. 110–112; G. Mendel, *Catalogue des figurines grecques de terre cuite. Musées impériaux*

with vents unobtrusive or omitted. The pieces are often extensively reworked with the hair deliberately roughened. All these features have been observed on the Hopkins figurine, a fact which argues strongly for its attribution to Smyrna. Not heretofore observed on terracottas linked with Smyrna, however, is the application of black glaze as an adhesive, used on the Hopkins piece as a means of attaching the left arm and right leg and of securing the figurine to a base. This technique first appears on Attic terracottas of the middle of the 2nd century B.C., and its effectiveness as well as the possibility of its transmission by the easy communication of the age suggests that the practice might have come into use in Smyrna at about the same time, whether as a natural independent development in that city or inspired by Attic products.¹⁰

Two aspects of the subject of the Hopkins figurine further support an attribution to Smyrna. The first element is the treatment of the face and body. Both the twisted, distorted torso with accentuated musculature and the exaggerated facial features compare closely with numerous terracottas that have been ascribed to workshops in Smyrna.¹¹ Many of these figurines have been identified as performers of the mime,¹² a theatrical form, parodying everyday life, that became immensely popular in Hellenistic Asia Minor where the plays were performed both in the theater and in private homes. Performers rarely wore specific costumes or masks but were clad in everyday dress and were distinguished by their exaggerated expressions.¹³ The mime figurines attributed to Smyrna have been dated to the 1st century B.C. and 1st century after Christ, both because of stylistic parallels with examples in fabrics about which more is known and because of the popularity of the mime at that time.¹⁴ By extension, the Hopkins figurine should be contemporary with these mime figurines, and indeed, it will be shown below that this same date is indicated by the adaptive, eclectic character of the composition, which fuses elements of the mime with an unrelated sculptural tradition.

ottomans, Constantinople 1908, pp. 210ff.; A. Delhay-Cahen, "Terres cuites hellénistiques de Smyrne," *AntCl* 38, 1969, pp. 389–407; P. G. Leyenaar-Plaisier, *Les terres cuites grecques et romaines. Catalogue de la collection du musée national des antiquités à Leiden*, Leiden 1979, pp. 132ff.

¹⁰ Thompson, *Hesperia* 34, 1965 (footnote 7 above), pp. 51–52.

¹¹ Besques, D 885, p. 132, pl. 163; D 886, p. 132, pl. 163; D 1249, p. 176; D 1119, p. 163, pl. 225. See also I. Schneider-Lengyel, *Griechische Terrakotten*, Munich 1936, figs. 89, 92; V. Poulsen, *Catalogue des terres cuites grecques et romaines*, Copenhagen 1949, no. 55, pp. 31, 36–37.

¹² Besques, E/D 1631, p. 218, pl. 299; E/D 1780, p. 232, pl. 311; E/D 1044, p. 150, pl. 189; E/D 1043, p. 150, pl. 189. Other parallels are J. Vogt, *Die griechisch-ägyptische Sammlung Ernst von Siegelin*, II, ii, *Terrakotten*, Leipzig 1924, pp. 156–157, pls. 66, 67; Chase, *op. cit.* (footnote 9 above), pp. 58ff.; A. Laumonier, "Terres cuites d'Asie Mineure," *BCH* 70, 1946, pp. 312ff.; N. Breitenstein, *Catalogue of Terracottas, Cypriote, Greek, Etrusco-Italian and Roman*, Copenhagen 1941, no. 476, p. 53, pl. 59. Compare these with the features on a terracotta inscribed with the word *mimologos*: O. Watzinger, "Mimologon," *AthMitt* 26, 1901, pp. 1–8.

¹³ M. Bieber, "Grotesques and the Mime," *AJA* 17, 1913, pp. 149–156; *eadem*, *History of the Greek and Roman Theater*, 2nd ed., Princeton 1961, pp. 106–107, 248–249; Thompson, *op. cit.* (footnote 8 above), pp. 119–120.

¹⁴ Higgins, pp. 110, 112; Besques, p. 231. One should, however, be cognizant that the Smyrna koro-plastic industry remained active into the 2nd century after Christ, since the hairstyles on many figurines date them to Hadrianic and Antonine times. See Sieveking, *op. cit.* (footnote 4 above), pp. 49–50, pl. 108; Besques, p. 190.

The second characteristic of the subject matter of the Hopkins figure shared by Smyrna terracottas is the influence of major bronze and marble statuary. Smyrna terracottas betray this inspiration in their large size (from 40 to 80 cm. high),¹⁵ frequent gilding, incision of the iris and punching of the pupil,¹⁶ and the deliberate roughening of the hair, as on our figurine, in imitation of bronze surfaces. The koroplasts chose their subjects from Classical and post-Classical statuary; it is interesting to note that Herakles was a favorite. Since most of the original statuary has not survived, it is difficult to assess the accuracy of the terracotta versions, but a terracotta Diadoumenos in New York, for instance, agrees very closely with full-scale copies of the original work.¹⁷

The Hopkins Herakles is undoubtedly another example of the enthusiasm of Smyrna koroplasts for producing small-scale versions of a major statue. Indeed, the Hopkins figurine becomes a key piece of evidence for reconstructing a lost work which clearly belongs to a long artistic tradition. Representations of the *Hercules strangulans* appear as early as the 5th century B.C. in vase paintings by the Berlin Painter¹⁸ and the Nausicaa Painter,¹⁹ and shortly thereafter on a krater Beazley assigned to an artist "near the Mykonos Painter".²⁰ The pose in the latter two depictions is quite similar to that of our figurine: Herakles is kneeling with widespread thighs, upraised left arm, lowered right arm, and a serpent in each hand. In the 4th century we consistently encounter a modified version of this type, and it is reasonable to ascribe the change to the impact of a major work, be it a sculpture seen by Pausanias on the Akropolis (I.24.2)²¹ or a painting by Zeuxis (Pliny, *N.H.* xxxv.63).²² One of the first examples of this altered type is on a series of coins issued between 394 and 387 B.C. by an alliance of East Greek cities, following the defeat of the Spartans by Athens at the battle of Knidos.²³ Now the kneeling Herakles presses his left arm to the ground and holds a serpent head in the left hand, while his outstretched right hand holds the coils and head of the other snake.

¹⁵ G. Lippold, *Kopien und Umbildungen griechischer Statuen*, Munich 1923, pp. 153–154; Delhaye-Cahen (*op. cit.* [footnote 9 above], p. 407) believes that large statuettes, whose heads are *ca.* 5 cm. high, were not made before the 2nd century B.C.

¹⁶ Delhaye-Cahen, *op. cit.* (footnote 9 above), nos. 1, 4, 5, 7, pp. 394ff., beginning with terracottas of about the 3rd century B.C.; Besques, p. 190.

¹⁷ Higgins, p. 111, pl. 51:E; Lippold, *op. cit.* (footnote 15 above), p. 154; G. M. A. Richter believed that many heads were portraits. See *Collections Latomus. Greek Portraits III*, XLVIII, 1960, pp. 17, 25ff., especially pls. 1, 14–16, 21, 32; Sieveking, *op. cit.* (footnote 4 above), p. 46, pl. 107.

¹⁸ Louvre G 192 = *ARV*², p. 208, no. 160; F. Brommer, *Vasenlisten zur griechische Heldensage*, Marburg 1973, B 1, p. 189; *Gazette archéologique*, 1875, pls. 14, 15; G. Richter, *The Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans*, London 1966, fig. 321; Brendel, p. 195.

¹⁹ MMA 25.28 = *ARV*², p. 1110, no. 41; Brommer, *op. cit.*, B 4, p. 189; G. M. A. Richter and L. F. Hall, *Red-figured Athenian Vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New Haven 1936, pl. 74; Brendel, pp. 195–196.

²⁰ Perugia no. 73 = *ARV*², p. 516, M; Brommer, *op. cit.* (footnote 18 above), B 2, p. 189; Brendel, p. 197, fig. 1 and p. 198.

²¹ Lippold, pp. 96ff.

²² Brendel, pp. 192ff., 217–218.

²³ Lippold, p. 98, fig. 1 and pp. 98–99; Brendel, p. 202; F. Brommer, *Denkmälerlisten zur griechischen Heldensage I*, Marburg 1971, pp. 153–154; G. K. Jenkins, *Ancient Greek Coins*, London 1972, no. 282, p. 126.

The best sculptural parallels for our type are two Roman statues of about the 2nd century after Christ, one in the Uffizi and the other in the Hermitage.²⁴ Both are clearly based on a single original. The statue in the Uffizi (Pl. 87:b)²⁵ has many restorations, including the right leg, raised ground under the left thigh, left hand, and right arm wrapped with snaky coils, although the section of coil that rests upon the child's head is original. Even without these restorations, the similarity to the pose of the Hopkins figurine is quite arresting: the kneeling pose with left thigh slightly elevated, the twisting torso with weight on the left thigh, the elevated right shoulder, and the downcast head. Also similar are the chunky body, short hair, full cheeks, and concentrated expression. Since the facial features of the Uffizi Herakles are not distorted, the effect is amusing and even precious, in contrast to the treatment of the figurine at Hopkins, which is more in the spirit of parody.

The statue in the Hermitage (Pl. 88:a), which is in better condition, is less dynamic.²⁶ Restored are the nose, chin, fingertips, and part of the snake's head by the left hand. Similar to the Uffizi and Hopkins figures are the spreading thighs, slight elevation of the left thigh, position of the left arm close to the body, raised right shoulder, and downcast head. Absent are the torsion and the swollen abdomen and cheeks. The result is a struggle so tamed that the child seems only slightly annoyed by his attackers.

The Hermitage and Uffizi statues share a noteworthy feature, namely, that the serpent coils come into contact with the right side of the head. We can be fairly certain that this feature accurately reproduces its prototype because the same detail reappears on another Herakles, this one on a pillar that belonged to the Baths of Hadrian in Aphrodisias (Pl. 88:b).²⁷ The similarity between the face of the Aphrodisias Herakles and that of the Uffizi Herakles is quite striking; both have jowly cheeks and a grimace of concentration. Also significant on the Aphrodisias pillar is the position of the right arm, which is almost identical to that of the Hopkins figurine.

The compelling parallels among the Hopkins figurine, the Uffizi and Hermitage statues, and the Aphrodisias pillar argue that all the representations are based upon a single statue. The distinctive characteristics of these representations, the torsional pose, the focus on the drama of the struggle, and the fondness for the theme of Herakles with snakes are hallmarks of the Pergamene baroque and therefore suggest that the prototypical statue dated from the 2nd century B.C.,²⁸ even though the origin of basic elements in the composition (the kneeling pose and gestures) lies in 5th- and 4th-century treatments of this theme or of

²⁴ Other types that treat this theme are known, for instance, a seated Herakles in Turin: Brendel, pp. 227ff. and p. 228, fig. 14; Brommer, *op. cit.* (footnote 23 above), no. 8, pl. 150; and an unpublished terracotta figurine in the Louvre for which reference I would like to thank Madame Besques.

²⁵ Inv. no. 322. G. A. Mansuelli, *Galleria degli Uffizi. Le sculture I*, Rome 1958, no. 63, pp. 96ff., fig. 60; Brommer, *op. cit.* (footnote 23 above), no. 2, p. 150; Brendel, pp. 218–219, 224–225 and p. 220, fig. 12; Lippold, p. 94.

²⁶ Inv. no. A 76. O. Waldhauer, *Die antiken Skulptur der Ermitage II*, Berlin/Leipzig 1931, no. 188, p. 65 and p. 63, fig. 72; Brommer, *op. cit.* (footnote 23 above), no. 2, p. 150; Brendel (p. 219 and p. 221, fig. 13) dates it 2nd century after Christ; Lippold, p. 94.

²⁷ M. Schede, *Meisterwerke der türkischen Museen zu Konstantinopel*, Berlin 1928, no. 493, p. 17, pl. 36; Brendel, p. 206, fig. 3.

²⁸ Brendel (pp. 224, 234) dates the prototype to the time of the Altar of Pergamon; Lippold (pp. 96–97, 99) believes the prototype is the statue Pausanias saw on the Akropolis.

gigantomachies. The swollen faces and strained expressions of both the Uffizi statue and the Hopkins terracotta suggest that the Herakles of the prototypical statue was also presented in a humorous manner, and, indeed, levity has long been recognized as a characteristic of Hellenistic art. It is appealing to think that the original statue of Herakles might have been made in Pergamon, both because of stylistic links with the Altar of Zeus and because we find reflections of the work in near-by Aphrodisias, as well as perhaps now in Smyrna, which we know was politically aligned with Pergamon in the 3rd and 2nd centuries B.C. and even supplied terracottas to the Pergamene market.

The Hopkins figurine is probably not a near contemporary of its prototype. The deliberate reworking of the theme, incorporating allusions to the mime, is more compatible with a late Hellenistic and early Imperial date when artists were creatively adapting earlier Hellenistic works. It is now widely agreed, for instance, that this approach characterizes the sculpture from Sperlonga, which is dated between *ca.* 20 B.C. and A.D. 50.²⁹ Probably another illustration of this sort of adaptation is the Terme group of Amphitrite and the baby Triton, which is also assigned to the late Hellenistic and early Imperial period.³⁰ The Triton has a chubby torso that changes at mid-thigh into serpent coils in a manner so reminiscent of figures from the Pergamene altar (and incidentally of the Hopkins Herakles) that a mid-2nd-century prototype for the Triton has been convincingly proposed.

The similarity of our figurine to the Vatican Laocoon is immediately apparent (Pl. 88:c), particularly in the widespread thighs, elevated right shoulder, lowered right arm, and general intensity of the snaky drama. Von Blanckenhagen persuasively argues, on the basis of parallels with Sperlonga and inconsistencies of composition and style between the older son and the other two figures, that the Vatican Laocoon is based upon a group of the 2nd century B.C. which represented Laocoon but only one son. He postulates that the composition was adapted in the late 1st century B.C. or 1st century after Christ; at that time a second son was added to illustrate Vergil's version of the struggle wherein Laocoon and his two sons were fatally crushed by the serpents.³¹ The Vatican Laocoon would thus emerge as another example of the late Hellenistic and early Imperial tendency to adapt earlier Hellenistic works creatively. If Von Blanckenhagen's dating of the Vatican Laocoon is correct, the similarities between the latter and the Hopkins figurine take on a special significance, since it is unlikely that the terracotta would have been influenced by a group so nearly contemporary. Heretofore it has been difficult to establish that the artistic tradition for the *Hercules strangulans* was uncontaminated by the Vatican Laocoon because the Uffizi, Aphrodisias, and Leningrad representations of the Herakles type almost certainly postdate the Vatican Laocoon. Moreover, the obvious similarity to the Vatican Laocoon of the painting of Herakles from the House of the Vettii, dated to the later 1st century after Christ, argues that at least some representations of Herakles were indeed based upon the Vatican group.³²

²⁹ P. von Blanckenhagen, "Laocoon, Sperlonga und Vergil," *AA* 84, 1969, p. 265. See also his review articles: *AJA* 77, 1973, p. 459 and *AJA* 80, 1976, p. 103. The sculpture is published in B. Conticello and B. Andreae, *Die Skulpturen von Sperlonga*, *AntP* XIV, Berlin 1974.

³⁰ S. Lattimore, *The Marine Thiasos in Greek Sculpture*, Los Angeles 1976, p. 50; B. M. Fellitti Maj, "La Tetide della Stazione Termini," *ArchCl* 1, 1949, pp. 57ff., especially pp. 60, 65.

³¹ Von Blanckenhagen, *AA* 84, 1969, pp. 260-265; *AJA* 77, 1973, pp. 459-460; *AJA* 80, 1976, p. 103.

³² Brendel, p. 200; Lippold (p. 100 and "Zur Laokoongruppe," *JdI* 61, 1946, p. 90) believes it is

Considering, then, the probable independence of the terracotta Herakles from the Vatican Laocoon, it is interesting to contemplate the relationship between their Hellenistic prototypes. Although it is possible that there were two contemporary, independent expressions produced in the same artistic atmosphere, yet in a milieu sufficiently conscious of the artistic tradition of Herakles and the snakes to contribute a statue on that theme, it is unlikely that so similar a composition for the episode of Laocoon could have been an independent creation. The derivative character of the prototype of the Vatican Laocoon may be further indicated by Von Blanckenhagen's suggestion that the marble behind Laocoon's right shoulder remains from a serpent that in the prototypical statue was biting this part of the figure.³³ If this is so, then the right hand, which on the Vatican group has been restored close to the back of the neck, was probably also in this position in the prototypical statue.³⁴ This gesture seems to be directly quoted from the so-called Capaneus on the shield of Athena Parthenos. That figure draws his right hand behind his shoulder while he kneels on his right knee with the left leg outstretched in a pose comparable to that of the Vatican figure. It is interesting to note that Stavropoulos, followed by Harrison, identified the figure on the shield as Erechtheus, whom Poseidon was said to have struck down with a trident, a destruction that echoes Laocoon's own fate.³⁵

The similarities between the Hopkins figurine and the Vatican Laocoon lead us to examine another example of the theme. In the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston is a marble statue of an infant wrestling with serpents (Pl. 88:d).³⁶ The right arm is missing, as are the lower legs, but most of the thighs survive with the coils still wrapped around them. The left arm is held close to the left side and presses the serpent coils to the ground. The horizontal position of the right shoulder indicates that the right arm was outstretched. The statue has been described as an adaption of the Vatican Laocoon, whose influence may certainly be present in the placement of the coils across right thigh and left arm.³⁷ But the parallels with the Herakles type are even more apparent, in the almost certain kneeling position³⁸ and in the gesture of the left arm. The strongest argument, however, for linking the Boston statue directly with the Herakles tradition is the allegorical significance of the sculpture. The work has been most recently identified as a representation of Commodus as Herakles, probably

derived from the painting by Zeuxis. The paintings from Pompeii and Herculaneum with this subject are pictured in C. Watzinger, "Zur jüngeren attischen Vasenmalerei," *ÖJh* 16, 1913, pp. 169ff., fig. 86.

³³ Von Blanckenhagen, *AA* 84, 1969, p. 258, note 8.

³⁴ F. Magi (*Il ripristino del Laocoonte. MemPontAcc* 3, ser. 9, 1960) notes on p. 25 that there are no traces of the hand or the snakes on the hair. The statue is pictured without restorations on plate 41 and in a restored plaster model on plate 44. See also the review article by G. M. A. Richter in *Gnomon* 34, 1962, pp. 287–290.

³⁵ E. B. Harrison, "The Composition of the Amazonomachy on the Shield of Athena Parthenos," *Hesperia* 35, 1966, pp. 115–116, 129–130, and no. 14, p. 123, pl. 37:c; N. Leipen, *Athena Parthenos*, Toronto 1971, p. 43 and fig. 34 on pl. 72.

³⁶ Inv. no. 1971.394. C. C. Vermeule and M. Comstock, *Sculpture in Stone. The Greek, Roman and Etruscan Collections of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston*, Boston 1977, no. 366, p. 233; W. Gross, "Herakliskos Commodus," *NAkG*, 1973, pp. 83–105.

³⁷ C. C. Vermeule, "Commodus, Caracalla and the Tetrarchs: Roman Emperors as Hercules," *Festschrift für Frank Brommer*, Mainz 1977, p. 291.

³⁸ Gross, *op. cit.* (footnote 36 above), pp. 83–84.

dating from the years A.D. 190–192.³⁹ Commodus had a twin brother who died in A.D. 165 when the boys were four years old. In the following year Commodus was named Caesar, together with his younger brother Annius Verus, who was then four. Some time later, in A.D. 183, Commodus ordered Annius Verus murdered. It would be quite characteristic of Commodus, whose identification with Herakles is well known, to have commissioned a statue of Herakles and the snakes in order to proclaim through this mythical parallel how his own divine stature explained and justified both the death of his twin and the elimination of his younger brother. Now that the Hopkins figurine appears to substantiate the prominence of the prototype, it seems unlikely that the Boston Herakles is derived from the seemingly less common type of the Laocoon; certainly Commodus could far more effectively claim a special status by stressing an association not with a mortal who was punished by the gods but rather with a divine child portrayed in a triumphant moment.

CONCLUSION

The similarities in fabric, technique, and subject matter between the Hopkins figurine and terracottas associated with Smyrna indicate that the Hopkins piece is probably also a product of this center; the attribution therewith would broaden our knowledge of Smyrna's koroplastic industry by providing evidence for the use of black glaze as an adhesive. The Hopkins figurine can be dated to the late 1st century B.C. or 1st century after Christ, both because of parallels with mime figurines of Smyrna which have been dated to those years and because of the figurine's imaginative adaptation of a major statue type through the injection of theatrical allusions, a treatment which exemplifies a tendency now widely agreed to be characteristic of this era.

The figurine also has implications for the major arts. It is our earliest reflection of a work which we can now more clearly reconstruct and date to the 2nd century B.C. and which we may tentatively ascribe to Pergamon. The existence of the Hopkins figurine indicates that the original statue had an acclaim that has not been adequately assessed and argues that both the Commodus statue in Boston and the prototype of the Vatican Laocoon are closely linked with the Herakles tradition. Finally, the Hopkins figurine demonstrates those observations often made by Mrs. Thompson, that small-scale works of art are intriguing and very pertinent to those areas of the major arts where fundamental problems still confront us.

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³⁹ Vermeule, *op. cit.* (footnote 37 above), p. 292. Gross (*op. cit.* [footnote 36 above], pp. 102–103) suggests that the work copies a contemporary sculpture of ca. 160–170.



a. Left side



b. Front



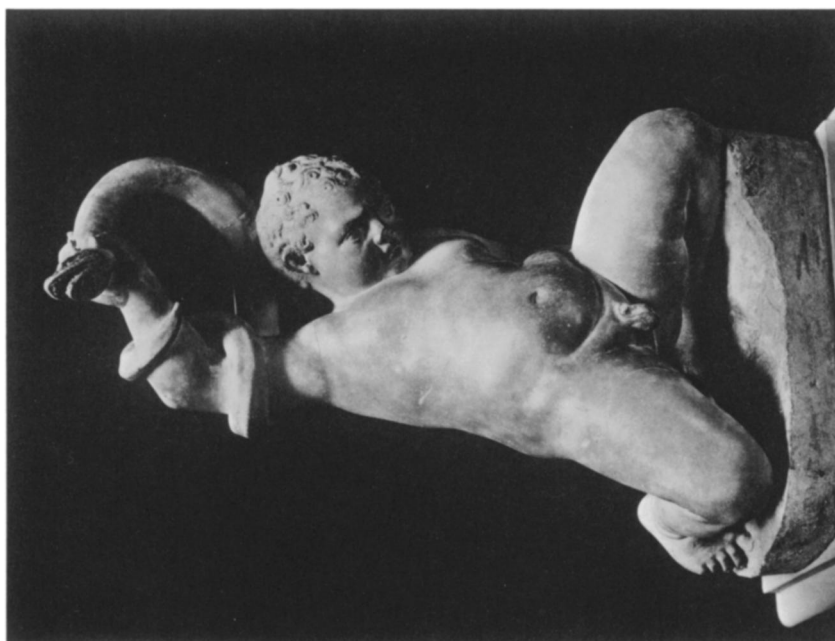
c. Back

Infant Herakles, The Johns Hopkins University inv. no. 9200

ELLEN REEDER WILLIAMS: A TERRACOTTA HERAKLES AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY



a. Infant Herakles, The Johns Hopkins University inv. no. 9200. Detail of head.



b. Infant Herakles, Uffizi Gallery inv. no. 322.
Photograph Alinari



a. Infant Herakles, Hermitage Museum inv. no. A 76.
Photograph DAI Rome



b. Infant Herakles, Aphrodisias. After W. Schede,
Meisterwerke der türkischen Museen zu Konstan-
tinopel, pl. 36



c. Laocöon, Vatican Museum. Photograph DAI Rome



d. Commodus(?) as Herakles, M.F.A. inv. no. 1971.394.
Courtesy, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston