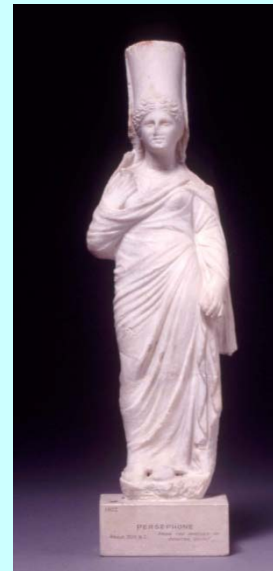
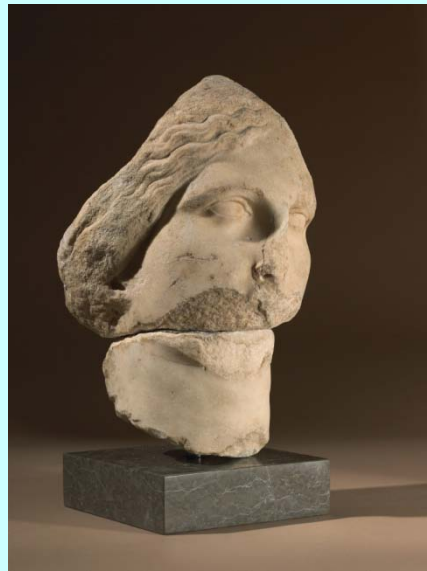

BRITISH MUSEUM INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMME 2011

Persephone: The daughter of Knidos



Two Stories about Persephone's sculpture from the ancient city of Knidos

by

Meltem YAŞDAĞ

The Reason for the Selection of the Object and Theme

Why Persephone?

- In a temporary exhibition, the selection of the object should be different from the process of a general exhibition understandings.
 - For this reason, the objects need to have;
 - a strong connection with the period, place or historical/mythical figure that they symbolized
 - a story
 - (allow) updating their information that came from the past
 - a reasonable size
 - For these reasons mentioned above; two sculptures of Persephone, who is a well-known figure in Greek Mythology, are chosen for my exhibition.
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Why Knidos?

- Without doubt, there are lots of sculptures belong to Persephone. The reasons for the selection for these sculptures from Knidos, which is an ancient city in Turkey, are:
 - Though excavations have been carried out at the site for many years, Knidos because of its remote and isolated location has remained unspoilt and has not been overwhelmed by a large group touristic traffic. For this reason, this kind of an exhibition is a good opportunity to make the place well-known.
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Why Knidos?

- British Museum has many archaeological objects from Knidos like Lion of Knidos, Demeter etc. So, after visiting this exhibition, the visitor can be eager to see the other objects from Knidos.



The information needed for the design of the exhibition

Who is Persephone?

In Greek mythology, **Persephone is the daughter of Zeus and the harvest goddess Demeter, and queen of the underworld.**

Persephone was such a beautiful young woman that everyone loved her, even Hades wanted her for himself. One day, when she was collecting flowers on the plain of Enna, the earth suddenly opened and Hades rose up from the gap and abducted her.



The information needed for the design of the exhibition

Who is Persephone?

Broken-hearted, Demeter wandered the earth, looking for her daughter until Helios revealed what had happened. Demeter was so angry that she withdrew herself in loneliness, and the earth ceased to be fertile. Knowing this could not continue much longer, Zeus sent Hermes down to Hades to make him release Persephone. Hades agreed, but before she went back he gave Persephone a pomegranate (or the seeds of a pomegranate, according to some sources).



The information needed for the design of the exhibition

Who is Persephone?

When she later ate it, she was bound to the underworld forever and had to stay there one-third of the year. The other months she stayed with her mother, Demeter. When Persephone was in Hades, Demeter refused to let anything grow and winter began. This myth is a symbol of the budding and dying of nature.



Where is Knidos?

Knidos is an ancient city located on the far southwest coast of Turkey. It was founded in around 360 BC on terraces built into ground that rises a 1, 000 feet from the sea to a towering fortified acropolis. The city was inhabited until late antiquity, when it was abandoned, probably as a result of repeated raids by pirates.



Where is Knidos?



The written sources for Knidos begin in the 7th century BC and continue throughout antiquity. The first Western knowledge of the site is due to the mission of the Dilettante Society in 1812, and the excavations executed by C. T. Newton in 1857-1858. Newton was the first Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities at the British Museum.

Knidos

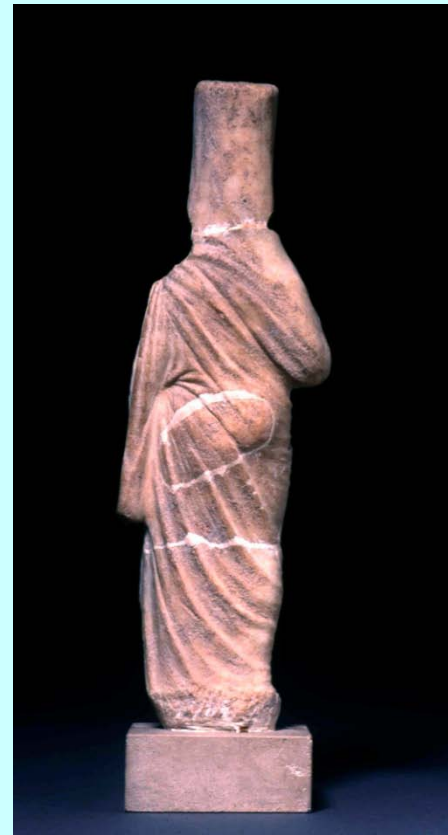
Today the agora, the theatre, an odeum, a temple of Dionysus, a temple of the Muses, a temple of Aphrodite, the sanctuary of Demeter and a great number of minor buildings have been identified, and the general plan of the city has been very clearly made out.

The on-going excavations at Knidos are supported by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Seljuk University of Konya. The British Museum also provides financial and academic support for the excavations.



The importance of the two Persephone sculptures from Knidos - Object 1

Marble Statuette of Persephone wearing a high crown and holding a pomegranate flower, about 350-300 BC.

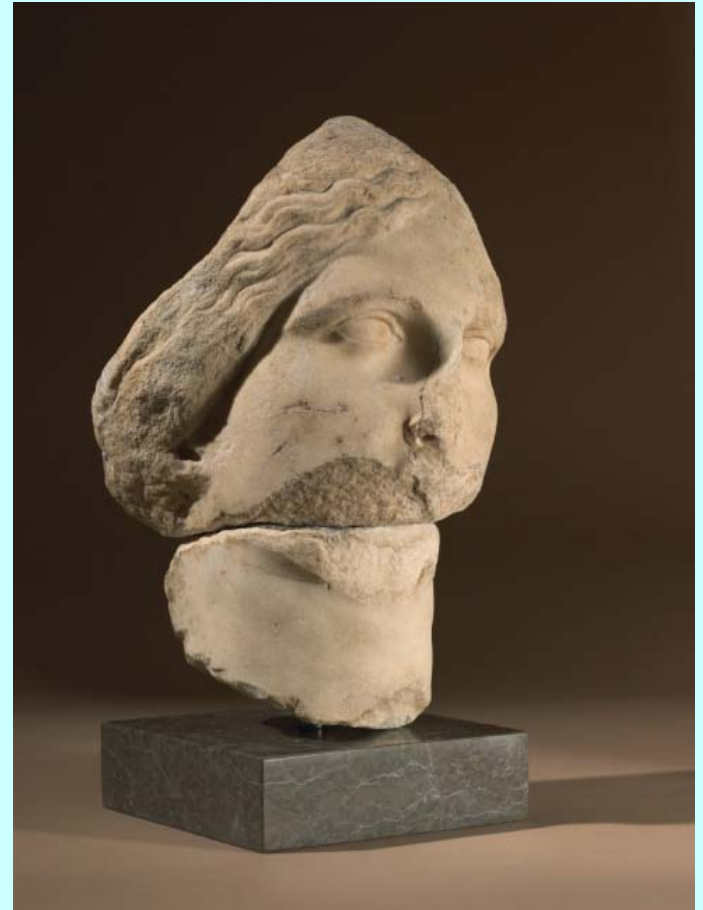


The importance of the two Persephone sculptures from Knidos - Object 1

- This sculpture shows the classical Greek style characteristics of 4 BC, especially the drapery is paralleled on some of the terracotas found in the sanctuary.
 - The position and the form of the statuette, holding a pomegranate flower, with her tragic and sad face, completely represents the myth of Persephone.
 - The marble of this sculpture and also others that are in British Museum is the same with the marble of well-known structure Parthenon.
 - This statuette also was used after the Greek times by Christians as a Madonna during their religious ceremonies.
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The importance of the two Persephone sculptures from Knidos - Object 2

Marble Head of a woman, perhaps Persephone, 350-330 BC. This much battered head probably belonged to a full length statue of Persephone, one of a number of votive statues standing in the sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos.

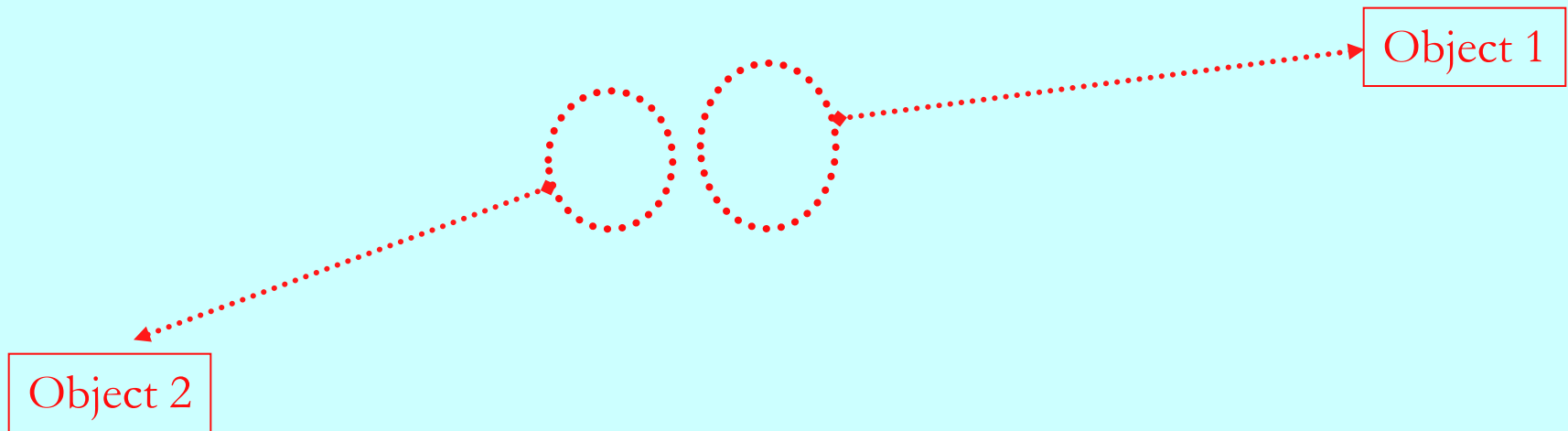


The importance of the two Persephone sculptures from Knidos - Object 2

American archaeologist Iris Love, who was the former excavator of Knidos in 1970s, claimed that this sculpture was the head of one of the world's greatest pieces of sculpture called Aphrodite, missing for 1500 years. But many of the scholars were against to her claim and they believed that this head to be that of Persephone, and not of Aphrodite, goddess of love. Therefore, one of an ordinary sculpture of Persephone from Knidos suddenly became very famous during the 1970s and there were lots of newspapers about it. The argument about the origin and the name of this sculpture continues today.

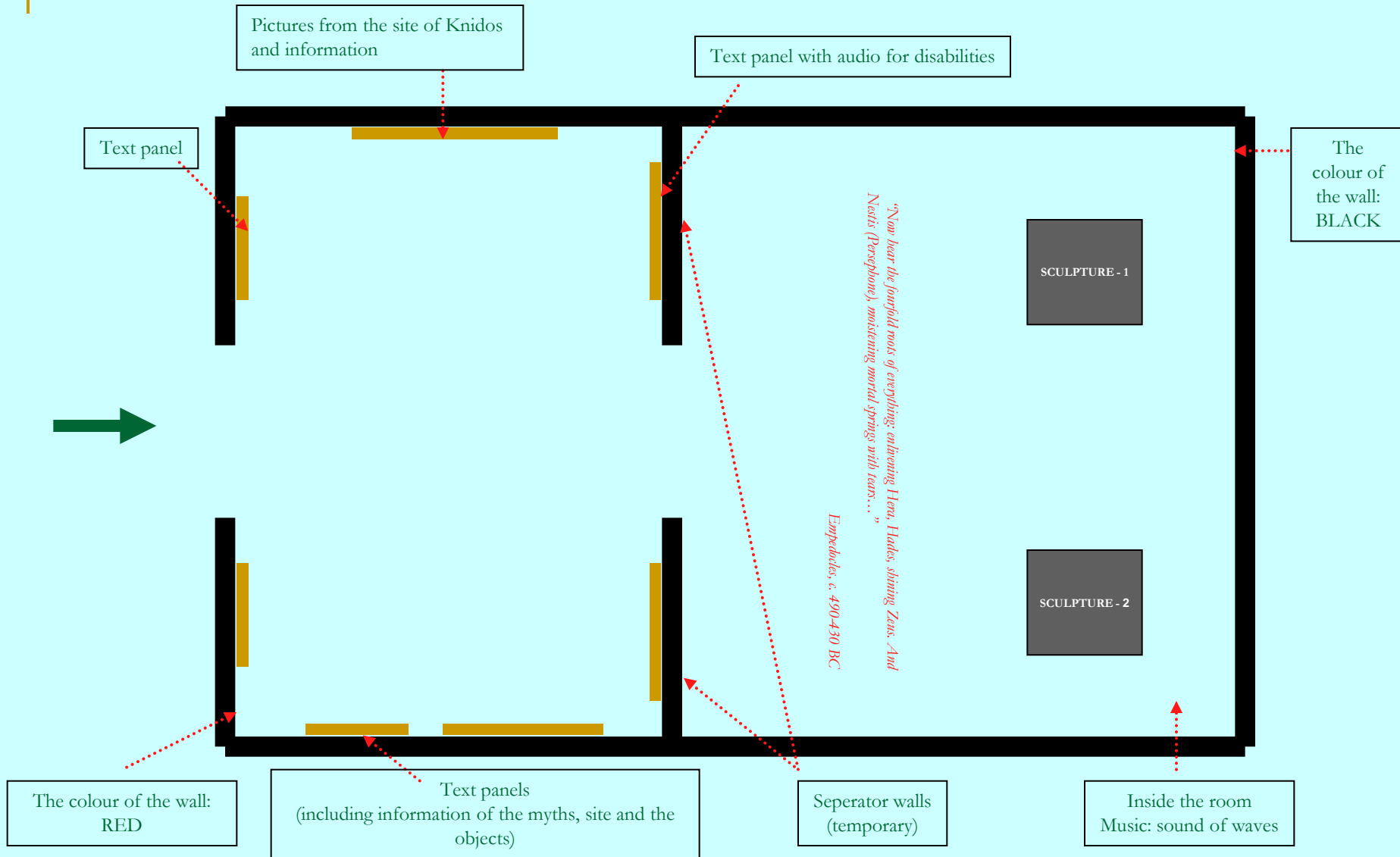


The positions of the objects in the British Museum

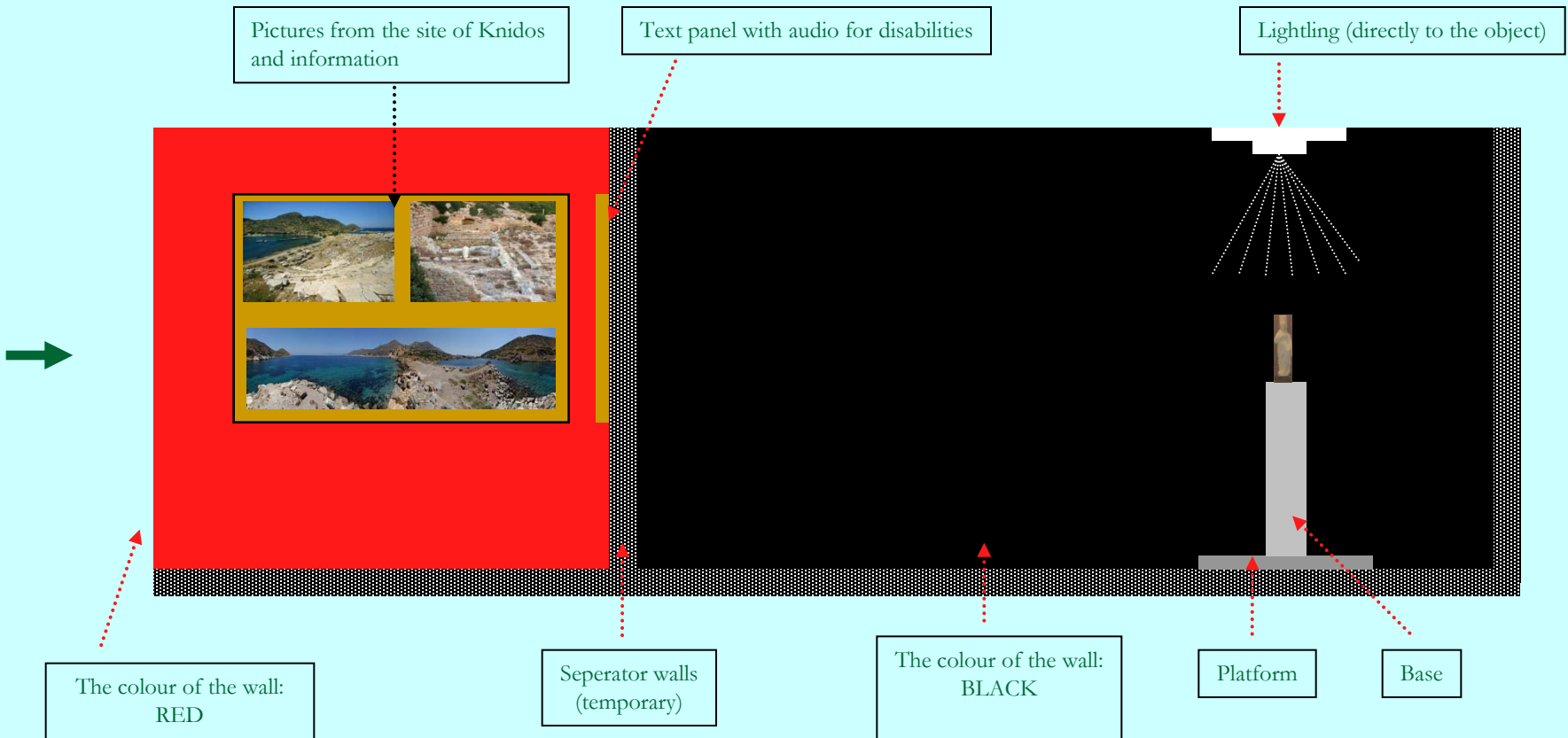


“Gallery 22: The world of Alexander”

The British Museum, Room 3 – Simple Plan



The British Museum, Room 3 – Vertical Section



The British Museum, Room 3 – 3D View



Persephone :
The Daughter of Knidos

Two Stories about Persephone's sculpture from ancient city Knidos



0-3 1 July 2011

The British Museum, Room 3

THE
BRITISH
MUSEUM



Republic of Turkey
Ministry of Culture and Tourism



Seljuk University of Konya

The products to promote the exhibition

- Books (about Knidos, Greek Mythology and sculpture)
 - Mirror for handbags (included two pictures of Persephone on its both sides)
 - Copy of the sculptures
 - Memory stick including 3D film of exhibition and site of Knidos
 - Fan, including the pictures of Persephone sculptures or Knidos
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