Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt

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Bronze votive offerings

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The bronzes discussed here cover a relatively wide range of objects discovered at Naukratis, including votive boxes, bronze figures and fittings for figures as well as models of cult equipment.¹ This type of material was usually deposited as an offering to the gods in Egyptian animal necropoleis, temples or shrines, and sometimes could have been used in the performance of cult activities (Hill and Schorsch 2007, especially 153–9; Weiss 2012, 463–92; Heinz forthcoming; on the more general question of deposition practices and terminology, see particularly Osborne 2004). A possible amuletic function should not be completely dismissed for some of the small bronzes provided with a loop for suspension. Chiefly of Pharaonic style, they are an important testimony of Egyptian religious practices and beliefs in Naukratis that are otherwise not particularly well attested in textual sources. They reflect a range of cults practised on a local and regional scale in the Saite nome or even across the wider Delta.

Katja Weiss lists 121 finds from Naukratis in her recent significant work on Lower Egyptian bronzes (Weiss 2012). The research conducted since 2012 has raised this amount to almost 300. This number includes a small category not discussed by Weiss, models of sacred equipment, but also numerous previously unpublished figures and fittings. Among them is an important group of 31 finds seemingly deaccessioned by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, known merely through old black and white photographs and the museum’s register, which we are able to include here courtesy of the MFA. This important increase in known pieces calls for a review of some of Weiss’s interpretations of the Egyptian bronze votives from Naukratis.

Included in this catalogue are a few figures from the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam, formerly part of Friedrich Wilhelm von Bissing’s collection. They are said to have been found in Naukratis (van Gulik 1940, 56, nos 73–80). Their origin, however, is very dubious since they do not match the rest of the bronze finds from Naukratis. They often feature a more Hellenistic style as well as Greek subjects – such as Psyche, Eros or a ‘thorn-puller’ (spinario). The same observation can be made with their faience collection, which differs widely from the usual amulets and other figurines found on the site (see the forthcoming chapter on scarabs, scaraboids and amulets).

A note on terminology and scope: the term ‘bronze’ used in this chapter is purely nominal since no analysis of the alloy was carried out on these objects. Future analyses of some of these votives should provide more detailed information on the metal composition. In the catalogue, the term ‘copper alloy’ is used to denote ‘bronze’ objects. Only the major groups of bronze votives and their main characteristics are discussed below.

¹ All images in this chapter are © Trustees of the British Museum unless otherwise indicated.
1. Contexts of discovery in Naukratis

In 1885, local villagers digging in the mound of Naukratis exposed a large assemblage of Egyptian bronzes in a building located in the southern part of the ancient settlement (Petrie 1886a, 41–2; Weiss 2012, 442–6; discussed in detail in Masson forthcoming a). Although Petrie spent some time and effort to retrieve the finds and subsequently excavated what was left from the cache himself, ‘a large quantity, apparently all the best of the things’ was never recovered (Petrie 1886a, 41; see also Petrie Journal 1884–5, 147–53; Quirke 2010, 116–18). The bronzes were found associated with a few other types of finds, including two fragmentary Attic squat lekythoi, on the basis of which Petrie dated the cache to the early Ptolemaic Period (Petrie 1886a, 42).

However, in the light of our reassessment of the material, it is now clear that these lekythoi are characteristic of the late 5th–early 4th century BC. This date accords well with the general character of the offerings in the assemblage, which are more typical of the Late Period than the Ptolemaic period (Masson forthcoming a).²

Petrie collected 145 bronzes from this cache, but only provided a very brief description of them. Weiss believed that all the bronzes from Naukratis she gathered for her publication stemmed from this particular findspot (Weiss 2012, 442–6). Yet the overall quantity of bronze votives now recognized as coming from Naukratis is double that of Petrie’s number, including several figures clearly discovered in later seasons. It is therefore obvious that many figures must also have been discovered in other areas of the site.

Caches such as this one constitute a rather common phenomenon in Egypt. They are usually a secondary context for votive objects, which were initially buried inside or in the vicinity of temple precincts (Spencer 2007, 29; see examples from the Delta listed in Weiss 2012, 381–462, as well as cases of caches from Egypt and Sudan analysed in Bell 2011). ‘Such caches […] probably resulted from periodic clearances of the shrines when they became too cluttered with offerings. Since the offerings were the property of the god, they could not be destroyed or sold and so were buried within the sacred precincts’ (Nicholson 2005, 12).³

This view is shared by various specialists, although any

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² Individual artefacts from this context can nonetheless have a quite heterogeneous date, not necessarily in the transition between the 5th and 4th centuries. As S. Davies and H.S. Smith noted about the numerous caches of bronze offerings found in North Saqqara ‘[…] the date of deposition of the caches has no necessary relation to the date of manufacture of the objects in them’ (Davies and Smith 1997, 123).

³ The existence of such caches implies a strong non-recycling policy in Egypt for votive offerings made in bronze. The melting down of bronze votives to produce new votive statuettes is attested elsewhere, notably in the Greek cultural area (Lindström and Pitz 2013, especially 269; see also their reference to the bronze workshop in ‘Almaqah sanctuary in the oasis of S. irwāh in Yemen).
generalization on the burial of caches should be avoided. The original place of deposit of the votive objects from the cache of bronzes at Naukratis was thus probably within the Great Temenos, though the presence of other cultic Egyptian buildings cannot be ruled out. Weiss interpreted the context of discovery as commercial rather than votive and suggested that the bronzes may have been intended for sale to devotees on their way to a temple in Sais (Weiss 2012, 446). Such an interpretation, however, does not fit the general picture of the Egyptian votives discovered in Naukratis (the meanings to be derived from the find contexts are further analysed in Masson forthcoming a and b). Griffith (Petrie Notebook 150, entry by Griffith for 7 January 1885) and Hogarth (Hogarth Diary 1903, entry for Saturday 2nd May) recorded the presence of bronzes among numerous other Egyptian votive offerings and other objects in the proximity of the Great Temenos, mainly outside, but also inside the enclosure wall. These observations point towards the existence of genuine, dynamic Egyptian ritual practices and beliefs at Naukratis.

2. Votive boxes

With more than a hundred specimens identified, votive boxes – also known in the literature as relic boxes, animal or votive coffins – form a significant proportion of the votive bronzes from Naukratis (on their function and nature see Thum 2012). The examples from Naukratis are usually small-sized rectangular boxes surmounted by the figure of an animal. Three examples display a case shaped like a naos (shrine) with a moulding around the top and bottom (Fig. 1). They all seem to be uninscribed, at least as far as can be determined from their varied state of preservation. One inscribed votive box, said to come from Naukratis, was purchased by Kirklees Museums from Sotheby’s in 1966 (KLMUS 1984.5041; information kindly provided by Katina Bill, Curator at Kirklees Museums and Galleries). Since it differs from the rest of the Naukratis votive boxes and its provenance is uncertain, it was decided not to include this specimen in the catalogue.

Votive boxes were supposedly meant to contain the mummified body, or part thereof, as a specimen of the creature represented on the top of the box (see the X-ray performed on a snake votive box: Grilleto 2000, 69, cat. no. 43). Remains of linen, plaster and/or clay, hair and bones are visible inside some of the Naukratite cases. Even if each and every one of them is unique, such votive offerings are generally characterized by poor

For example Bell 2011, 411: ‘A common motivation for such activity was the need to clean up an overcrowded site to make room for new donations, particularly along processional ways – perhaps before renovations were undertaken. A related reason was to avoid the possibility of damage being done during expected hostile actions. An open area in the floor of a temple was a favourite spot for digging protective dumps.’ See also Bonnet and Valbelle 2006, 174–82: after listing various cases of caches, it becomes clear to the authors that it is difficult to draw generalities about the function of these ritual deposits (Bonnet and Valbelle 2006, 180).
workmanship and often show a high degree of standardization in size and shape (Ogden 2000, 160; on the manufacture of votive boxes, see Thum 2012, 25–35). Many were likely produced in the same workshop, maybe at Naukratis itself or in the nearby important cultic centre of Sais.

At Naukratis, votive boxes are almost exclusively topped by figures of reptiles (see chart below). Lizard boxes form by far the largest group (Weiss 2012, 278–9, 731–8, pl. 42g-i, Typ T 15) (Fig. 2). They are followed by boxes with snakes, usually shown coiled forming a figure of eight (Weiss 2012, 278, 727–31, pl. 42d-e and 75 f, Typ T 14) and cobras with their heads erect (Weiss 2012, 276–7, 725–7, Typ T 13). Some variants with a combination of the same or different reptiles are also attested. Several boxes are topped with an eel (Weiss 2012, 267–8, 720–1, pl. 40, Typ T 5), including the longest votive box within the Naukratis corpus (Fig. 3). Rarer types show a falcon (Fig. 1) (Weiss 2012, 287, 747–54, pl. 45d-i, Typ T 23), a cat (Weiss 2012, 792, pl. 50a, Typ T 33) and an Egyptian mongoose (Weiss 2012, 307–8, 800–1, Typ T 40). One bronze box topped with two human-headed cobras may also pertain to the category of votive boxes, though this case might in fact not contain any mummified remains and be just a small base for a bronze figure (on this type of figure see Weiss 2012, 656–7, pl. 26a-c, Typ 87).

Many of the votive boxes originate from the ‘cache of bronzes’ (99 of them were collected by Petrie: Petrie 1886a, 41). However, there are discrepancies between Petrie’s list of the contents of this cache and the votive boxes identified so far from Naukratis, with major differences between the numbers for each species represented on the boxes (Masson forthcoming a). As mentioned above, it is quite possible that some of the votive boxes presented in this catalogue come from other contexts in Naukratis. Griffith, for example, signalled ‘several bronze reptile cases’ in a trench dug outside the enclosure wall of the Great Temenos (Petrie Notebook 150 entry by Griffith for 7 January 1885).

The creature represented on and allegedly contained in the box is usually associated with the deity to whom the box was offered as a votive. Lizards, eels and snakes are ordinarily associated with Atum (Myśliwiec 1978; 1981). The cult of this solar and demiurge (creator god) deity was particularly active in Sais (Myśliwiec 1979; on a few similar relic boxes from Sais see Roeder 1956, 387, § 518h; Kessler 1989, 41; Vittmann 2003, 162; Weiss 2012, cat. nos 720, 744 and 755) and Bubastis (Weiss 2012, cat. nos 797–800). The composite human-headed cobra mentioned above is also closely related to Atum, as often is the Egyptian mongoose of which one bronze ‘mummy-case’ was discovered in the Naukratis cache (Fig. 4). The mongoose, however, can also be associated with Horus of Letopolis (Weiss 2012, 178–80 and 308–9). An alternative interpretation would be to see in these boxes early evidence for the local cult of a snake
called Shena, ‘the One who repels’, which is attested in Naukratis in the early Ptolemaic period (Masson forthcoming b; on Panehemis, priest of the snake Shena see Leitz 2011; Guermeur 2005, 132–3).

3. Figures

About 160 figures and figure-fittings were collected during the excavations at Naukratis. The deities that can be identified in their anthropomorphic or theriomorphic forms were usually revered in Sais or in the wider Delta region, but also locally. Some of them also appear in other categories of material, such as glazed composition or as stone amulets (Masson forthcoming b).

3.1 The Osirian triad

A significant proportion of the Naukratite bronzes relate to the Osirian triad – Osiris, Isis and Harpokrates (57 figures identified).5 Once they appear all together, on an amuletic bronze (Weiss 2012, 351, 846, Nr. 1244, pl. 60g, Typ G30a) (Fig. 5).

Osiris is by far the most frequently represented deity in the corpus. Following the typology of Weiss, images of him appear to belong to four main types: types 81 (13 identified examples) (Fig. 6), 82 (2 identified examples), 85 (2 identified examples) and 86 (3 identified examples). He is always represented mummiform and standing, his hands holding against his chest the sceptre Heka and the flail Nekhekh, with his hands either side by side (types 81 and 85) or one above the other (types 82 and 86). He wears an Atef crown, composed of the white crown flanked by

5 Their cult appears to have been favoured by some inhabitants of Naukratis since the 26th Dynasty: a stela records that in the year 16 of Amasis (554 BC) a Naukratite made a donation for the monthly luminary ritual which was performed every new moon in front of the cult statues of Osiris, Horus and Isis in a shrine located in a village between Naukratis and Sais (on the stela 8499 of the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg see El-Sayed 1975, 53–61, pl. 8; Meeks 1979, 616, n. 34, 634, n. 113, 630 no. 28.5.16; Yoyotte 1991–2, 642–4; De Meulenaere 1993, 18, n. 56).
two ostrich feathers, with (types 85 and 86) or without (types 81 and 82) horizontal ram horns. Types 81 and 82 have parallels in various sites of the Delta, such as Sais, Herakleion, Bubastis, Athribis, Saqqara, Memphis and Tanis, notably in Late Period contexts (type 81: Weiss 2012, 171–2, 627–33, pl. 22b–i; type 82: Weiss 2012, 172–3, 633–9, pl. 23a–l). Type 85 appears already in the 25th dynasty and goes on into the Late Period, particularly in the Memphite region, Sais, Tell Nebesheh, Bubastis and Athribis (Weiss 2012, 175–7, 641–9, pl. 24f–j). Type 86 is also well attested in Late Period contexts, mainly in the Memphite region, but also in Sais and Bubastis (Weiss 2012, 177–8, 649–56, pl. 25a–h).

After Osiris, the most commonly depicted deities are Isis and Harpokrates. The group of Isis nursing Horus/Harpokrates appears regularly in the Naukratis corpus with at least nine examples identified (on this type of figure see Weiss 2012, 330–1, 822–33, pl. 56, Typ G12) (Fig. 7). The popularity of this group-figure can also be observed elsewhere in Egypt during the Late and Ptolemaic periods (Grenier 2002, 51–8, pls VIII–X; Goddio and Fabre 2008, 318–19 nos 178–80; Roeder 1956, §303–14).

Individual representations of Isis are also known. One winged Isis was discovered in the cache of bronzes (Petrie Museum, London, UC16468). This rare type is otherwise attested in Sais and the Memphite region (Weiss 2012, 245–7, 701–2, pl. 36d-f, Typ 139). Naukratis also yielded a bronze (British Museum, 1885.1101.91) depicting Isis (or, less likely, Hathor) standing, with parallels known from Athribis, Bubastis, Memphis and North Saqqara (Weiss 2012, 230–1, 687–8, pl. 33h–j, Typ 126).

Bronze figures of the child deity Harpokrates alone were common in Egypt during the Late and Ptolemaic periods (Weiss 2012, 126–57, Typ 41–69, pls 11–19), chiefly in the Delta, where his cult was particularly developed (Sandri 2006). At Naukratis he was especially popular, appearing in a large number of small votives and amuletic figures in a variety of materials and shapes (Masson forthcoming b). He is depicted in a traditional way, as a naked child wearing the sidelock of youth, with one hand held close to his mouth (Weiss 2012, 130–1, 576–81, pl. 11f–h and pl. 12a–b, Typ 43; 138–9, 589–92, pl. 14, Typ 51; 145–6, 603–6, pl. 16g–h and 17a–b, Typ 58) or having both of his arms along his body (Weiss 2012, 128–30, 573–6, pl. 11c–e, Typ 42; 137–8, 587–8, pl. 13c–f, Typ 50; 147, 606–7, pl. 17c–e, Typ 59).

Bronzes representing Osiris, as well as the other members of the Osirian triad – Isis and Harpokrates – are conspicuous in Late Period and Ptolemaic bronze votive deposits all over Egypt (see, for example, the large caches from North Saqqara, where members of the Osirian triad make up three-quarters of the bronze figures: Emery 1970, 6; see also Davies 2007). In the Saite nome, the Osirian cult is important in Sais itself, as stressed...
by Weiss (Weiss 2012, 445), but also on a more local scale (Masson forthcoming a and b).

3.2 Other deities

Several other deities are depicted, but only with one or very few occurrences each. Some of them are discussed briefly below (for further discussion see Masson forthcoming b).

Bronzes related to the local triad, composed of Amun, Mut and Khonsu, are scarce, as in the rest of the Delta. Amun appears in two bronzes (one of them illustrated in Gardner 1888, pl. XV, no. 12). Several elements of Shuti headaddresses, combining two tall ostrich feathers above a sun-disc, could have crowned additional figures of Amun, but such crowns were also worn by other deities (see below). Only one amuletic figure of Khons was identified (British Museum, 1885,1101.92) (Wei

ss 2012, 164–6, 622–4, pl. 20f–l, Typ 76), and no figures of Mut could be recognized with certainty.

The Memphite triad – Ptah, Sekhmet and Nefertum – is rather better represented. Nefertum especially, whose cult developed significantly during the Late Period, appears in a series of amuletic bronzes (Weiss 2012, 105–6, 557–61, pl. 8c-e, Typ 27; see also amuletic figures in bronze and lead from Herakleion/Thonis: Goddio and Fabre 2008, 191, no. 323; Heinz 2011, 217). Usually very schematic and of poor craftsmanship, only the presence of Nefertum’s distinctive headdress – made of an open lotus flower surmounted by high plumes and menat counterpoises on the sides – allows the identification of the deity in small figures (Fig. 8). Apis, originally regarded as a manifestation of Ptah, is depicted in a few bronzes in Naukratis, as a walking bull, crowned with a sun disc with uraeus in front. Such figures find parallels, dated to the Late and Ptolemaic periods, in a few Delta sites and first of all in the Memphite region, the centre of the Apis cult (Roeder 1956, § 411–13; Weiss 2012, 293–5, 758–79, pl. 47, Typ T 28).

Bronzes depicting the cat-headed goddess Bastet and her son, the lion-headed god of war Mahes (Fig. 9), are fairly recurrent in the bronze corpus. The sites of Bubastis and Leontopolis – where these gods were predominantly revered – have yielded similar votives (on the cult of Bastet, see Kessler 1989, 150–4; on Mahes bronzes see especially Weiss 2012, 201–2, 666–9, pls 29 a–d, 73, Typ 106). For example, the bronze group featuring Bastet revered by the king (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 86.264) (Weiss 2012, 836–7, pl. 57f–g, no 1215, Typ G 15a) finds a parallel in a group of Bastet with an adorant from Bubastis (Weiss 2012, no. 1216, pl. 57g). In addition the bronzes featuring a seated cat (on this type of animal figure see Weiss 2012, 297–300, Typ T 32–4; for examples from Bubastis see Weiss 2012, 385–90) are related to Bastet; they comprise figures on a base and small amuletic figures with a loop for suspension (Fig. 10).
According to the dedication inscribed on it, one base (British Museum, 1885,1101.74) (mentioned in Petrie’s Journal as coming from the ‘bronze cache’: Masson forthcoming a) belongs to a figure of Neith, the patron goddess of Sais (on this type of figure see Weiss 2012, 242–3, 693–8, pl. 35d-I, Typ 136 or 137). Since Naukratis probably acted as the international harbour of Sais during the 26th dynasty (Bernand 1970, 620–1, 624), it is plausible that Naukratis was sensitive to the major cult of Neith in Sais and this figure could denote some cultic connection between the two towns. In contrast, the single bronze of Min (or Amun-Min) is most probably associated with the local cult of the fertility god. Min’s cult at Naukratis is documented by the colossal statue of Horemheb (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, CG1230) who – as the inscription on the statue’s back-pillar indicates – was his prophet in Naukratis during the early Ptolemaic period (on this sculpture, see especially Yoyotte 1994-95, 671–3; Derchain 2000, 42–3, 69–74; Guermeur 2005, 135–7).

### 3.3 Fittings for figures

Although the bronze statues discussed so far are all of small size, the presence of larger Egyptian statues can be inferred from several fittings in bronze, sometimes with remains of glass inlays, found during the early excavations in Naukratis.

Elements of Atef and Hathoric crowns (such as Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 86.331 and 86.293) were probably used for larger figures of Osiris and Isis, though other deities can wear similar crowns (on the Atef crown, see Weiss 2012, 30, 34–5, figs 3.4, 3.12, 3.13, 4.4; on Hathoric crowns, see Hill and Schorsch 2007, 151 note 5; Weiss 2012, 868–70, pl. 68a-c). Insignia of power - a Heka sceptre and a flail Nekhekh - in copper alloy, inlaid with coloured glass paste, probably belonged to a statue of Osiris (Fig. 11). The two tall ostrich feathers (Shuti) also appear regularly in the corpus of fittings (for example, World Museum, Liverpool, 9,9,86,109). They can belong to various crowns worn by different Egyptian deities, such as Amun, Harpokrates or Horus (Weiss 2012, 31–4, 38–9, figs 3.6, 3.12 and 4.10a). Divine beards (e.g. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 86.290) were associated with male Egyptian gods or the deceased pharaoh (Weiss 2012, 39, fig. 5.1; similar fitting from Herakleion: Goddio and Fabre 2008, no. 211).

Naukratis also yielded several fittings belonging to theriomorphic figures. They are almost exclusively claws likely to come from falcon figures (Fig. 12). Falcon figures are common in Lower Egypt, especially in the falcon complex and catacomb in North Saqqara (Weiss 2012, 738–45, pl. 43c–f and 44, Typ T18–19). This bird of prey is often associated with Horus (Weiss 2012, 281–2), though several other deities and the pharaoh himself are also linked with this form (David and Smith 2005, 54). Other fittings for bird’s figures include an ibis’ head (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE27205), a bird associated to Thoth and a very common...
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Several good sized fittings were also discovered in the Naukratis bronze cache. Petrie listed notably ‘two snakes’ (Petrie 1886a, 41), which could be a fitting from a crown (and which could, in fact, be one of the three extant pairs of cobras: Fig. 14). They probably belonged to a rather large statue, perhaps a cult statue, made predominantly of perishable material and possibly representing Osiris (Masson forthcoming b). Such a hypothesis is based on comparable cases elsewhere. In the main Late Period cache of votives that Emery excavated in North Saqqara, for example, a large wooden statue of Osiris was discovered along with 102 smaller statuettes of deities, chiefly in bronze and representing members of the Osirian triad (Emery 1970, 6). A similar pattern was observed in the deposit of votive bronzes dated to the late 5th century BC, discovered in the temple of Osiris-ıu in ‘Ayn Manawir: a large, but fragmentary, cult statue of Osiris dominated the assemblage composed of 400 bronzes and other objects (Wuttmann, Coulon and Gombert 2008, 167, fig. 72; on the central cult statue and the accompanying abundant statuettes being all possibly ‘regarded as loci for a divine presence’ see Hill and Schorsch 2007, 154).

4. Models of sacred equipment

A further category among the votive bronzes is sacred equipment used in Egyptian rituals. The objects included in this group range from minute models that could be used as small offerings or amulets to fittings for larger figures or life-sized elements of sacred equipment possibly later dedicated as votives. Some of the mirrors discovered at Naukratis, which could have been deposited as ex-votos, are not discussed in this section. They
tend to have more a domestic function than a religious one (on mirrors as offerings or part of the funerary equipment, see Robinson 2010, 219–20).

4.1 Situlae

A situla is a slender, bag-shaped vase, ending in a simple pointed base or a more pronounced button-shaped base (type discussed for example in Lichtheim 1947; on their meaning see also Derriks and Delvaux 2009, 206–10). Two vertical suspension rings for a handle are usually welded to opposite sides of the mouth. The vessels were ordinarily used for libations of water, milk or other liquids in the context of divine or funerary cults (Junker 1913, 10; Lichtheim 1947, 171–4; on the link between these ritual vases and Osirian/Isiac cults, see Goddio and Fabre 2008, 328, no. 249). However, all seven situlae discovered in Naukratis are mere models, measuring between 3.1 and 9.5cm in height (Fig. 15). Both models and full-sized situlae are common among the metal objects of the Late and Ptolemaic Period, particularly between the 4th and 2nd centuries BC. A sealed context in Ashkelon, dated to the late 7th century BC, produced seven models of situlae with an offering tray and a figure of Osiris (Bell 2011). They were mass-produced votives that visiting devotees dedicated in temples and shrines (see the chapter on situlae in Green 1987, 66–115; for a large votive burial in North Saqqara containing essentially situlae see Nicholson and Smith 1996; Nicholson 2004; Nicholson 2005). Situlae similar to those discovered in Naukratis have not only been discovered in Egypt, but in Nubian, Near-Eastern, Cypriot and Greek contexts (Bell 2011, 406–16).

Most situlae from Naukratis appear to be undecorated and uninscribed, though corrosion may hide some details of the original surface. One situla, nevertheless, preserves a low-relief decoration consisting of a dedicant making offerings to several deities (1885,1101.102). The ithyphallic god Min (or Amun-Min) appears to be the main beneficiary (for a close parallel, see the decorated situlae from North Saqqara: Green 1987, 66). Min was one of the deities revered in Naukratis, as discussed above in relation to the bronze figure of Min.

4.2 Ceremonial staffs

A few models of ceremonial staffs are known from Naukratis. Two are papyriform and surmounted by a raised cobra (Weiss 2012, 276, 725, pl. 42a-b, Typ T 12a; see also Davies and Smith 2005, 108, pl. LVI c). One of them was discovered in the bronze cache. Cobras, as seen earlier, are well represented in the votive bronzes from Naukratis. Considering the small size of the staffs, they could have been just dedicatory models, rather than items actually used during processions. An interesting staff finial in the form of a ram’s head (Fig. 16) may be connected to the local cult
of the ram-headed god Amun-Ra Baded in Naukratis (on this cult, see for example Guermeur 2005, 126–38; on similar finials in bronze, see Weiss 2012, pl. 65 b-f; Davies and Smith 2005, 93, pl. XLVI c).

4.3 Sistra

Sistra are famous sacred musical instruments used in the cults of various Egyptian deities, mainly goddesses like Hathor, Isis, Bastet or Sekhmet (see e.g. Hickmann 1949a, 76–103, pls XLV–LXX; Pinch 1993, 143–6; Ziegler 1979, 31–62; Ziegler 1984). Seven, maybe eight, sistra, made of bronze and faience, were discovered in Naukratis. As is customary, the bronze sistra bear a more or less elaborate Hathor-head at the transition between the handle and the arched frame (cf. also e.g. Ziegler 1979, 37; Goddio and Fabre 2008, 334, no. 288). On better preserved examples (see for example the well-restored sistrum from Thebes, Fig. 17) the arch is pierced with holes on opposite sides. Rods running through the holes were fitted with small discs of metal. When shaken, these discs rattled against one another, producing a sound which was believed to propitiate the goddesses. Bar one example (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, JE26846), the bronze sistra from Naukratis are too small to have been used as musical instruments (see Penn Museum, Philadelphia E12 and World Museum, Liverpool, 9,9,86,110). They could have been models offered as votives or used as a fitting for large figures of Bastet.

4.4 Bells, crotals and cymbals

Ten copper alloy bells were retrieved during the early excavations at Naukratis.

At least four bells bear a decoration consisting of animal heads protruding in high relief and one of them is further decorated with a Bes head in low relief (Fig. 18). Two additional examples are too corroded for any decoration to be identified though the presence of two clear protrusions might indicate similar animal heads. As is the case with closely similar bells, the animals probably correspond to mythological animals, a ram, a jackal and/or a lioness (Anderson 1976, 32–4, nos 33–8; Hickmann 1949a, pls XXIII and XXVI; Petrie 1914, 28, pls XLIV no. 124c and XLVI no. 124d). A ram’s head can be easily identified for instance on Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 86.317. They are often dated to the Ptolemaic or the Roman period. Most of the Naukratite examples were found in the cemetery (see Gardner 1888, 28, pl. XVI, no. 7), which yielded much material of the early Ptolemaic period, i.e. the late 4th to late 3rd century BC. In this context, they are likely to have had an amuletic function. Petrie observed that bells were worn on a bracelet, possibly by children in their burials, and suggested that they were meant to protect them against the evil eye (Petrie 1914, 28, pl. XV, no. 124 a–b).
Two of the undecorated bells are hemispherical, very thin-walled and their tops are pierced by a small hole. As well-preserved crotals (e.g. Ziegler 1979, 69, cat. no. IDM 92–3) suggest, such bells would have been placed along the handles or at the top end of a crotal, a kind of clapper used during ritual performances (on this type of instrument see Hickmann 1949b; Ziegler 1979, 65–70, especially cat. no. IDM 92-IDM98 for crotal bells similar to the Naukratite specimens). This instrument, known in the whole Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean world, was introduced quite late into Egypt in the Roman period (Ziegler 1979, 66).

Another percussion instrument possibly discovered at Naukratis is a cymbal: the distribution list of the Egypt Exploration Fund notes a ‘bronze cymbal’ among the objects received – and later deaccessioned (and today no longer traceable) – by the Chautauqua Institution in New York. While we cannot be sure if this is indeed a cymbal or if a bell is meant by the term, cymbals are certainly already attested in the Levant in the third millennium BC and appear to have been introduced into Egypt during the Hellenistic or Roman period (on cymbals, see particularly Hickmann 1949b). It has been suggested that they were introduced from Greece and are associated with the diffusion of the worship of Attis and Cybele (Ziegler 1979, 64).

4.5 Aegides

The early excavations at Naukratis provided three aegides in copper alloy and different in size, style and method of manufacture. An aegis is a broad collar topped by the head of a deity, principally goddesses and chiefly Isis, Hathor and Sekhmet as well as other lion-headed goddesses (Grenier 2002, 187–91; Roeder 1956, § 633–40; Weiss 2012, 852–8, pls 63–4) (Fig. 19). The aegis can be used as an amulet or maybe as a fitting for figures of the cat-headed goddess Bastet.

4.6 Offering table

One model representing an Egyptian offering table was discovered in Naukratis (Fig. 20). It is rectangular in shape with a central projecting channel in front (reproducing the shape of a Htp-offering table). Two figures of a couchant lion (?) are placed in the two back corners, while a frog is shown sitting astride the channel. According to Teeter (1994, 257–8), the only mammals attested at the edges of offering tables are jackals or apes. Although, the identification of the couchant lions might be mistaken for jackals, the jackal figures are normally placed consistently at the front edge of offering tables, not at the back (Teeter 1994, 257). Couchant lions are popular in the amuletic material found and/or produced at Naukratis, and they were possibly associated with solar deities, notably Amun-Ra (Masson forthcoming b). Could this offering table reflect a local variation? The much more standard representation of a frog over a spout is strongly associated with the annual flood of the Nile and beyond to ideas of rebirth and regeneration (see for example Hornung...
This type of miniature offering table seems particularly typical of the 4th–2nd century BC (Green 1987, 116–20, nos 447–64; Teeter 1994, 263), though it is attested earlier in the Late Period (for example in the sealed late 7th century BC deposit in Ashkelon, where an offering tray was discovered among seven situlae: Bell 2011, 403–4; for a discussion exploring the link between offering tables and situlae see Teeter 1994, 259–64). The presence of suspension loops could indicate an amuletic function, but it seems more likely that these objects were meant as gifts to the gods (Teeter 1994, 263–4). Several models of offering trays have a chain attached to their suspension ring (Roeder 1956, 433; Teeter 1994, 255–6, fig. 19.1; Bell 2011, 404) and it has been suggested that they could have been suspended to the walls of chapels or other sacred buildings where they were deposited as offerings (Nicholson 2004, 9).