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Organized by Adi Erlich

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Terracottas in the Mediterranean through Time

Keynote Address

2015. The Year of Coroplastic Studies.

Jaimee Uhlenbrock, Professor Emerita, State University of New York at New Paltz;
President, Association for Coroplastic Studies.

Abstracts

Countenances of Clay: Isolated Heads and Terracottas in Pre-Roman
Italy

- 1 Keely Heuer, Associate Professor, State University of New York at New Paltz

Terracotta shoulder busts and protomai

were produced throughout the Italian peninsula and Sicily starting in the mid-seventh century B.C.E. The busts, which stand independently, have their beginnings in Etruria. Protomai, which originated in Ionia in the mid-sixth century and soon after appeared in Sicily, are not self-supporting and therefore leaned against something, were laid flat, or hung on a wall, probably that of a temple or temenos. Overwhelmingly female, these truncated human figures were frequently dedicated to chthonic goddesses in southern Italy and Sicily until the end of the third century B.C.E., such as at the Malophoros sanctuary at Selinus and the Mannella sanctuary at Locri Epizephyrii. Over time, attributes were included such as lotus flowers, pomegranates, cross-bar torches, and piglets, all items associated with Demeter and Persephone. Other female busts have a small winged-figure, presumably Eros, seated in the area of the collarbones, suggesting a connection with Aphrodite, whose chthonic aspect was venerated in Magna Graecia. Busts and protomes are also uncovered in tombs, further underscoring the connection between these objects and the underworld.

Representing the head apart from the body was of particular significance to the indigenous peoples of pre-Roman Italy, unlike their Greek counterparts who tended to conceptualize the human form holistically. The manufacture of busts and protomai are part of a larger phenomenon of utilizing the isolated head in a wide variety of media, especially in the late Classical period, including other types of molded terracottas, such as arulae, pinakes, and thymiateria. This paper explores the consistent use of the isolated head for sacral and funerary terracottas and the connection to the motif's most prolific application as a decorative element on over one third of the red-figure vases produced in southern Italy and Sicily between ca. 440 and the early third century B.C.E.

The Gestures and Symbology of the Terracotta Hands from the Cave of the Nymph Koroneia, Boeotia, Greece

- 2 Stavros Oikonomidis, Professor of Archaeology, Arcadia University, College for Global Studies, Glenside, U.S.A; Arcadia Center, Athens, Greece
Nelli Skumi, Archaeologist, Ephorate of Paleoanthropology and Speleology, Athens, Greece

A collection of terracotta hands discovered during the archaeological investigation of the Cave of the Nymph Koroneia in Boeotia is presented in this paper. This study focuses on the gesticulation of the hands and on the symbology of the gestures on a diachronic basis, throughout a typological paraphrasis from other archaeological contexts of the eastern Mediterranean. This is the study of the hand as a medium of specific types, of a non-verbal form of expression, as a guide, or as the prototype of every immediate way of communication connected with the archetypical mimesis of the silent, though powerful exposure of the human soul. The terracotta

hands from the Cave of the Nymph Koroneia, coming from the context of a huge deposit of ex votos, describe the symbology of the gestures themselves and reveal the character of the offerings in a center of cult and adoration in early Classical, central Greece.

Votive Terracotta Protomai in Greek Sanctuaries and their Settings

- 3 Sanne Hoffmann, PhD Fellow, The National Museum of Denmark & Aarhus University

The purpose of the paper is to study the use of votive terracotta protomai in Greek sanctuaries and the connection between the protomai as votive offerings, the deities to whom they were offered and their aspects, and their relations to the surrounding landscape of the sanctuaries. Greek sanctuaries often connect with the landscape, but certain elements of the setting, such as water, caves, rocks and cliffs may have had a specific impact on how the deities were worshipped – and thus which gifts were more suitable – such as the terracotta protomai. As symbolic, bodiless depictions of females, goddesses or worshippers, the protomai might have had a closer connection with deities shaped by the natural setting, as there were no limitations in gesture and attributes, but rather a more flowing and open symbolic value. The Athana Lindia sanctuary in Lindos, Rhodes, will be the starting point of the study, where, in the period between 525 and 330 B.C.E., more than 700 protomai out of around 2600 votive terracottas were dedicated. The sanctuary is placed on top of an acropolis next to the sea, with the temple itself situated directly above a natural cave in the rock. While considering the relevance and connections of these characteristics of the sanctuary and the aspects of the goddess, the study will seek similarities in other sanctuaries where offerings of protomai are prominent.

Though the symbolic value of votive terracotta protomai has been widely explored, there are still many unanswered questions, whose investigation might bring us closer to an answer, especially when viewed within a broader picture.

Fragments of Identities: The Goddess Parthenos, her Cult, and Worshippers in the light of Terracotta Votives of her Sanctuary in Neapolis (Greece, Modern Kavala)

- 4 Alexandra Prokova, PhD in Classical Archaeology, University of Cologne

The optimistic expectation that one could detect direct and substantial information on the identity of a deity and her cult through the study of the terracotta offerings of a sanctuary seems at first glance not to be confirmed in the case of the goddess of Neapolis. Among hundreds of clay figurines that have been found during the limited exploration of the sanctuary of Parthenos, there are not identifiable representations either of the deity herself or of specific ritual attributes indicating her particularity or her identification with a major Olympic goddess.

However, Parthenos was undoubtedly the poliadic deity of Neapolis, a city on the Thracian coast, founded in the beginning of the sixth century B.C.E. by Thasian settlers. The abundance and the high quality of the excavated votive offerings in her sanctuary, mainly vessels and clay figurines dating from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods, as well as the erection of a monumental, Ionic temple at the beginning of the fifth century B.C.E., suggest a vivid ritual practice.

The fact that the vast majority of the coroplastic offerings reproduce the prevalent, standardized typology of their time, without any alteration, obfuscates the efforts of interpretation. Then again, commonalities can be significant. The predominance of specific female representations of the “Ionic koiné” of the sixth century B.C.E. indicates the affinity between the Parthenos’ cult and the cults of major goddesses in Ionia and the Aegean. The iconological analysis of these common coroplastic types suggests that a main aspect of Parthenos in Neapolis can be recognized in her role as patroness of *parthenoi* and women during the crucial transitions to new phases of their lives.

Figurative Terracottas from a Cave Sanctuary at Paliambela Vonitsas, (Akarnania), West Greece

- 5 Evangelia-Miranda Chatziotou, Ephoreia of Speleology and Palaioanthropology of South Greece, Athens

This paper will present a preliminary report of the results of a rescue excavation conducted between 1993 and 2000 at a cult cave, located approximately 10 km east of Vonitsa, at the south side of the Ambrakikos gulf, in west Greece.

This popular Akarnanian cave shrine, as the abundant archaeological material confirms, was founded at the end of the sixth century B.C.E. and functioned until the late second century B.C.E. Emphasis will be placed on the hundreds of figurative terracottas, mainly figurines, that belonged to circular nymph dances, along with protomai (busts) and figurative clay plaques. What makes this assemblage unique is the significant typological and iconographic variety that provides valuable information about the religious life of the ancient Acarnanians. Additionally, an attempt is made to identify the gods worshipped in the cavern, which will serve as a convenient point of reference in ascertaining the social meanings and religious beliefs demonstrated by these dedications.

The artefacts presented are the product of various coroplastic workshops, so an examination of the iconography and style of this material will enable a recognition of direct or indirect influence. Possible centers of manufacture represented by coroplastic material at the cave site include those from Sicily and south Italy, along with those from Akarnania and its neighboring areas. This indicates a much more complex pattern of distribution, one that may shed light on issues of political influence and lanes of commercial activity.

Terracotta Finds from the Demeter and Kore Sanctuary at ancient Corinth

- 6 Sonia Klinger, Senior lecturer, Department of Art History, University of Haifa

The small finds recovered from the Demeter and Kore Sanctuary at ancient Corinth comprise over 1500 unpublished artifacts connected with cult practice and daily life in a variety of materials including gold, silver and copper, iron, lead, stone, ivory and bone, glass and terracotta, with a chronological span from the Geometric to the late Roman periods. The terracotta artifacts are among the most interesting and significant because they include both finds such as masks and small altars connected with cult practice, as well as loomweights, toys and models of jewelry and food deriving from daily life. The study of these objects is of importance because it may help to identify not only the objects themselves, their date, and place of manufacture, but also their role in daily life and their use by the worshippers and the concerns that brought them to the sanctuary.

My work toward the publication of the sanctuary's small finds allows me the opportunity to present in this paper some of these unpublished terracotta artifacts and discuss their underlying meaning within the sanctuary.

A Glimpse of Large-Scale Terracottas Figures from Gela Workshops in Late-Archaic and Classical Periods

- 7 Marina Albertocchi, Associated researcher, CNR-IBAM, National Research Council of Italy

This paper will focus on large-scale terracotta sculpture from the Bitalemi sanctuary at Gela, in Sicily. This extra-urban sacred area is well known to scholars because of the number and characteristics of its finds, but the freestanding sculpture has not been considered to date. From the sacred area come approximately 20 fragments of terracotta statues belonging both to male and female figures. They were mostly brought to light from the level dating 550 through to the end of the fifth century B.C.E., the so-called *strato 4*.

As noted by N. Bookidis for similar finds from the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore in Corinth, the *trait d'union* that links these statues is the technique of manufacture, more than the dimensions, that present a certain range in scale. Nearly all the statues are in fact handmade, with only some parts obtained by molds.

In the paper we will try to analyze the placement of the statues in relation to the structures of the sanctuary, the range of types represented, and their chronology. Two other issues that will be discussed are the interpretation and identification of the terracotta sculptures that conceivably could be part of architectural decoration, as well as simple votive offerings, or even cult statues. Also to be

explored is their relationship to other products of local coroplastic workshops, such as the large-scale arulae.

The Function and Meaning of the Large Clay Statues from Despotiko

- 8 Yannis Kourayos, Director, Despotiko and director of Paros' Archaeological Museum
 Erica Angliker, University of Zurich
 Kornilia Daifa, Greek Ministry of Culture

A large sanctuary dedicated to Apollo and Artemis has been uncovered on Despotiko, a small Cycladic island not mentioned in any written sources. The structure is of paramount archaeological importance because within the Cyclades, it is surpassed in size and organization only by the one on Delos. Flourishing between the Geometric and Hellenistic periods, the sanctuary revealed thirteen buildings. The excavation has also brought to light numerous marble statues, jewelry, and a small number of both common and fine coroplastic items. Amongst these latter is a large clay statuette initially believed to be a representation of Artemis that served as the sanctuary's cult image. Recent discoveries of more fragments of similar clay statuettes, however, have raised questions about this particular one's function and use at the sanctuary. The aim of this paper is to shed more light on the function and use of these larger clay statues by re-evaluating their use not only in this specific context, but also in the broader region of the Cyclades. In order to determine the statuette's cultic function, the contextual archaeological deposit will be examined, including the co-finds. We will then pay particular attention to the potential similarities and differences in the use of these large clay statuettes and the more conventional female figurines found on Despotiko.

The second half of the paper focuses on the votive use of the statuette at Despotiko by drawing comparisons between the items discovered there and similar coroplastic items that have been found at other Cycladic sanctuaries on Sifnos, Kea, and even Thasos, where the dedication of larger clay statuettes also occurred.

On Sacred Ground: Interpreting Diverse Depositional Contexts at the Pantanello Sanctuary at Metaponto

- 9 Rebecca Miller Ammerman, Professor of the Classics, Colgate University, Hamilton NY

In southern Italy and Sicily, a terracotta figurine or relief plaque served frequently as a votive gift in sanctuaries from archaic to Hellenistic times. An archaeologist may uncover dozens, or even thousands, of such artifacts during the course of an excavation. It is rare, however, to find a terracotta in the original location where a worshipper once placed it as an offering within a sacred precinct. Instead, the archaeologist usually encounters a mass of fragmentary objects in secondary or tertiary deposits. Such an assemblage often displays a wide range of imagery, format, and date.

The proposed paper considers the archaeological context of an assemblage of some 500 votive terracottas excavated at a rural spring sanctuary at Pantanello at the Greek city-state of Metaponto in southern Italy. The terracottas range in date from the sixth to the third century B.C.E. Analysis of the findspots of the individual terracottas reveals patterns in terms of “horizontal” stratigraphy. Variation in the imagery presented by the terracottas in different areas of the shrine requires explanation. Do these differences point to the propitiation of different divinities within the sanctuary? Or do they reflect the performance of different rites? To what extent are social distinctions in terms of age, gender, or ethnic identity at play? Exploration of these questions offers varying vistas from which to appreciate the role that terracottas played in the lives of the individual members of the community.

Hellenistic Grotesque Figurines: Societal Functions on Mainland Greece

- 10 Heather Bowyer, PhD candidate, Arizona State University: The Herberger School for Design and the Arts

The Hellenistic period was rife with cultural change due to the expansion of the Greek world into Asia Minor and Anatolia, the Near East, and Egypt. During this time, there was a growth in popularity of what scholars have termed grotesques. The definition given by Nicholas Himmelmann in his *Realistische Themen in der griechischen Kunst der archaischen und klassischen Zeit* of 1994, p. 98 will be used to define what figurines come under the title of grotesque. He states that they are, “figures characterized by laughable and monstrous distortions.” During the Hellenistic period the figurines were crafted in both terracotta and bronze and depicted human bodily dysmorphia. While produced throughout the Hellenistic world, their popularity at Athens has yet to be thoroughly analyzed.

This paper will present the specific grotesque types found in Athens during the Hellenistic period and explore two of the multiple functions that grotesque figurines had in Athenian society, in funerary ritual, and in their association with the theater and Dionysius. The funerary role will be demonstrated through excavation results from the Kerameikos. Their use relative to the theater will be supported by finds from the theater of Dionysius at Athens. A discussion of New Comedy and its stock character types will lend credence to the popularity of grotesque figurines. The utilization of these miniatures in both contexts shows a cultural shift during the Hellenistic period towards small scale art that people bought for both apotropaic and entertainment purposes. Here, the grotesques serve functions that reflect the needs of those who lived in Athens during the Hellenistic period.

Hellenistic and Roman Imperial Terracottas from Secondary and Primary Contexts in Pergamon and its Region: a Confrontation

- 11 Sven Kielau, Independent Researcher

The majority of the terracottas found on the acropolis of Pergamon since the start of archaeological exploration there in the 19th century were found in secondary contexts. Very little is known about the function and circumstances of their use. The 5,500 terracotta fragments found in secondary contexts on the southern slope of the Pergamon acropolis in the "Stadtgrabung" (city excavation) project can at first glance only be defined as non-sepulchral terracottas. But within the residential area they could have functioned as parts of household inventories, votives, or part of the inventories of a cult association or shop.

To gain more information about these terracottas, I want to compare certain types found in the secondary contexts with earlier published terracottas from primary contexts in and around Pergamon, namely from its sanctuaries (Mamurt Kale, Kapıkaya) and graves (Gambrion/Poyracık, Dünderli, Ketios valley). In addition, comparisons with terracottas from the graves of Myrina prove to be particularly useful. The aim of this project is to outline the important aspects of this corpus and in consequence to draw conclusions regarding the use and meaning of these terracottas, while taking into account existing interpretations. There are numerous images of the Mother of Gods (Cybele), who did not play a role in the grave rituals, but who did appear in rural sanctuaries and in the residential area. Figurines of the "state goddess" Athena were surprisingly rare among the residential area finds from the Stadtgrabung and even less numerous in the already noted primary contexts. The pan-Hellenic "seated dolls" by contrast were recorded in all the noted contexts. Nike and sirene figurines were almost restricted to grave use and are rare in other contexts. Again by contrast, figurines of Eros were very common in all of the noted contexts. A regional type of a boy in a short garment appears both in two Pergamene graves and in the residential area.

Terracotta Figurines and Fertility Cult in Ashqelon in the Byzantine Period

12 Fanny Vitto, Field and Research Archaeologist, Israel Antiquities Authority

In the course of excavations at Barnea, the northern suburb of Ashqelon, three terracotta figurines were discovered on the mosaic floor of a building dating to the Late Byzantine–Umayyad period. They are hand-shaped, made of a coarse red fabric fired at low temperature, and covered with a layer of white slip. They represent naked standing females with a high, triangular head, a large breast, and a circular depression in place of belly. We will examine if the Ashqelon figurines may be connected with a fertility cult and if there is evidence for fertility rites at Ashqelon.

Female figurines with large breasts, holding a baby, or with a pregnant belly, are usually attributed to fertility cults. Though unparalleled, the crudely modeled figurines found at Barnea present obvious features that point to a fertility cult. Ancient written sources and various archaeological finds indicate that fertility cults existed in Ashqelon at least from the Persian period onward. In the Roman period, coins minted in Ashqelon and sculptures adorning public buildings

represent deities who had, among other functions, the role of protecting childbirth and maternity. In the Byzantine period, fertility rites are attested at several sites in the Eastern Mediterranean. In Ashqelon, a number of finds dating to the Byzantine period suggest the existence of a fertility cult. The three terracotta figurines discovered at Barnea provide yet more evidence for such a cult in Byzantine Ashqelon.

From Production to Consumption: Life Histories of Figurines from Cretan Bronze Age Peak Sanctuaries

- 13 Christine Morris, Andrew A. David Senior Lecturer in Greek Archaeology and History, Trinity College Dublin
Alan Peatfield, College Lecturer In Greek Archaeology, University College Dublin

This paper explores the ‘life history’ of the terracotta figurines from the Cretan Bronze Age (or Minoan) mountain shrines known as ‘peak sanctuaries,’ which are found throughout Crete. It uses examples of figurines from the fully excavated site of Atsipadhes in western Crete, and from recent museum-based work on east Cretan sites. Thousands of these handmade figurines—anthropomorphic, animal, and ‘votive limbs’ or body parts—were carried up the mountain to these ritual sites, and there deposited as offerings.

We consider the life history of the figurines from the perspective of both the producers or figurine makers and the consumers. In relation to production, we consider the technology of manufacture, making use of the combined evidence from traditional artefact study, experimental work and 3-D scanning data. Relatively few of the thousands of known figurines have been published, leading to the assumption that peak sanctuary figurines are uniform in types and style across Crete. However, the large body of material from many sites offers the opportunity to explore regional and even site-by-site preferences of figurine forms and styles. In common with many figurine traditions, the Minoan peak sanctuary figurine makers combined miniaturisation with simplification or distillation of the human or animal form. Choices made of what to emphasise or omit are important for exploring Minoan self-representation, from gender and gesture to aspects of bodily adornment, and are expressive of the concerns of the users, which clearly included health and healing.

Understanding the Choices of Artisans in the Production of the Base-Ring Female Figurines from Cyprus

- 14 Constantina Alexandrou, PhD candidate, Department of Classics, Trinity College, Dublin

One of the main categories of figurines produced in Late Bronze Age Cyprus (ca. 1600-1050 B.C.E.), belongs to the family of Base-Ring Ware. This category includes both anthropomorphic (male and female) and zoomorphic figurines, all of a hand-made manufacture. The female figurines of this category constitute the predominant type of anthropomorphic figurines produced in Cyprus during the

ca. 15th-12th centuries B.C.E. Broadly speaking, the handmade female terracottas can be stylistically separated into two groups, each comprising both hollow and solid examples: the so-called 'bird-headed' (Type A) and 'flat-headed' (Type B) figurines. This group of figurines has been found all over Cyprus in domestic, burial and cultic contexts.

This paper focuses on these female figurines, in an attempt to investigate the choices of the artisans in their formation. Such an examination could shed light on the figurines' character, role and use in the society. Elements that might complicate the manufacturing procedure, adding to the time consumed and levels of difficulty are considered to represent deliberate choices of the figurine-makers. The decision of the figurine-makers to produce both solid and hollow figurines, their persistence in hand-made, rather than -made manufacture, and the production of figurines in multiple parts (adding to their fragility) are some of the aspects explored in this paper. Repeated, omitted or emphasised elements are also considered as 'choices of the artisans.' The recording of these features provided the groundwork for reconstructing the technological expertise related to the production of these figurines. In the context of the present paper however, I wish to emphasize how the figurine-makers' choices may indicate the role and function of these figurines as meaningfully constituted objects, identifying at the same time characteristics possibly related with specific practices and different social groups. Consequently, the choices made by the craftsmen during the construction of Base-Ring female figurines form a significant aspect one should take into consideration while studying and interpreting them.

Judean Pillar Figurines and the Organization of Production: Evidence from Jerusalem and Beyond

15 Erin Darby, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Judean Pillar Figurines (JPFs), miniature terracotta females from southern Israel, have received a great deal of attention over the past century. While some interpreters have speculated about the producers of these objects in the eighth through sixth centuries B.C.E., scholarship has largely ignored lines of evidence that might shed light on production organization.

When scholars do comment on JPF production, they most frequently note the "crude" make and manufacture of the figurines and the gender of the objects, concluding that JPFs were made by women or in households on an *ad hoc* basis. On the other end of the spectrum, a few scholars have hypothesized that JPF production was governed by a central authority. These scholars highlight the large numbers of figurines from the capital city, Jerusalem, and the correspondence between JPF distribution and the political borders of Judah.

Unfortunately, neither of these hypotheses has been exposed to close scrutiny, contextualized within ancient Near Eastern ceramics production, or tested by data analysis. In contrast, this paper will examine JPF production in light of ethno-archaeological ceramics studies, ancient Near Eastern descriptions of craftsmen

and potters, known pottery production sites, and a recent petrographic study of figurines from Jerusalem. When combined, these sources call into question both of the dominant paradigms outlined above and suggest a far more nuanced development in the organization of JPF production.

Sculpture in Clay: The Techniques of the Ancient Coroplast

- 16 Nancy Serwint, Associate Professor of Art History, School of Art, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, Arizona State University

The ubiquitous presence of clay allowed for that material to emerge as the most common medium for sculpture in the Mediterranean world during antiquity. With objects ranging from miniature to colossal, the results spanned the spectrum from the sublime to the banal with figurines and statues reflecting a breadth of aesthetic appeal. The artisans who were responsible for such a disparate corpus certainly varied in their artistic capacities, but what proved to be a commonality was a range of technical strategies that could be employed with varied results. This paper will focus on the variety of production techniques that were employed by coroplasts working in the eastern Mediterranean during the first millennium B.C.E. The gamut of manufacturing processes that included hand fashioning, the use of the potter's wheel, and the implementation of the mold will be discussed from the point of view of tactics and stratagems that responded to the demands of an enthusiastic market. Emphasis will be placed on the evidence that has emerged from excavation of the ancient cities of Marion and Arsinoe on the island of Cyprus where an unprecedented number of terracotta sculpture has been recovered. The material is particularly valuable because it not only emanates from an area where local production has been confirmed but also allows for tracking production over time from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods.

"Made in Akragas," Molded Figurines, an Archaeological Experiment

- 17 Gerrie van Rooijen, PhD candidate, Leiden University, the Netherlands

One of the main subjects of this conference that is particularly well suited to my own research is that of manufacture. In cooperation with the Material Culture Studies and the Ceramics Laboratory, I recently carried out an archaeological experiment in order to reconstruct and understand the practices and techniques applied in the production of terracotta figurines. The experiment focused on female figurines from Akragas (Agrigento, Sicily) dated from the sixth–fifth century B.C.E.

The experiment focuses on two aspects of the local production of terracotta figurines at Akragas. The first is the material itself. Questions concerning the availability and workability of clay found nearby could be answered. It was tested for its suitability for local production, since the quantity of figurines found at Akragas clearly indicated local manufacture.

The second focus is on the large-scale manufacture of figurines. This part involves questions on the molds and the effect of a mechanical ‘production line.’ Traces of molds, tool marks, and even fingerprints made it possible to reconstruct the multiple steps in the production process. Different workshops could not only be recognised by their iconographic preferences, but also by the applied techniques. Some features of the manufacture could be seen as typical for the production in Akragas. Contact with coroplasts from nearby Selinus is evident in the production methods. The development of an additional iconographic scheme in the second half of the fifth century B.C.E. is marked by altered techniques as well.

A Technological and Compositional Study of the Hellenistic and Roman Terracotta Figurines from the House of Orpheus in Nea Paphos, Cyprus

- 18 Maria Dikomitou-Eliadou, Archaeological Research Unit, University of Cyprus
 Giorgos Papantoniou, The University of Dublin, Trinity College.
 Eleni Aloupi-Siotis, THETIS Authentics Ltd.
 Vassilis Kilikoglou, National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos.”
 Demetrios Michaelides, Archaeological Research Unit, University of Cyprus.

The terracottas from the House of Orpheus in Nea Paphos, Cyprus, form a significant collection of high-quality ceramic artefacts, all recovered in a well-stratified, domestic environment. They provide an important opportunity to study the technology of their production and assess technological variability through time, within an assemblage coming from one single household. Portable X-ray Fluorescence (pXRF) and Neutron Activation Analysis (NAA) were both used for the chemical characterisation of the terracotta figurines, in order to address compositional variability within the assemblage. The initial analysis of the entire terracotta figurine assemblage by pXRF and their fast sorting into chemical clusters was followed by the selection of a representative sample for NAA. Beyond the testing of the correlation between the two elemental datasets, as well as the identified morphological groupings, the two analytical methods offered the opportunity to assess fabric variability and develop further arguments regarding the production and distribution of various types represented in the assemblage. In correlation with macroscopic observations and 3-dimensional reconstructions of the terracotta figurines, a holistic approach was employed, one that aims at an enhanced understanding of the various stages of the production of the terracotta figurines, from the selection of the raw materials, the shaping of the clay body, to firing and the application of pigments and slips for the decoration, and how these differ in time and/or among contemporary workshops.

Relatives in Province: Sepulchral Appliqué from the First–Second Centuries C.E. Bosphorus: A Phenomenon of Terracotta Reliefs Reissued in Plaster

- 19 Nadia C. Jijina, Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

The State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg holds a fascinating collection of small relief items made of white painted plaster (gypsum or gesso) that once were used for decorating wooden sarcophagi. They date back to the first–second centuries C.E., and originate from the Greek necropoleis excavated in the area around modern city of Kertch in the eastern Crimea, the territory of the ancient Bosporan Kingdom.

The repertoire of images is vast and includes tragic and animal masks, gorgon masks, floral and architectural ornaments, Erotes riding geese or dolphins, and Niobid figures, as well as many more that call to mind images found on marble and terracotta sepulchral decorations in various centers of Mediterranean world. Compared to examples made of clay, some of these plaster appliques show a striking resemblance to one another that may prove that they come from the same workshop. Undoubtedly based upon traditional Classical or Hellenistic models, some of them demonstrate an amazing adaptation to provincial taste and skill, which makes them a unique phenomenon of provincial art to be found nowhere else. It should be specified that despite their clumsy appearance, their symbolism remained the same as it was in earlier periods, although at times as clichés. It seems likely that terracotta appliques of similar types point to a higher social position of a deceased person than those whose coffins and sarcophagi were decorated with plaster casts.

The Hermitage holds plaster appliques excavated from the 1820s to 1991. Those found during the 19th to early 20th century were brought to light under the supervision of the Imperial Archaeological Commission, the official institution that gave permission for this kind of scholarly activity. However, other examples were illegally dug by the so-called “lucky devils,” who used to sell their plunder to private collectors. It is especially important to determine whether it is possible to distinguish restorations or additional details that might have been before the sale.

Gendering Figurines: Sex, Gender, and Ideology in Figurine Studies

- 20 Erin Averett, Assistant Professor, Department of Fine and Performing Arts; Classical & Near Eastern Studies, Creighton University, Omaha
Erin Darby, Assistant Professor, Religious Studies, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Although studies of figurines often treat “male” and “female” determiners as straight-forward formal attributes, the reality is far more complex. The criteria used to determine the physical sex of a figurine must be examined in light of our own modern presuppositions and the ancient contexts from which figurines come. The interpreter also has to decide how closely physical sex and social gender roles

overlap in the figurine iconography and in the figurine's original social context. Furthermore, when ambiguous or contradictory attributes are observed, analysis must take into account whether the ambiguity is due to poor preservation, our own ignorance of artistic convention, or whether it is an intentional aspect of figurine design.

Although complicated, none of these steps comes close to the difficulties arising when these criteria are enlisted to reconstruct the gender identity of the humans who produced, used, or discarded these artifacts. Clearly, then, the study of figurines and gender is a multi-faceted and potentially fraught enterprise. Despite this fact, figurines are also one of the most important sources of information about the embodiment of ancient gender norms and the ritual life of humans at all levels of society. In order to appreciate the complexity of gender in figurine studies, this paper reviews the basic processes of interpretation and outlines the theoretical pitfalls that often accompany each interpretive step, with the goal of generating a more cautious and productive theoretical orientation for future studies.

Mycenaean Figures and Figurines as Gendered Bodies

- 21 Ann-Louise Schallin, Senior lecturer, Department of Historical Studies, University of Gothenburg

Mycenaean female figurines are seemingly stereotype and schematic in appearance and may not at a first glance reveal any characteristic features, which could be used for a closer analysis. Yet, this group of objects show a certain amount of variability. Moreover, their features can be compared with the more elaborate Mycenaean female figures, which display a number of individual traits. Furthermore, there also exist Mycenaean figurines, which in their elaboration could be characterized as something in between a stereotype figurine and an elaborate figure.

In analysing the features of Mycenaean figures and figurines several layers of feminine identity can be determined, which may mirror a real difference in identity and status between women in the Mycenaean society. Some features also signal ambiguous gendered qualities. The figures and figurines from Mastos in the Berbati Valley are used as a material basis for the analysis, which also involves other Mycenaean female images.

Who Used the Judean Pillar Figurines?

- 22 Raz Kletter, University of Helsinki

We know much about Judean Pillar Figurines (JPF); their date, distribution, contexts, and typology are quite clear, as well as their relation to the Kingdom of Judah. While their meaning is debated, most scholars see JPFs as representing either a goddess, most likely Asherah, or mortal women, perhaps worshippers. Thus, their female gender is agreed upon too.

However, we know very little about how these figurines were used, mainly because we hardly have complete items that reflect patterns of use. The vast majority of the figurines are found broken, often in “mass” loci (pits, pools, streets), where the contexts may suggest patterns of disposal rather than “frozen moments of use.”

As for who used (or did not use) JPFs, there is hardly any evidence. Many scholars jump to the conclusion that the ‘femaleness’ of the figurines indicates use by women. The aim is noble—to rediscover life of women in ‘ancient Israel’ (and Judah). Yet, by assuming female users, they tie JPFs to ‘all things female’: the household, the domestic sphere, family religion, fertility, etc. Perhaps such a stereotypic view of female life is expected for a ‘traditional’ society like Iron Age Judah; but where is the evidence that the JPFs belonged to women, or were used solely by women?

In my talk I will suggest that JPFs were owned and used by both women and men, based on written sources and archaeological clues. Female goddesses were worshipped by men too; men were not divorced from fertility, sexuality, the household, etc. Such a view helps us to avoid a too rigid women-men dichotomy for ancient Judean society.

Motifs Defining Male and Female Images on Chalcolithic Ossuaries

23 Dina Shalem, Kinneret Institute for Galilean Archaeology, Israel

The Peqi'in ossuary assemblage revealed for the first time a small group of male images, along with the majority of female images. As no genitals are depicted on ossuaries the male images were identified on the basis of a painted or sculpted beard, while female images were recognized by their modeled breasts, or their typological classifications. Subsequently, it was possible to define other motifs as typical of either male or female images, or both. When these male and female characteristics are compared to other artifacts, both Neolithic and Chalcolithic, it is possible to suggest certain motifs as male attributes and other as female attributes.

New Figurines from Tell Jemmeh: Assessment of a Border Site

24 David Ben-Shlomo, Ariel University, Israel

The paper will discuss an assemblage of figurines and figurative terracottas from the Smithsonian Institution excavation at the site of Tell Jemmeh, Israel. The assemblage includes a diverse group of terracottas dating mostly from the Late Bronze Age through to the Persian period, including human plaque and other figurines, zoomorphic figurines and vessels and mask fragments (127 items altogether). The main types of terracottas will be discussed and their chronological and geographical distribution presented. An additional large assemblage of figurines from the Petrie excavations was published in 1928, but these will only be briefly discussed. The site is located near the Mediterranean

coast, on the Besor River, which was the ancient border between Canaan and Egypt. In addition during the Iron Age the settlement was geographically part of Philistia, while during the end of the Iron Age II the site probably accommodated a Neo-Assyrian administrative center. Hence, this class of finds will be assessed, and the various influences coming from Canaanite, Egyptian, Philistine and possibly Assyrian cultural traditions will be examined.

Putting Together the Pieces: A New Look at the Anthropomorphic and Zoomorphic Figurines and Vessels from Samaria

25 Daphna Tsoran, Curator, Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The corpus of some two hundred anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines and vessels, some of them unique, uncovered in the excavations at Samaria in the first half of the 20th century, comprise one of the most important assemblages of such items in the north of Israel. However, due to the circumstances and time-period of the excavation, which dictated the contingencies of its publication, these items were never comprehensively studied. Several studies on figurines, such as that of Holland, have provided brief descriptions and mainly summaries of how the Samaria corpus is representative of a northern Israelite coroplastic tradition. However, for the most part, this assemblage has fallen into oblivion and a renewed study is imperative.

The present research entails the application of current methodology to the Samaria figurines and vessels, including quantification, provenience study, examination of modes of production, style, iconography and context, in order to understand their function and significance, both as a discrete group and in comparison to other such assemblages in the north and in Judah. Particular attention is paid to the context in which the majority of the items were found—Locus E207, a unique hewn canal dated to the eighth century B.C.E., located outside the tell and possibly of a cultic nature. Access to a large portion of this important group and its study are facilitated by their present location in the collections of the Institute of Archaeology of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

The Samaria corpus has great potential for furthering our understanding of social, cultural and geo-political aspects of the northern Kingdom of Israel prior to the Assyrian conquest at the end of the eighth century B.C.E.

Iron Age Female Terracotta Figurines from Jordan

26 Regine Hunziker-Rodewald, Professor of Old Testament Studies, History of Israel and the Ancient Near East, University of Strasbourg, Faculty of Protestant Theology, Strasbourg

The database of the Franco-German Figurines Project (FGFP 2012-2016) currently contains over 400 open-molded female terracotta figurines from the Iron Age II (eighth– seventh century B.C.E.) which were found in Transjordan. Most of the

figurines are of naked women. Very little of the data of the archaeological find context has survived, remaining available only for a small number of the artefacts. Thus, for the classification of the figurines, the “phenotype” remains the major indicator of identification and comparison, in both the Jordanian and the Levantine context. With regard to a systematic registration of the typological details, the refinement of criteria for the determination of the function and meaning of these figurines (cultic, magic, representative, decorative) must be treated as the highest priority.

The Megiddo-Ta’anach Figurines Revisited.

- 27 Laura A. Peri, Curator of Western Asiatic antiquities, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

The "Megiddo-Ta'anach" figurines are a group of clay, mold-made figurines, distinctive to Israel-Palestine, that depict a woman holding her breasts and are characterized by such additional features as a high headdress decorated with vertical grooves, a necklace of multiple strands, a vertical line running from the area between the breasts to the navel, a pudendum delineated by an incised triangle with a central groove, and a rear element – a plait or, in some cases, a necklace counterweight.

The paper deals mainly with examples found in or attributed to Megiddo. It revisits several earlier theories, while adding some new observations concerning the manufacture, date of production, and origin of this figurine-type. It is argued that, contrary to previous studies that have defined these figurines as "double-molded" or, recently, "twice-molded," the figurines were produced using a single, frontal mold, while the back was lightly modeled by hand and by means of a sharp tool. It is further claimed that even though their archaeological contexts range from the late Middle Bronze Age to Iron Age II, the figurines are most probably mid-second millennium B.C.E. products, which, when present in later contexts, should be seen as intrusive or as heirlooms. Finally, it is maintained that this figurine-type is rooted in a northern Mesopotamian coroplastic tradition dating as far back as the late third millennium B.C.E., and as such, it may reflect, along with other contemporary artifacts and cultural practices, the infiltration and eventually settlement of elements of a northern population in the southern Levant toward the end of the Middle Bronze and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age.

The Effects of Miniaturization: Figurines and Social Change in Hellenistic Babylonia

- 28 Stephanie M. Langin-Hooper, Assistant Professor and Karl Kilinski II Endowed Chair in Hellenic Visual Culture, Southern Methodist University, Dallas

The tremendous diversity and variety of miniature objects in Hellenistic Babylonia reflects a social environment of intensive cross-cultural interaction and widespread change. Figurines were commonly owned, easily consumed, and quickly discarded and replaced, making them ideally responsive to social shifts and trends. Considering the aspect of miniaturization itself reveals how tiny things participated in this social transformation. Through their appealing and non-

threatening materiality, miniatures established an intimate connection with their users that encouraged identity sharing and illusions of power over the outside world. Such lived experiences of miniatures are largely private encounters, yet they are also inherently social; indeed, it is through their reference to the larger-scale world that miniatures have much of their power to captivate and to comfort. Miniatures of performing bodies, such as musicians and theatrical masks, induced users to experiment with new enactments of Greek cultural identities. Soldiers, deities, and other powerful bodies in miniature enabled fantasies of control over the wars and political upheavals endemic to Hellenistic Babylonia. Display-oriented figurines depicting interpersonal relationships encouraged self-identification and shaped new ideals of social behaviour. The miniature objects of Hellenistic Babylonia were more than just witnesses to social change; they were also participants in the processes of negotiating new identity norms for this multicultural society.

The Reclining Figurines from Seleucia on the Tigris: Transformation of Iconographies and Cultural Complexity in Seleucid and Parthian Mesopotamia

- 29 Roberta Menegazzi, PhD archaeologist, Centro Ricerche Archeologiche e Scavi di Torino per il Medio Oriente e l'Asia, Torino

Reclining figures are among the most interesting subjects in the coroplastic repertoire from Seleucia on the Tigris. Completely unknown in pre-Hellenistic Mesopotamia, they enjoyed a great popularity at Seleucia, becoming a distinguishing feature of the terracotta production of the city and spreading throughout the main centers of central and southern Mesopotamia. From an iconographic perspective, they are highly revealing of the freedom of local craftsmen in approaching and re-elaborating Western models: if the reclining types from the Mediterranean world usually depict male figures, the ones from Seleucia mostly portray semi-nude or draped women. Aim of this paper is to investigate the reasons of such a reinterpretation, trying to shed some light on the possible functions and meaning of the Seleucian reclining figurines.

Ritual Gestures and Bodily Communication: Exploring Religious Transformation in Cyprus during the First Millennium B.C.E.

- 30 Giorgos Papantoniou, Irish Research Council/Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellow,
31 The University of Dublin, Trinity College

There has been considerable discussion about the provenance, techniques, workshops, typologies, chronological groupings and significance of Cypriot terracottas, but only in a few circumstances has an effort been made to interpret patterns of continuity and change of the local cultural and religious tradition in relation to the so-called Hellenistic artistic and religious *koine*. The discovery and publication of a great number of terracottas from the Cypro-Archaic to the

Hellenistic/early Roman period (ca. eighth–first centuries B.C.E.) found in funerary and ritual contexts at Amathous provides a good opportunity to examine the levels at which foreign influences in types and styles were transmitted and transformed. Moving from artistic to religious influence and transformation, however, is a particularly complex and multifaceted issue.

In this study of Cypriot terracottas, the mode of inquiry is shifted from stylistic change towards social dynamics, religious change and politico-religious agency and ideology. By “reading” the terracotta figurines found in Amathous, I attempt to explore how aspects of the broader “Hellenistic religion” affected Cypriot tradition. Does this suggest a passive acceptance of standard forms? Can we trace uniformity with other Mediterranean areas in the artistic repertoire, and if so, are artistic and religious uniformity equal? How are cultural and religious meanings and identities expressed through this artistic production? Finally, could any changes in the figurines repertoire be associated with socio-political change? This paper will focus on the study of gesture in this group of terracottas in order to trace ritual and bodily communication, both embedded within long established cultural norms and *mentalités*. As revealed from the study of the Amathousian terracottas, the religious transformations from the Cypriot city-kingdoms to the Hellenistic period, resulted first from the transformation of the political structures and relations, and secondly from the interaction between various “active” and “passive” aspects of personal religious identities.

“The Gesture of Blessing” on Near Eastern Clay Figurines of the Roman Period

32 Renate Rosenthal-Heginbottom, PhD. Independent scholar, retired

The gesture of the raised right hand with the palm outward can be traced in the ancient Orient over a long period of time. In the Roman period male and female divinities, their worshipers, priests, royal and high ranking personalities, as well as the deceased, are represented within diverse ethnic and religious groups in sacred, funerary, and domestic contexts. The paper will focus on two aspects of Nabatean and Syro-Phoenician clay figurines that present this gesture. The first is the matter of interaction with the stone sculpture and reliefs from Hatra, Palmyra, Dura Europos, Phoenicia, and southern Arabia; the second is the question of meaning. Over the years, scholars have made different though partly related interpretations: gesture of omnipotence, blessing, prayer, reverence, plea, and wish for protection. Different interpretations will arise from the archaeological contexts with regard to ethnicity, religion and cult, social status, and target group.

The Role of Greco-Roman Egyptian Terracotta Figurines as Representatives of the Notion of "Divine Reflexivity." A Case Study of Figurines from the Collection of the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

- 33 Rachel Caine Kreinin, Associate Curator of Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine Archeology, the Israel Museum, Jerusalem

In her book *Religion of the Gods, Ritual, Paradox and Reflexivity*, Oxford University Press, 2009, Kimberly Christine Patton explores a fascinating notion, that of "divine reflexivity," which in essence she defines as the "ritual performance by a deity of an action known as belonging to the sphere of that deity's human cultic worship." Images of divine reflexivity are quite common in Greek, as well as Roman, art, and it would appear that they mirror a strong religious concept. This concept, Patton proposes, views the divine being not only as a recipient of cult, or the origin of it, as Mircea Eliade proposes, but as a practican in its own right. Patton has shown that this concept existed not only in the Greco-Roman world view, but also in the Semitic religions, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as in Vedic and Norse traditions of thought. While prevalent and perhaps even universal, this concept is virtually unknown in the visual culture of the Near East until the Greco-Roman period.

A small group of Egyptian Greco-Roman terracotta figurines from the Israel Museum's collection portray deities either holding cultic statues of other divinities, or presented alongside cultic objects. These iconographic features could perhaps be understood as representing the notion of divine reflexivity as Patton defined it.

In this paper I would like to explore the possibility of viewing these iconographic features as examples of the influx of new theological notions and the syncretic change that Egypt underwent in the first centuries B.C.E., following the conquest of Alexander the Great.

Graeco-Egyptian Coroplastic Art: Interpreting Formal Consistency and Changes of Meaning

- 34 Veit Valske, Post doc at Humboldt-Universität Berlin, Germany

The research on terracottas in Egypt is momentarily undergoing a certain paradigm shift. The progress of ongoing excavations does not only produce an increase of material, it also offers the opportunity to overcome the ambiguous studying of iconographies of uncontextualized objects, and to examine historical configurations of coroplastic production and terracotta usage. It has become possible to identify workshops because of the development of series or of local preferences, as well as for the implications of a *longue durée* of Egyptian terracotta art respectively for aspects of cross-fertilization with other areas of coroplastic production outside Egypt. Among the many variables that have to be determined, the question for polyvalence is still open. Terracotta types, or series, can have

endured different constructions of meaning during their life span. The significance that was applied to one replica might not have been valid for the other.

Using specific examples this presentation will measure the extent of this phenomenon and point out hermeneutic ramifications.