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A Catalogue of the Greek and Roman Terracottas in the Aydın Archaeological Museum

Murat Çekilmez



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A Catalogue of the Greek and Roman Terracottas in the Aydın Archaeological Museum

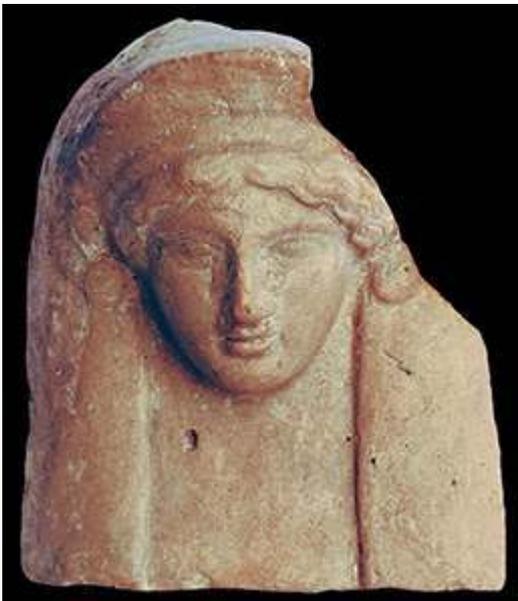
Murat Çekilmez

- 1 I completed my dissertation at the University of Adnan Menderes in 2014 on the Hellenistic and Roman terracotta figurines from the south necropolis of Tralleis that were found during salvage excavations by the Aydın Archaeological Museum.¹ Currently, I am working on an analysis and catalogue of the terracottas in the Aydın Archaeological Museum that are from the ancient cities of Hyllarima, Alinda, and Halikarnassos in Caria for eventual publication. This includes a group of terracotta figurines that was inventoried at the museum during the years 1959–2007 and subsequently put on display. Approximately 120 fragments and complete specimens of terracotta figurines ranging in date from the Archaic period to the Roman Imperial era make up this catalogue. Unfortunately, no excavation reports or any other archaeological information is available regarding the specific findspots of these figurines. Therefore, the project's main aim is to assess the most significant examples in the collection of the Aydın Archaeological Museum and attempt to clarify or correct information concerning their provenance, date, and/or function. Many of these figurines had been purchased in the 1960s, although some were also acquired through smaller, personal donations. Museum records indicate that most of the figurines came from Caria. It should be noted that Carian terracottas have been the focus of considerable attention over the last decade, whether they have come from older excavations or from recent discoveries.²
- 2 The majority of these figurines depict gods and goddess, specifically Aphrodite, Artemis, Zeus, Attis, and Herakles, but there are also mortal male and female types. These figurines were mold made using the characteristic clay of the region³ which is homogeneous, with large crystals that contain mica and sand. By contrast, in the Roman Imperial era the manufacture of terracotta figurines was an industry that used a rather coarse, but homogeneous, clay that contains a fair amount of mica. After firing, the

figurines often were covered with a white slip and the majority decorated with black and other color pigments. This is a very common finishing technique, that of painted polychrome decoration that consists of colored mineral suspensions over a white slip.

- 3 The major types under discussion include figurines of korai and kouroi, as well as figurines of Aphrodite, Artemis, Attis, and various agents of cult. These may be useful for defining more fully the character of the cult of the Carian and Ionian sanctuaries in which figurative terracottas were discovered. Of particular interest in my catalogue are figurines of the Archaic period that were found in deposits at the sanctuaries of Demeter and Persephone at Alinda and Halikarnassos, and in Ionia at Myus, Didyma, Miletos, and Priene. Female images dominate quantitatively, and particularly mold-made protomai, as well as handmade figurines. The majority can be classified as votive. They also provide excellent documentation for a lively local industry that flourished from the later sixth well into the fifth centuries B.C.E. Chronologically, the majority of the protomai can be dated from the mid-sixth to the mid-fifth centuries B.C.E. (fig. 1)

Fig. 1. A protome from the collection of the Aydın Museum. Inv. no. 103. Mid-fifth century B.C.E.



- 4 This catalogue is divided into three parts. The terracottas of the Archaic period are presented in the first part and are organized typologically; standing female figures, seated female figures, female protomai, standing male figures, and fragments of other figures of uncertain subjects. Each figurine is introduced by a general commentary that discusses its typology, chronology, and significance. Interpretations of subject matter and discussions of iconography and style accompany each group, with a specific reference to the overall Carian production. Catalogue descriptions give factual detail, references to previous publications, and close parallels. Finally, the typology and style of each example is compared with the dated finds from other contemporary sites and contexts outside of Caria.
- 5 The second part of the catalogue is dedicated to the terracottas of the Classical period and follows the same organization, while the third part of the catalogue focuses on the material character of these terracottas and comprises discusses of their technical features, methodological aspects, and terminology.

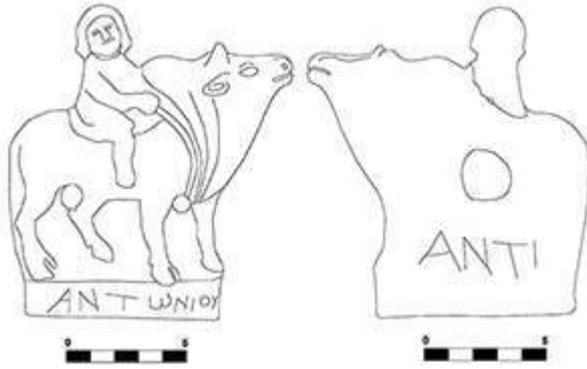
- 6 The female figurines of the fourth century B.C.E. largely fall into a single type that represents a hydrophoros (fig. 2), although several standing hydrophoroi are earlier and can be dated to the fifth century. These hydrophoroi have led to the assumption that the deity venerated at Caria was associated with aspects of marriage and youthfulness. However, it is difficult to attribute a specific identity and function to the figurines, and it is advisable to make conclusions regarding these questions only after careful contextual analyses.

Fig. 2. A hydrophoros from the collection of the Aydın Museum. Inv. no. 562. Mid-fourth century B.C.E.



- 7 Beginning with the 1980s, an important number of Carian terracottas dating from the Hellenistic period to the Late Roman era arrived at the museum. This included a group of Carian figurines dating as late as the second century C.E. During the second half of the second century B.C.E. various types of genre groups with animals, as well as new types of standing, draped women began to appear. The typological repertoire of the first century C.E. continued to include standing, draped women and men, as well as athletes with a quiver, masks, actors, puppets, caricatures, animals, and other mythological and religious types. These latter types of figurines are not exclusive to Caria, but are common at most Mediterranean sites in the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial eras.
- 8 Signatures of the coroplasts Sosimos, Hermodoros, Trophimos, and Antonios (fig. 3a-b) appear on figurines from the late Hellenistic period through to the second century C.E.; these will be examined in more detail on another occasion.

Fig. 3a-b. Figurine with the signature of Antonios.



The signatures show that identifiable workshops were active at Caria as early as the first century B.C.E. and that these workshops continued to produce figurines until the second century C.E. We may therefore assume the fabric in which the coroplasts worked to be a local fabric of its period.

NOTES

1. "Terracotta Figurines From the South Necropolis of Tralleis." 2014. PhD diss., Adnan Menderes University.
2. IŞIK, F. 1980. *Die Koroplastik von Theangela in Karien und ihre Beziehungen zu Ostionien zwischen 560 und 270 v. Chr.*, *IstMitt Beiheft* 21; RUMSCHEID, F. 2006. *Die Figürlichen Terrakotten von Priene, Fundkontexte, Ikonographie und Funktion in Wohnhäusern und Heiligtümern im Licht antiker Parallelbefunde*, Wiesbaden: Reichert; ÖZCAN, F. 2007. "Die figürlichen Terrakotten von Milet aus Klassischer und Hellenistischer Zeit." Inauguraldissertation, Ruhr Universität, Bochum; KIZIL, A. 2009. "1990–2005 Yılları Arasında Mylasa'da Kurtarma Kazıları Yapılan Mezarlar ve Buluntuları Üzerinde Genel Bir Değerlendirme." In *Die Karer und die Anderen, Internationales Kolloquium an der Frei Universität Berlin*, 397–463.
3. *Munsell Soil Color Chart*, 7.5 YR 6/6-8.

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AUTHOR

MURAT ÇEKILMEZ

Adnan Menderes University
mcekilmez@adu.edu.tr