

Article

Christian Terracotta Figurines from el-Ashmunein in the Museo Egizio, Turin

Clementina Caputo

Abstract

The collection of the Museo Egizio in Turin includes a small group of terracotta figurines that can be dated to the period between the fifth and the first half of the seventh century AD. They were found during excavation campaigns carried out by Ernesto Schiaparelli in 1903, 1904 and 1909 at el-Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna (Middle Egypt). Despite the fact that terracotta figurines lack any mention in ancient literary and documentary sources, the significant number of specimens from both the antiquities market and archaeological excavations suggests that they played a significant role in social life and religious practices during the Late Antique period. Although their physical, technological and figurative aspects indicate a regional production, some of their features reflect the typical canon of Byzantine art, which was widespread in the Mediterranean basin in this period as an expression of Christianity. Through a description and discussion of this material, this paper aims at offering a new contribution to the study of the terracotta figurines produced in Egypt in Late Antiquity.

المخلص

تحتوي المجموعة الأثرية للمتحف المصري في تورينو على مجموعة صغيرة من تماثيل التراكوتا، يمكن تأريخها للفترة ما بين القرن الخامس والنصف الأول من القرن السابع الميلادي. تم العثور عليها خلال بعثات الحفائر التي قام بها إيرنيسستو سكياباريلي في الأشمونين أو هيرموبوليس ماجنا (بمصر الوسطى) في الأعوام ١٩٠٣ و ١٩٠٤ و ١٩٠٩. ورغم افتقار المصادر الأدبية والوثائقية لأي إشارة لهذا النوع من القطع الأثرية، فإن عدد نماذجها الغاية في الأهمية – الموجود في كل من المجموعات الخاصة بالمتاحف وأيضا الحفريات الأثرية – تشير إلى أن هذه القطع الأثرية تمثل جزءاً هاماً من الحياة الاجتماعية والممارسات الدينية خلال الفترة الرومانية المتأخرة. ورغم أن الجوانب المادية والتكنولوجية والرمزية تشير إلى وجود نتاج إقليمي يخص هذه التماثيل، فإن بعض عناصرها تستدعي للوجدان الشرائع النموذجية للفن البيزنطي والتي كانت منتشرة في هذه الفترة في حوض البحر الأبيض المتوسط للتعبير عن الديانة المسيحية. ولذلك فإن الهدف من هذه الورقة البحثية هو تقديم مساهمة جديدة لدراسة تماثيل التراكوتا التي تم تشكيلها في مصر في الفترة الرومانية المتأخرة، من خلال وصف ومناقشة هذه التماثيل

1. Introduction

Egypt is known for a significant variety of objects as well as works of art from all historical periods. While carvings in stone or wood, wall paintings and textiles of the Late Antique and Byzantine periods have attracted the attention of both scholars and the general public ever since the first discoveries were made in the late nineteenth century, many humbler objects of daily use silently found their way into store-rooms of museums all over the world; however, only a small number of these objects were exhibited and/

or published. One of the most interesting categories in the diverse material culture of Christianity in Late Antique Egypt is that of terracotta figurines.¹

Among the historians of material culture who have worked intensively on the deeper meaning of the figurines of Byzantine Egypt, two names stand out: László Török and David Frankfurter. Török, in his catalogue of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts,² and Frankfurter, in various books and articles,³ refer to these terracotta figurines with remarkable regularity. Especially in a recent article⁴ and in his

latest book,⁵ Frankfurter approaches the “materiality of devotion” in the light of the processes through which Egyptian culture assimilated Christianity, looking especially at the material culture, including terracottas, lamps and pilgrim flasks.⁶ He sees significant continuity in most of these terracotta figurines, rooted in a thousand-year-old expression of fertility, but reactivated, in other forms, in the Christian world.

In parallel, Pascale Ballet is one of the leading experts in the field of Egyptian coroplastic studies. The historical, material and technological studies she has conducted on ceramics and related objects, especially terracotta figurines, are of key importance for understanding this category of objects in particular, and late Egyptian material culture in general.⁷

Considering the absence of written documents of that historical period mentioning such figurines, the mass production of these images appears to be almost paradoxical, but is tangible evidence of their widespread use in Egypt. Terracotta figurines dating to the Byzantine period (fifth to early seventh century AD) have been found in great numbers throughout Egypt. During this period, two main centres produced distinctive terracottas: Abu Mina, west of Alexandria, and the region of the First Cataract, around Aswan. Both had pottery workshops covering the entire spectrum of ceramic production: table and common wares, cooking vessels, amphorae, oil lamps, pilgrim’s flasks, and terracotta figurines.

As regards the materials terracotta figurines are made of, those produced at Abu Mina are recognizable by their fine marl clay fabric, pale-yellow in colour with a pink core.⁸ The products of the Aswan workshop(s) can also be distinguished by their fabric, which is pink in colour and has a fine texture (Pink Aswan Kaolinitic Clay).⁹ To these distinctive productions may be added the copious female figurines made of Nile-clay fabrics (brick-red to brown in colour), for which some workshops have been identified in the Fayum at Karanis, in Middle Egypt at Antinoopolis, and in Upper Egypt at Manqabad.¹⁰ A further production that also deserves mention is that of the figurines made in the Great Oasis – the Dakhla and Kharga oases in Egypt’s Western Desert – where local clay fabrics were used: in Dakhla,

mainly iron-rich fabrics;¹¹ in Kharga, mostly the typical local calcareous clay fabrics.¹²

As regards iconography, the figurines are usually in the same frontal standing position, with arms raised or hanging along the sides, an elaborate coiffure, and holes in the ears.¹³ Despite these shared characteristics, the figurines are also extraordinarily diverse in their artisanry and details. Some are nude, but the majority are dressed in a linen tunic; some hold babies (*mater lactans*), others are in the *orans* position; some are freestanding, others lying down in negative space, or seated holding a child; some are crudely hand-modelled, others are made with moulds, or half moulded and half hand-modelled; some are painted and accurately decorated, or slipped, or just whitewashed, others are characterized by incisions and puncture-marks on the head and the body.¹⁴

This extraordinary diversity suggests that their manufacture and use occurred in a regional context rather than being a result of the country-wide marketing of a new ritual device or image.

Male figurines, often identified as figures of knights or shepherds, and those depicting animals, mostly horses or birds, are less frequent.

As regards the contexts they occur in, the majority of the terracotta figurines in museum collections have no documented provenance, as they come from illegal digging, or excavations carried out during the first decades of the nineteenth century, when archaeological and functional contexts were neither observed nor recorded. For these objects, there is often little evidence about the find spots. However, recent excavations attest to their presence in houses, tombs and shrines dated between the fifth and the early seventh century AD, which appears to suggest a flexible “identity”.¹⁵ Terracotta figurines have been found in domestic contexts or large dumping areas at Kôm el-Dikka,¹⁶ Karanis,¹⁷ Herakleopolis Magna,¹⁸ Djeme,¹⁹ Edfu,²⁰ Elephantine,²¹ Bawit,²² Berenike,²³ and Hibis;²⁴ some were deposited in graves at Antaiopolis,²⁵ Antinoopolis,²⁶ and Gurob;²⁷ and others come from monastic sites or religious contexts, including Wadi Sarga,²⁸ Armant,²⁹ Athribis,³⁰ Manqabad,³¹ and Kellis.³² In addition, terracotta figurines from late-fifth- to mid-seventh-century contexts are attested at Meinarti, Nubia.³³

2. Possible functions of terracotta figurines during the Christian Period in Egypt

The general design of female terracotta figurines of the Christian period in Egypt, with emphasized sexual attributes (a painted or moulded womb), and occasionally children or arms raised in prayer, suggests that they were linked to the idea of fertility or maternity and crafted to somehow mediate procreative success. However, their precise function is still debated among scholars, especially in consideration of the heterogeneity of their contexts of discovery (see Section 1). Indeed, the occurrence of terracotta figurines in monastic complexes, burials and domestic spaces suggests multifunctional use, as a) votive objects dedicated to healers or saints; b) mementos brought back from a pilgrimage to a shrine; or c) private objects of domestic piety.³⁴ A possibly unifying explanation that will be discussed below is that these different uses are all stages of the same devotional practice.

Starting from the late third/fourth century AD, Christians began undertaking pilgrimages to sites or places associated with saints and miracles – such as St. Coluthus at Antinoopolis, Apa Apollo at Bawit, St. Menas and Thecla at Abu Mina, and at Deir Anba Hadra (St. Simeon) on the West Bank at Aswan. The phenomenon of female pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Menas and Thecla at Abu Mina, for instance, is supported by literary and archaeological evidence.³⁵ Women, mostly wives with fertility issues or hoping to safely survive the experience of maternity, went there to ask for the saints' help. Those who made these pilgrimages often acquired some artefacts on their journey to the sacred sites they visited, and brought them home as tangible connections to the divine.³⁶

Modern maps of ancient monastic Egypt illustrate that monastic communities were located in nearly all geographical zones of the country.³⁷ Seemingly, the extraordinary diversity in craftsmanship of the figurines (in terms of face and body details, modeling techniques and ceramic fabrics) clearly suggests that their manufacture is attributable to regional or, more likely, local ateliers, associated to some of the principal religious centres active in Egypt during the Late Antique period.³⁸ A few of the workshops in which this category of female figurines were made

have been identified at places where the sanctuary or monastic complex of a saint was located, such as at Antinoopolis, Bawit, Abu Mina and Aswan, as well as in the Fayum and the Thebaid.³⁹

As regards the intentions behind the manufacture and use of female terracotta figurines in Late Antiquity, I would argue that, like other objects in terracotta, they were produced and supplied by the pottery workshops of the visited monastic site, in order to facilitate ritual practices and encourage pilgrimage to the Christian saints' shrines. These objects, once purchased by believers visiting the sanctuary, assumed a symbolic significance for the believer (in the case of female figurines, one connected to fertility and maternity) through prayer to the saint and a sort of sacred contagion; and once it had been brought home from the journey, this "fetish" became part of the owner's private and personal devotional sphere until her or his death.

3. The terracotta figurines in the Museo Egizio

3.1. The site of Hermopolis Magna/el-Ashmunein

The Christian terracotta figurines discussed in this contribution and held in the Museo Egizio in Turin come from Hermopolis Magna – modern el-Ashmunein – one of the major cities of ancient Egypt. The site is in Middle Egypt, on the west side of the Nile river, between Al-Minyā, the modern regional centre, and Mellawi (Fig. 1). The settlement dates back to the Old Kingdom and was occupied until as late as the Islamic period. The town was known by the Egyptian name of *Khemenu* ("City-of-Eight"), referring to the local cosmogonic tradition according to which the "Ogdoad" of the primordial gods was born in this place. During the Ptolemaic period, the city was called "The City of Hermes" (Hermopolis) since the Greeks identified Hermes with the local city god Thoth, supreme creator, god of sciences, wisdom and justice, and divine messenger.⁴⁰ The Egyptian name of *Khemenu* survived as Coptic *Shmun*, from which the modern name el-Ashmunein derives.

The archaeological investigations conducted so far have focussed mainly on the central area of the site, whose size – compared to its possible full exten-

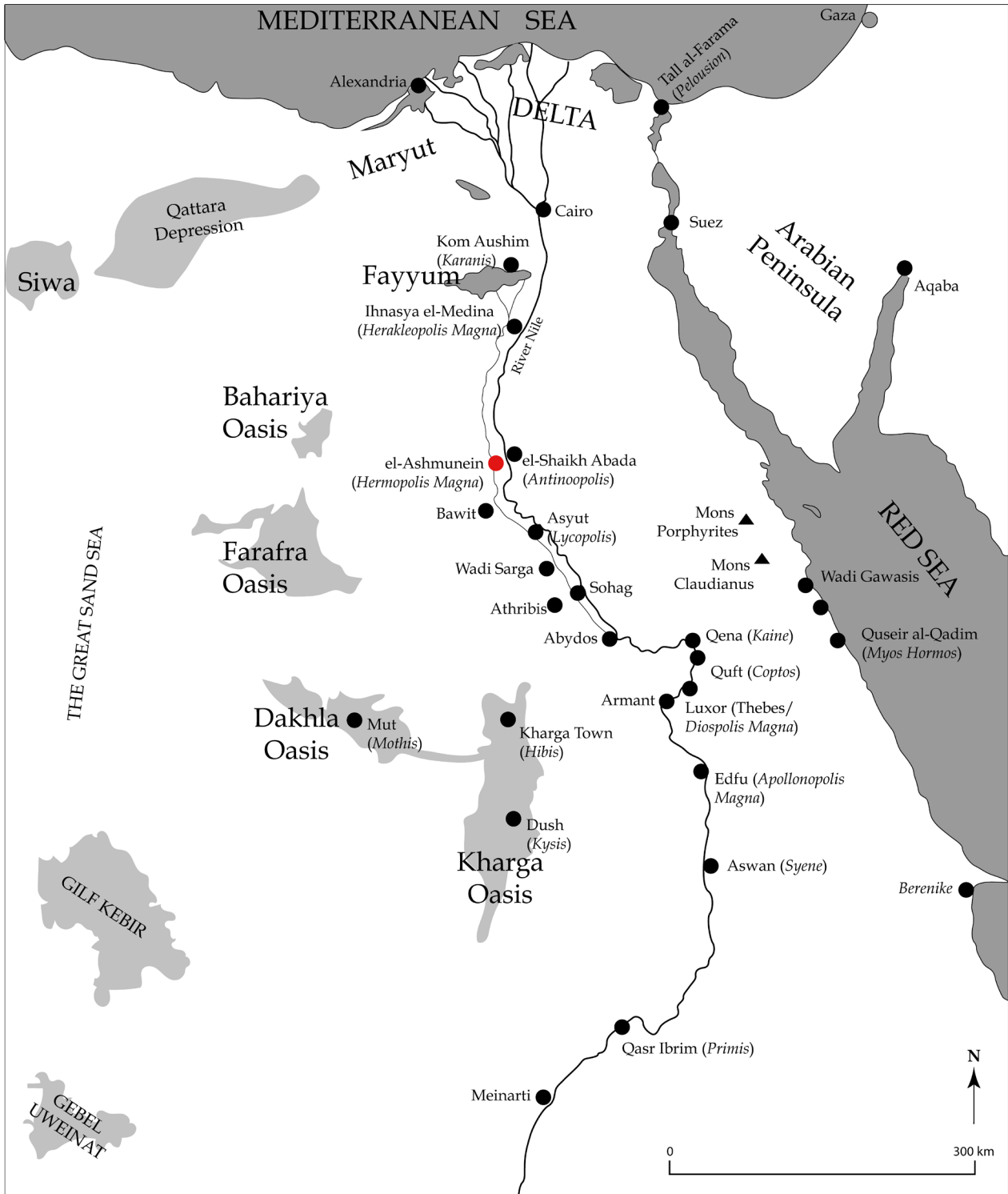
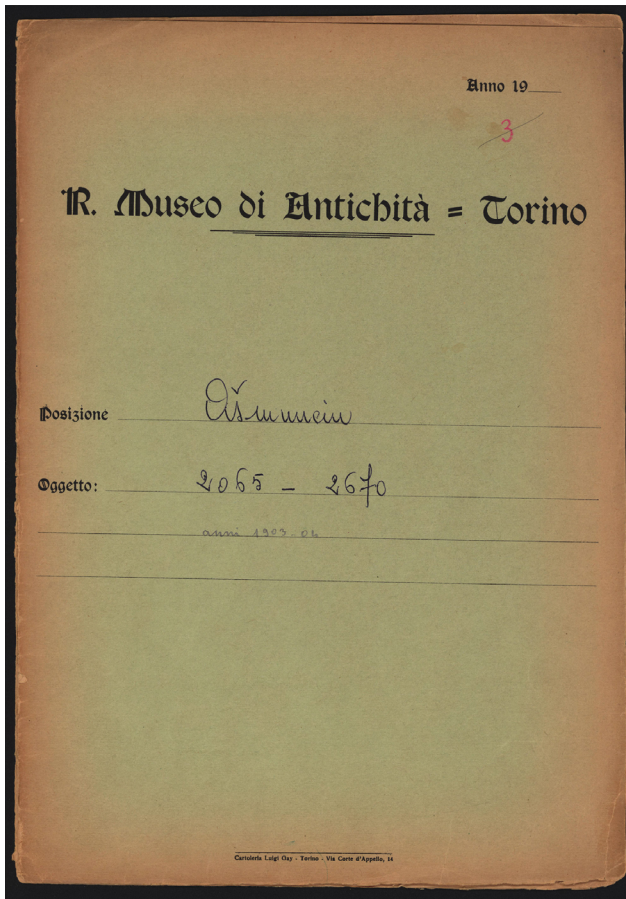


Fig. 1: Map of Egypt with the places mentioned in the text and the location of el-Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna (map: Clementina Caputo).

sion – appears to be limited. Even though the documentation available today allows the topography of the site to be outlined, the archaeological work, often done using dated methods and by cutting large trenches, has left open many questions regarding the architecture of the monumental complexes during the different phases of the site, their diachronic and spatial relationships, and their specific functions.

The town plan is divided into two distinct areas, already existing in the Dynastic era:⁴¹ the north area was of a religious nature, while in the south one there were presumably residential districts, now poorly known because they are buried under the modern village of el-Ashmunein. These two sectors were divided by the main east-west road, called “Via Antinoita”, as it led to Antinoopolis, the famous city



Numero	Descrizione dell'oggetto	Materie	Chi di	Prof. B. G.	Annotationi
2222	spenna empy. teropide	terocora	1-		
23	" " " "	"	2-		
24	test. di " "	"	2-		
25	" " " "	"	2-		
26	pietra panna c.s.	"	0,25		
27	pannelli stucchi mura	marmo	2-		
28	" " " "	calce	1-		
29	" " " "	"	"		
30	test. panna c.s.	gesso	1-		
31	" " " "	calce	0,25		
32	empsyre murelle	terocora	1-		
33	" " " "	"	0,50		
34	" " " "	"	"		
35	" " " "	"	"		
36	" " " "	"	"		
37	framma empsyre murelle	"	"		
38	" " " "	"	"		
39	" " " "	"	"		
40	" " " "	"	"		
41	test. panna stucchi mura	"	1-		
42	" " " "	"	0,25		
43	" " " "	"	0,50		
44	" " " "	"	0,25		
45	" " " "	"	1-		
46	" " " "	"	0,25		
47	" " " "	"	0,25		
2248	" " " "	"	1-		

Fig. 2: The manuscript inventory. ©Archivio di Stato, Torino, Fondo MAE, II Versamento, Mazzo 2, Fascicolo 5.

con essi un frammento di statua reale in alabastro dipinto della IV din.

2) Descrizione degli scavi a Ermapoli, condotti dal Braccini, dopo che la sua presenza miscol inutile a Aisa.

Al loro periodo 20 marzo - 29 aprile, si trovarono molti papiri, sei due Koum che ingombrano ad anfiteatro rispettivamente il tempio orientale con le colonne di Filippo II, e il tempio "dall'altra parte" dove si trova il colosso di Psammetico II.

4) Descrizione degli scavi a Chioptoli: più diffusa delle altre. Dai l'invasione della zona archeologica da parte di proprietari privati, limito' alquanto la possibilita' di scavo. Comunque furono esplorati:

i) il Koum a N dell'obelisco. Si fece un taglio fino al piano antico della citta'; venne in luce a m. 7 di profondita' un acquedotto poco circolare per acqua, assai profondo, rivestito di belle pietre calcaree squadrate, e di costruzione faraonica.

ii) una piccola altura a m. 400 dall'obelisco, prolungata verso N in un sperone privato, qui creata corrispondente al senso di cinta del tempio, che si supponeva spiccata a W dell'obelisco, con la faccia rivolta a E." secondo

Assiimun

Circa la metà del decimo secolo, alcuni gli scavi nella Valle delle Targine e annessi quelli di Ghisra, poterò distaccare da questi il dr. Braccini e inviarlo a lavorare scavi a Ermapoli.

Quanto è stato visto qui in epoca arcaica, e poi sempre fino al periodo musulmano.

U' hanno in esse Koum altri mura varie decine di metri, rivestiti da case costruite ad una piazza templi. Tempio alquanto ~~antico~~, caduto in rovina e ricostruito nel medesimo luogo, ricorda' da case costruite in epoca cristiana e post, negli stessi tempi, seguiti talora, (l'uso di colonne romane di Filippo II, l'alta da un colosso di Psammetico II. Anche Koum sono in parte oggi distrutti dai fellah.

(qui la p. us. finisce)

Fig. 3: Two pages of Silvio Curto's hand copy of (1) Schiaparelli's 1903 excavation report addressed to the King of Italy, Vittorio Emanuele III, in which el-Ashmunein is mentioned, now in the Royal Library (E160), and (2) Schiaparelli's final summary of the results of his excavations (E161) ©Archivio di Stato, Torino, Fondo MAE, III Versamento, Mazzo 1, Fascicolo 3.

founded in AD 130 by Emperor Hadrian, located on the opposite bank of the Nile river.⁴²

Among the European explorers who visited the site, the documentation collected by the *Expédition d'Égypte* at the end of the eighteenth century and published at the beginning of the nineteenth century is of particular interest. It provides a first general plan of the site as it appeared before the removal of extensive deposits by the *sebbakhin*,⁴³ and contains a representation of the main monument then visible, the pronaos of the great temple of Thoth-Hermes, which was completely demolished in 1826.⁴⁴

In 1903, the *Missione Archeologica Italiana* directed by Ernesto Schiaparelli undertook the first archaeological excavations at el-Ashmunein,⁴⁵ mainly with the intention of finding Greek papyri. The field direction of the 1903 season was assigned to Evaristo Breccia,⁴⁶ that of the 1904 season to Giacomo Biondi. The work was resumed again in 1909 by Arturo Frova.⁴⁷ Between 1929 and 1939, the Pelizaeus Museum Hildesheim began new excavations under the direction of Günther Roeder,⁴⁸ followed by sporadic investigations, often unpublished, by the Egyptian authorities. Finally, archaeological excavations using stratigraphic methods and a complete topographical survey of the site were carried out in the 1980s under the direction of Jeffrey Spencer of the British Museum.⁴⁹

3.2. The context of discovery

605 objects from the campaigns between 1903 and 1904 at el-Ashmunein, now held in the Museo Egizio, Turin, are listed in the finds register, inventoried under the numbers 2065 to 2670 (Fig. 2).⁵⁰ Of these, 68 are terracotta figurines,⁵¹ listed under the heading “terracotta” along with other objects, including ostraca and oil lamps. At least 30 out of the 68 terracotta figurines are datable to the Byzantine period and will be described, analysed and discussed below.⁵² According to the report by Schiaparelli about the campaign conducted from March 20 to April 29, 1903, addressed to the King of Italy Vittorio Emanuele III, the archaeological work of the *Missione Archeologica Italiana* focussed mainly on the “*due kom che cingono ad anfiteatro rispettivamente il tempio orientale con le colonne di Filippo II,*



Fig. 4: General plan of el-Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna (from Jomard [ed.], *Description de l'Égypte*, I, 1817, pl. 50).

e il tempio 'dall'altra parte' dove si trovò il colosso di Ramesse II”,⁵³ where numerous papyri were found (Fig. 3).⁵⁴ Unfortunately, no more precise information about the context in which the figurines were found is given in the report.

The plan of the site of el-Ashmunein published in 1817 in the *Description de l'Égypte* and available to the scholars of the Italian mission showed the main features of the site (Fig. 4).⁵⁵ Probably, the two “*kôm*” (in the singular; for “*akwâman*,” “mounds”) mentioned by Schiaparelli correspond to the two mounds located in the southeast half of the site. These would correspond, in the most recent maps of the site, to the “*akwâman*” that covered and surrounded the area where the Christian Basilica and *Kôm el-Kenissa* can be seen today and the area where the statues of *Ramesses II* were found, close to the South Church. Another possible location of this second area could be immediately north of the Antinoe road. If this were the case, then it would be necessary to interpret Schiaparelli’s characterization *dall'altra parte* (“on the other side”) as referring to the main street running east-west. How-

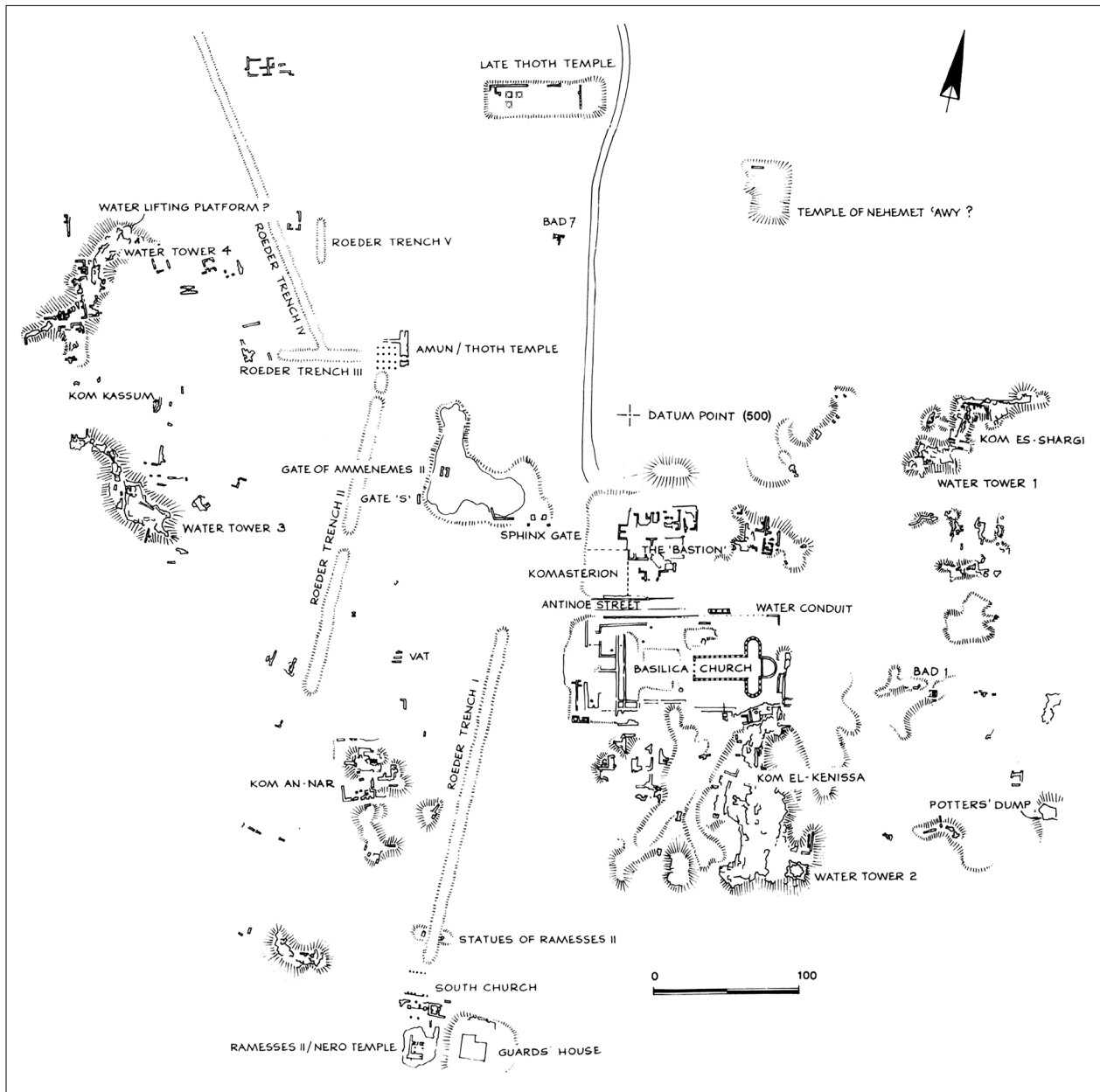


Fig. 5: General plan of el-Ashmunein/Hermopolis Magna (from Bailey, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein IV*, 1991, pl. 1).

ever, any attempt to compare the various plans or identify the original contexts remains futile, since the site had already undergone numerous changes and suffered damages prior to the arrival of the Italian mission.⁵⁶

In this regard, the findings of Christian terracotta figurines during the German excavations (1929–1939) north of the Sphinx Gate – which was almost entirely covered with late antique houses – and in the ancient dump near one of the Coptic cellars⁵⁷ is worth noting. In addition, further specimens were found during the British excavations (1991) in the area of the Christian basilica (Fig. 5).⁵⁸

3.3. General characteristics of the terracotta figurines in the Museo Egizio

The small group of Byzantine Christian terracotta figurines from el-Ashmunein preserved at the Museo Egizio comprises 30 statuettes. They are all fragmentary: only the head survives of 16 of them; only the upper half of 5; and only the body of 6. Only 3 are almost complete. I found no joining fragments during my study of this corpus. The maximum height of the complete statuettes can be estimated at around 15 cm. It should be emphasized that the fractures generally appear to run through the neck or the abdomen, an aspect which I will return to in my final remarks (Section 5).

Based on careful autoptic analysis, the figurines may be divided into two main groups according to their material. 10 figurines are made of an Aswan pink Kaolinitic Clay fabric (Group 1), and the remaining 20 of Nile silt fabrics (Group 2). The fabrics are described in detail in the following sections.

From the point of view of their modelling technique, the figurines under examination show significant diversity. Modelling by moulds appears to be the most frequent manufacturing method among them (25 out of 30). Among the moulded figurines, 12 were made with double moulds – that is, the front and back were formed in separate moulds and then joined; 13, instead, were made with a single mould and usually have a flat back. Some details of the body or parts of the coiffure were sometimes retouched by hand during the drying that preceded the firing. Only 5 out of 30 statuettes are modelled by hand. Remarkably, during the Late Antique period, to which these terracotta statuettes belong, double moulding is very rare for Nile-clay figurines, while it is more frequently used for Aswan-made ones.

The subjects represented are mainly female figures, standing with upraised arms, in a praying or adoration posture. In only three cases, the figures hold a child in their arms (Fig. 8, no. 20 and Fig. 9, no. 22). The heads can have a rounded shape or, especially in the case of the Aswan figurines, be spade-shaped.⁵⁹ At least two terracottas can be identified as rep-

resentations of horse riders (Fig. 9, nos. 26–27). In one further case, the horse is preserved without the rider (Fig. 9, no. 28). To these may be added two statuettes representing birds, perhaps a pigeon (Fig. 9, no. 29) and a hen (Fig. 9, no. 30), respectively – the latter may have originally been a decorative element of a figured vase.

From a stylistic point of view, the schematic rendering of the body of the figures (especially the female ones) contrasts with the coroplasts' evident attention to the coiffure and some features of the face and body, such as the nose and breasts, which are rendered more carefully than other features. All other details – including the eyes, the mouth, the ornaments and the dress – are generally painted in black and red on a yellow background. Usually the figurines have pierced ears, most likely for earrings. Only those made of Kaolinitic Clay fabric have a third hole on top of the head, pierced through the large headdress, probably a feature needed to hang up the statuette.

4. Catalogue of the terracotta figurines from el-Ashmunein in the Museo Egizio

Within the following catalogue, a general overview of the fabric, the technological characteristics, and the distinctive features of the statuette fragments⁶⁰ are given for each group. For every single piece, a progressive catalogue number, the Museo Egizio inventory number,⁶¹ measurements (height × width ×

Cat. No.	Inv. No.	Subjects	Measurements (cm)	Remarks
1	Suppl. 2090	Head of female figure	5.2 × 5.7 × 3.3	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.4 cm)
2	Suppl. 2092	Head of female figure	6.6 × 6 × 3.4	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.5 cm)
3	Suppl. 2254	Head of female figure	6.6 × 5.8 × 2.8	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.4 cm)
4	Suppl. 2256	Head of female figure	8.5 × 6.1 × 3.7	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.3 cm)
5	Suppl. 2259	Head of female figure	5 × 5.3 × 2.9	Holes pierced at ear level (∅ 0.3 cm)
6	Suppl. 2262	Head of female figure	7.7 × 5.6 × 3.4	Holes pierced at ear level (∅ 0.4 cm); hole at the top of the hair (∅ 0.2 cm)
7	Suppl. 2263	Head of female figure	6.3 × 5.3 × 3.9	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.2 cm)
8	Suppl. 2264	Head of female figure	7.6 × 6 × 3.7	Holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair (∅ 0.5 cm)
9	Suppl. 2261	Standing female figure	8.4 × 7.6 × 4.3	Circular and open base (∅ 3 cm)
10	Provv. 5954	Standing female figure in <i>orans</i> posture	8.3 × 6.9 × 4.1	Circular and open base (∅ 3.5 cm)

Table 1: Group 1 – Terracotta figurines made of Aswan Kaolinitic Clay fabrics.



Fig. 6: Group 1 (nos. 1–8): Terracotta figurines made of Aswan Kaolinitic Clay fabrics. Photos by Nicola dell’Aquila/Museo Egizio.



Fig. 7: Group 1 (nos. 9–10): Terracotta figurines made of Aswan Kaolinitic Clay fabrics. Photos by Nicola dell’Aquila/Museo Egizio.

thickness, in cm), and some additional remarks are indicated in [Table 1](#) and [Table 2](#). For each group, the closest parallels, if any, are indicated in a footnote. Each statuette description is complemented by the photo of the piece in the figures at the end of the respective paragraph.

4.1. Group 1 – Terracotta figurines made of Aswan Kaolinitic Clay fabrics

10 terracotta figurines belong to Group 1 ([Figs. 6–7](#)). Their fabric is pink, sometimes with a beige core, a fine to medium-fine texture, and rich in mica particles. The surfaces are smooth and covered with a pink to light-orange slip. The details of the head and the body are painted in black (eyes, lips, edge of the headdress, earrings in the form of large round pendants,⁶² ornaments on the neck [such as a *bulla* with an inscribed cross], and the tunic) on red-orange (headdress) and yellow (face), sometimes on an overall white dress ([Fig. 6, nos. 2–4](#)). The figures of Group 1, all hollow inside and fragmentary, are all made with a two-piece mould (heads: [Fig. 6, nos. 1–8](#); bodies: [Fig. 7, nos. 9–10](#)).⁶³ In terms of distinctive features, these statuettes represent female figures, characterized by a standing posture, with the arms outstretched at a 90° angle to the body ([Fig. 7, no. 9](#))⁶⁴ or raised up at an angle ([Fig. 7, no. 10](#)),⁶⁵ a spade-shaped wreath framing the hair, holes pierced at ear level and at the top of the hair, a cylindrical shaped body, small rounded breasts (moulded), and an open rounded base. Usually, they have a palm branch incised on the back. In one case ([Fig. 6, no. 7](#)), the fracture at the base of the neck is covered by a thick layer of black resin.

4.2. Group 2 – Terracotta figurines made of Nile silt fabrics

20 terracotta figurines, all fragmentary, are included in Group 2 ([Figs. 8–9](#)). The fabrics often show zoned fractures, from red-brown to pink-mauve in colour, with a grey-black core and a medium-fine to medium-coarse texture, in which mica, quartz and vegetable particles are present. The surface treatment on most of the statuettes of this group consists of a reddish slip, tone-on-tone, over which a whitish layer, possibly calcite, is superimposed. This is used as a primer for painting the details of the face, the head-

dress, the tunic and other elements (as in the case of the animal figures) with black, red, dark red, pinkish and yellowish colours.⁶⁶ Most of these figurines are single-moulded, solid, with a flat back ([Fig. 8, nos. 11–20](#) and [Fig. 9, nos. 21, 23–24](#)), except for five that are hand-modelled ([Fig. 9, nos. 22, 26–29](#)) and two others that are two-piece moulded and hollow ([Fig. 9, nos. 25](#) and [30](#)). Generally, only the nose and the small, rounded breasts are in relief, except for [Fig. 8, no. 14](#) and [Fig. 9, nos. 23–25](#), whose hair, eyes and lips are moulded. As for Group 1, the most represented subject are female figures, of which only the head is preserved in most cases ([Fig. 8, nos. 11–15](#) and [Fig. 9, nos. 23–25](#)). More rarely, the entire upper part of the body is preserved, so that the standing orans posture with upraised arms is discernible ([Fig. 8, nos. 16–18](#)). In one case, the statuette is preserved from the neck to the feet and shows traces of the now lost separately modelled and applied breasts ([Fig. 8, no. 19](#)). Only in three cases, the figure holds a baby ([Fig. 8, no. 20](#) and [Fig. 9, nos. 21–22](#)), summarily rendered in the mother's arms in front of the belly.⁶⁷

In terms of distinctive features, the female figurines are generally characterized by a large flat and rounded wreath framing the hair ([Fig. 8, nos. 12–15, 17–18](#) and [Fig. 9, no. 25](#)).⁶⁸ Spade-shaped headdresses are less frequent ([Fig. 8, nos. 11, 16](#)),⁶⁹ while some figures are characterized by the hairstyle described as “melon-rib” or, in French, *à côte de melon* ([Fig. 9, nos. 23–24](#)).⁷⁰ The statuette's legs are straight and divided by a groove ([Fig. 8, nos. 19–20](#) and [Fig. 9, nos. 21–22](#)), just above which is a cup-shaped depression representing the belly button ([Fig. 8, nos. 16, 18](#)). Holes pierced at ear level are visible only in three items ([Fig. 8, nos. 15, 17](#) and [Fig. 9, no. 23](#)). In two cases ([Fig. 9, no. 23–24](#)), the fracture of the neck is covered by a thick layer of black resin.

The group also includes two male figures ([Fig. 9, nos. 26–27](#)), identifiable as two riders (based on the fracture at the height of the pelvis and their possible attachment to a horse back), and an almost complete horse ([Fig. 9, no. 28](#)) which originally had a rider on its back, as indicated by the fracture.⁷¹ They are all handmade figurines, summarily modelled, although the painted details appear to be accurately made. I have identified the animal figures that close the cata-

Cat. No.	Inv. No.	Subjects	Measurements (cm)	Remarks
11	Suppl. 2251	Head of female figure	8.3 × 7.5 × 2.8	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
12	Suppl. 2258	Head of female figure	6.7 × 7.6 × 2.7	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
13	Suppl. 2242	Head of female figure	7.1 × 5.6 × 2	
14	Suppl. 2267	Head of female figure	7.8 × 7.7 × 2.6	
15	Suppl. 2260	Head of female figure	8.2 × 7.3 × 3	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
16	Suppl. 2240	Standing female figure in <i>orans</i> posture	15 × 10.2 × 3.2	
17	Suppl. 2252	Standing female figure in <i>orans</i> posture	10.2 × 10.7 × 2.6	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
18	Suppl. 2253	Standing female figure in <i>orans</i> posture	11.1 × 8 × 7	
19	Suppl. 2726	Standing female figure in <i>orans</i> posture	11.7 × 7 × 1.5	
20	Suppl. 2237	Female figure with child	11.1 × 8 × 2.5	
21	Suppl. 2233	Female figure with child	10.8 × 6.9 × 2.7	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
22	Suppl. 2234	Female figure with child	8.7 × 8.2 × 7	
23	Suppl. 2257	Head of female figure	4.9 × 7 × 2.6	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
24	Suppl. 2266	Head of female figure	7.1 × 5.6 × 2	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
25	Suppl. 2248	Head of female figure	4.7 × 3.8 × 2.4	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
26	Suppl. 2282	Male figure (horse-rider?)	9.2 × 4 × 2	
27	Suppl. 2283	Male figure (horse-rider?)	5.2 × 4 × 3.4	
28	Suppl. 2286	Horse figurine	11.7 × 9.4 × 4.4	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.
29	Suppl. 2288	Bird figure (pigeon?)	11.6 × 4 × 1.6	
30	Suppl. 2289	Figured vase (hen?)	11.4 × 6 × 10.5	The upper part of the coiffure is characterized by finger pressures (likely made after the moulding phase) along the entire edge.

Table 2: Group 2 – Terracotta figurines made of Nile silt clay fabrics.



Fig. 8: Group 2 (nos. 11–20): Terracotta figurines made of Nile silt fabrics. Photos by Nicola dell’Aquila/Museo Egizio.

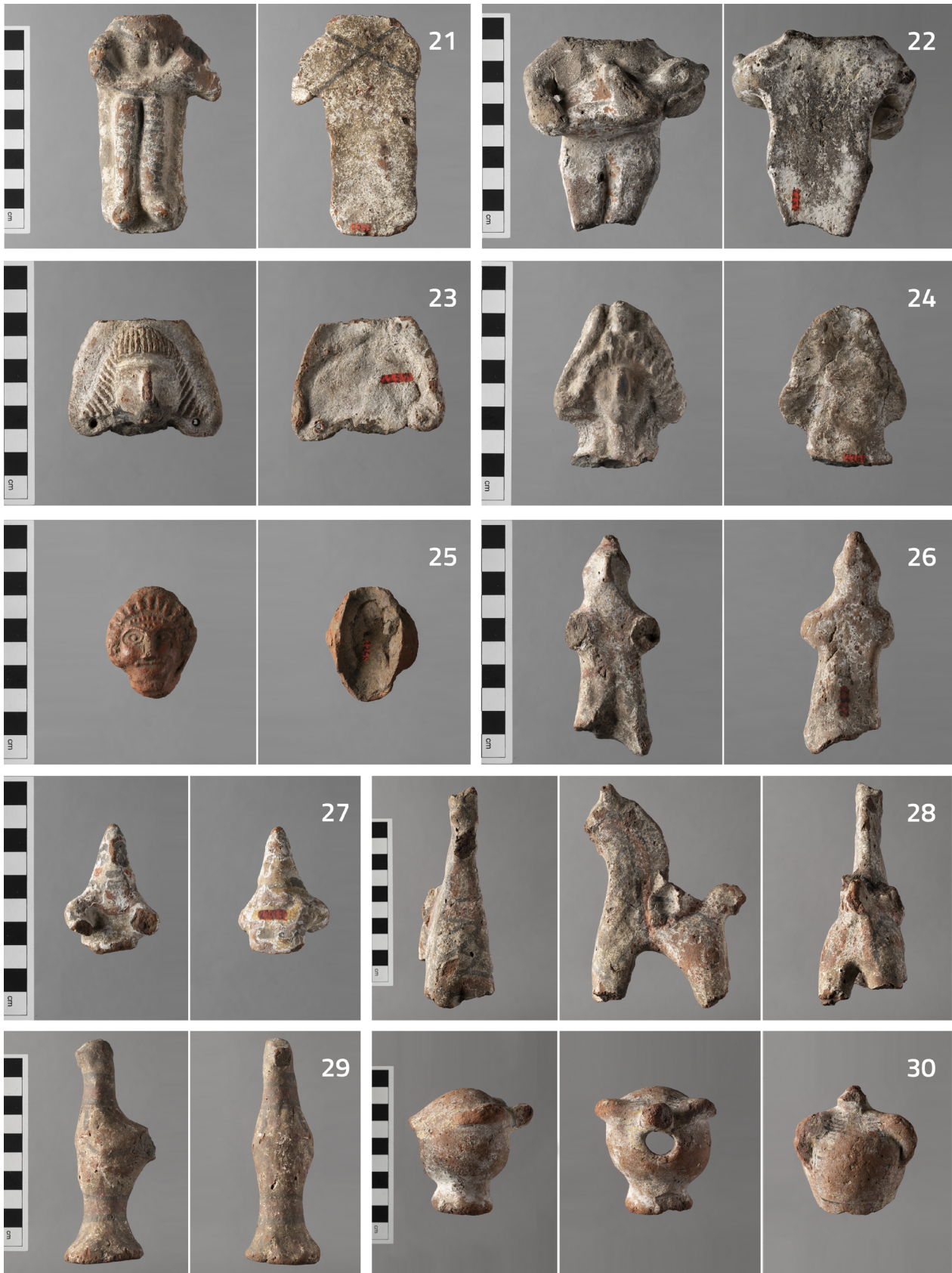


Fig. 9: Group 2 (nos. 21-30); Terracotta figurines made of Nile silt fabrics. Photos by Nicola dell'Aquila/Museo Egizio.

logue (Fig. 9, nos. 29–30) as an almost complete bird, likely a pigeon (Fig. 9, no. 29), and a fragmentary hen (Fig. 9, no. 30).⁷² While no. 29 is hand-modelled and solid, no. 30 is two-piece moulded and hollow.

5. Results of the study

The terracotta figurines manufactured during the Christian period are completely different from the more widespread and better-known examples of the Graeco-Roman period.⁷³ The accuracy in the modelling and the rendering of the details of the Graeco-Roman statuettes gives way to the evident flattening and stylization of the figures in the Byzantine period Egyptian productions. These are characterized by two-dimensional and stereotyped bodies and only in some distinctive attributes (such as the nose, belly, breasts, and jewellery) is there an effort towards realism by means of plastic rendering. To these characteristics one may add frontality, repetitiveness of gestures, invariability of the gaze, and large and expressive eyes giving the visage a solemn appearance. In 1990, Piotr Parandowsky wrote about the study of terracotta figurines of the Byzantine period:

*With no risk of exaggeration one can define them as Cinderellas among other archaeological finds. Coptic terracottas exist on the marginal, neglected place, are treated badly by the scholars, as well as the antiquarians of Egypt. One has to dig them from the deepest corner. It results from the lack of interest and as a matter of fact they were none as skillfully made and not so 'artistical' as their Graeco-Roman counterparts. They are considered as more "ugly".*⁷⁴

Today, although they may still be regarded as “ugly” objects, the interest in this type of terracotta figurines has definitely increased and new publications⁷⁵ are enriching our knowledge with information concerning not only manufacturing techniques and places of production but also, more importantly, the archaeological contexts these figurines come from and, despite the lack of ancient written sources regarding them, their historical and social meaning. The study of the Christian terracotta figurines from el-Ashmunein in the Museo Egizio collection allows one to confirm the conclusions already reached so far in the study of these artefacts and to highlight

some aspects deserving more in-depth discussion. Although the general provenance of these 30 figurines is known, their precise find-spot remains unknown (see Section 3.2 above). However, similar terracotta figurines found at el-Ashmunein in Late Antique contexts of domestic and public nature (i.e., houses, urban dumps, and areas around the basilica) during the German and British excavations here might lead to the hypothesis that the figurines in the Museo Egizio collection could come from the same contexts.

From a stylistic and manufacturing point of view, the female figurines listed above recall those attested in other contemporaneous settlements in the Egypt. Those of pink Kaolinitic Clay fabrics stand out in the group. Their stylistic and technical characteristics are clearly indicative of production in the Aswan area, where the monastery of Deir Anba Hadra (St. Simeon) is located. The female figurines made of Nile-clay fabrics are stylistically and technically comparable to those produced at the monastic sites of Antinoopolis and Bawit, respectively associated with St. Colluthus and St. Apollo. At these sites, the closest parallels have also been found for the few figurines representing horsemen and animals, both produced in Nile-clay. No specimens reminiscent of the productions of Abu Mina or the Great Oasis have been identified among the figurines in the Museo Egizio.

None of the female figurines treated in this contribution is complete: they are all broken at the neck or the abdomen. During the analysis of the pieces, it was noted that the fractures are clear and straight, only rarely slanted. The research of parallels from other Egyptian contexts showed that, except for the rare complete figurines, this partial fragmentation appears to be common within the category of Christian female figurines: they are broken in the same place consistently, and this is why only the heads or the bodies are preserved. The characteristics of these fractures, which do not suggest a break due to depositional or accidental conditions, may be interpreted as evidence of an intentional action on, or manipulation of, the figurines. This aspect deserves attention since, while much has been written about the possible interpretation and function of these Christian female figurines (see Section 2), their state of partial fragmentation has rarely been discussed.⁷⁶

The hypothesis of intentional breakage has been put forward and debated for female statuettes in terracotta and clay from different places and historical periods, not only in Egypt but also in the wider Mediterranean basin.⁷⁷ Several interpretations were proposed to explain the intentional behavior leading humans to break objects in ritual circumstances, funerary occasions or symbolic activities.⁷⁸ Some scholars argue that these behaviors are a) motivated by an intention of “killing” the artefacts to remove them from the sphere of use and release the spirit of the object to accompany the deceased in the afterlife, b) to avoid association with the property of a deceased, c) to bring renewed life to the earth,⁷⁹ or d) to conclude a ritual, before the statuettes were thrown away.⁸⁰

In light of the heterogeneous contexts of discovery of these statuettes, it may be possible to suggest a further interpretation: this type of figurines might have been bought by the believer visiting a sanctuary to ask for the intercession of the saint in fertility and maternity issues. For the believers, this object took on a symbolic meaning of connection with the saint and, once brought home from the pilgrimage, the “fetish” became part of their private and personal devotional sphere, to which the believers kept turning until the grace was granted. The breaking of the figurine could therefore occur after conception or, more likely, at the moment of childbirth, followed by the dumping of the fragments. The discovery of female figurines still complete could, consequently, be explained by non-granting of the grace or premature death of the figurine’s owner. This hypothetical interpretation of the breaking practice could be corroborated by the fact that figurines of this type are often found in landfill areas near residential areas and cemeteries.

For the moment, this is only an interpretative suggestion. Attempting to define to what practices the voluntary fragmentation of the female figurines can actually be ascribed is a difficult task. Only further archaeological and papyrological research might be able to shed further light on this issue. Also, it is essential to carry out accurate and systematic analysis of larger numbers of similar objects, focusing on their surface features as well as the morphology and localization of the breaks, in order to attempt a reconstruction of the gesture and the way in which the intentional act of breakage was performed. The above observations on the group of Christian female figurines from el-Ashmunein held in the Museo Egizio, Turin, could therefore provide a springboard for evaluation of the intentionality of fractures in this type of figurine in other collections and expand our knowledge on the meaning of particular human behaviors that are part of Christian practices in Egypt.

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Notes

¹ Those discussed in the present article are part of a larger group of terracotta figurines studied within the Project SUR.VI.V.E. *SURveying Virtual Voids in Egyptian collections. A Digital and Cultural Study of Terracotta Figurines and their Lost Molds*, conducted between 2020–2022 under the supervision of Corinna Rossi (DABC-Politecnico di Milano), awarded the “Seal of Excellence” by the European Commission (H2020-MSCA-IF-2019) and funded by

the Politecnico di Milano.

² Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 7–8, 30–31.

³ Frankfurter, in Tallet and Zivie-Coche (eds.), *Le myrte et la rose*, 2014; Frankfurter, *Material Religion* 11/2 (2015); Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 2018.

⁴ Frankfurter, *Material Religion* 11/2 (2015), pp. 209–10.

⁵ Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 2018, esp. pp. 34–35 in the chapter “Domestic Devotion and Religious Change”; p. 58 in “Female Figurines and the Ambiguity of the Representation”; and pp. 162–67 in

- “Potters and Terracotta Artisans”.
- ⁶ Frankfurter, *Material Religion* 11/2 (2015), p. 192.
- ⁷ Ballet, *Figurines et société*, 2020.
- ⁸ Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 31, 41–45 (G33, 42–49); Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 2018, pp. 34–35, fig. 1.
- ⁹ Ballet and Mahmoud, *BIFAO* 87 (1987); Ballet and Lyon-Caen, in Delange (ed.), *Les fouilles française à Elephantine*, 2012. The figurines produced in the area of Aswan are very common at many Egyptian sites and are often found together with local productions. Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 31–33 (G4, 5) and 37–40 (G18–23, 25–28); Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, pp. 107–08, 112–14 (3390–3396, 3398–3400).
- ¹⁰ On Karanis, see Allen, *The Terracotta Figurines from Karanis*, 1985, pp. 437–57; on Antinoopolis, see Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020; on Manqabad, see Incordino, *ArOr* 90 (2022), pp. 219–39.
- ¹¹ Caputo, *Amheida V*, 2020, pp. 8–14, with further references.
- ¹² Ballet and Vichy, *CCE* 3 (1992), pp. 116–19.
- ¹³ Only the Aswan versions normally have a third hole at the top of the head, pierced through the huge coiffure on the often subtriangular head. Ballet suggests that the holes were for earrings to be inserted by the owner; Bailey is not wholly satisfied with earrings as the sole explanation, although he has nothing to offer in its place: see Ballet, in Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, 1991, p. 500 (<https://ccdl.claremont.edu/digital/collection/cce/id/449/rec/1>), and Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 107.
- ¹⁴ This is above all a feature of the terracotta figurines produced in the Great Oasis between the 4th and 7th centuries AD; see <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search?q=Kharga&material=Figurines>.
- ¹⁵ Some ethnographic studies on the use of dolls/figurines in modern Africa have shown that in everyday life they are used in multiple ways, and most notably that there are differences between their intended use and their actual use or reuse; see Weiss, *RRE* 1 (2015), pp. 84–86, with further references.
- ¹⁶ Parandowski, in Godlewski (ed.), *Coptic Studies*, 1990, p. 303, with further references.
- ¹⁷ Allen, *The Terracotta Figurines from Karanis*, 1985, pp. 437–57; Pollard, *JARCE* 35 (1998), pp. 147–62; Weiss, *RRE* 1 (2015).
- ¹⁸ Petrie, *Roman Ehnasya*, 1905, pl. LII.
- ¹⁹ Several Byzantine terracotta figurines from Djeme/Medinet Habu are accessible in the online collection of the Institute for the Study of Ancient Culture ISAC (previous OI), University of Chicago, at <https://isac-idb.uchicago.edu>.
- ²⁰ Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 108.
- ²¹ Ballet and Mahmoud, *BIFAO* 87 (1987), p. 61.
- ²² Palanque, *BIFAO* 3 (1903), pp. 97–103; Clédat, *Le monastère*, 1999, pp. 235, 240, figs. 237–38. See also, Calamant and Hadji-Minaglou (eds.), *Baouît*, 2023.
- ²³ Wendrich, in Sidebotham and Wendrich (eds.), *Berenike* 1994, 1995, p. 31, fig. 12.
- ²⁴ Frankfurter, *Female Figurines*, 2015, p. 199, fig. 8; Incordino, *ArOr* 90 (2022), p. 226, fig. 5.
- ²⁵ Frankfurter, *Female Figurines*, 2015, p. 196, fig. 3.
- ²⁶ Del Francia, *Antinoe. Cent'anni dopo*, 1998, pp. 108–11; Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 35–60; Ballet, *Figurines et société*, 2020, pp. 220–21.
- ²⁷ Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 108.
- ²⁸ Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 112, pl. 70 (no. 3388).
- ²⁹ Mond and Myers, *Temples of Armant*, 1940, pp. 98–100.
- ³⁰ Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 108.
- ³¹ Incordino, *ArOr* 90 (2022), pp. 223–24.
- ³² Stevens, in Hope and Bowen (eds.), *Dakhleh Oasis Project*, 2002, p. 282 (figs. 3–6, cat.-nos. 25, 27, 28, and 30), p. 284 (pl. 12, cat.-nos. 19, 20, and 26), pp. 286–88.
- ³³ Adams, *Meinarti*, 2000, p. 92.
- ³⁴ Frankfurter, *Material Religion* 11/2 (2015), pp. 207–15; Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 2018, pp. 34–38; Weiss, *RRE* 1 (2015), p. 87.
- ³⁵ Stafford, *Evidence for Female Pilgrims*, 2019, p. 11, especially fn. 2 for further references.
- ³⁶ Nicgorski, *Artifacts of Early Christian Pilgrimage*, 2021, p. 1.
- ³⁷ Wipzinska, *The Second Gift*, 2018, 287–336.
- ³⁸ Incordino, *ArOr* 90 (2022), p. 232.
- ³⁹ Frankfurter, *Christianizing Egypt*, 2018, p. 163. See also, Bagnall and Rathbone, *Egypt*, 2004, pp. 107–26, 174–82, 237–46.
- ⁴⁰ On the toponym and the religious tradition of Khemenu-Hermopolis, Boylan, *Thoth*, 1987, pp. 147–72; Lambert, *RHR* 205 (1988); Dunand and Zivie-Coche, *Dei e uomini nell'Egitto antico*, 2003, pp. 72–73; Bagnall and Rathbone, *Egypt from Alexander to the Copts*, 2004, p. 162. See also Tobin's summary on Egyptian creation myths, in Redford (ed.), *The Ancient Gods Speak*, 2002, p. 248.
- ⁴¹ For the general topography of the site, Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein I*, 1983. See also Bozza, in Livadiotti et al. (eds.), *Theatroideis*, 2018, pp. 453–68, with further references.
- ⁴² On the relations between Antinoopolis and Hermopolis, see Malouta, in Schubert (ed.), *Actes du 26e Congrès International de Papyrologie*, 2012.
- ⁴³ In general, on the action of the *sebbakhin* and on the excavations in Egypt for the recovery of papyri between 1800 and 1900, see Davoli, *Atene e Roma* 1–2 (2008).
- ⁴⁴ Snape and Bailey, *British Museum Expedition*, 1988, pls. 37–51.
- ⁴⁵ In the same year, the Italian Archaeological Mission also began excavations at Giza, the Valley of the Queens, and Heliopolis, see Moiso, *Ernesto Schiaparelli*, 2008.
- ⁴⁶ Breccia, *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei*, 1903.
- ⁴⁷ See Del Vesco and Moiso (eds.), *Missione Egitto*, 2017, pp. 163–64.
- ⁴⁸ Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929–1939*, 1959.
- ⁴⁹ Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein I*, 1983; Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein II*, 1989; Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein III*, 1993; Bailey, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein IV*, 1991; Bailey,

- Excavations at el-Ashmunein V*, 1998.
- ⁵⁰ Archivio di Stato, Torino, Fondo MAE, II Versamento, Mazzo 2, Fascicolo 5.
- ⁵¹ Inventoried in the following ranges of numbers: 2077–2094, 2222–2226, 2232–2269, 2273–2276, 2282–2286, 2288–2292.
- ⁵² The rest are ascribable to the early Roman period.
- ⁵³ “Two ‘*akwâman* [the plural of *kôm*] enclosing, as in an amphitheatre, respectively the eastern temple with the columns of Philip II and the temple on the other side, where the colossus of Ramesses II was found”.
- ⁵⁴ Archivio di Stato, Torino, Fondo MAE, II Versamento, Mazzo 1, Fascicolo 7 and Fondo MAE, III Versamento, Mazzo 1, Fascicolo 3.
- ⁵⁵ Jomard (ed.), *Description de l'Égypte*, 1817, pls. 50–52.
- ⁵⁶ See Davoli, *BASP* 52 (2015), pp. 95–97, especially fn. 28.
- ⁵⁷ See Roeder, *Vorläufiger Bericht*, 1940, pp. 68–69, pl. 10 (c–e), pl. 16 (b); Roeder, *Hermopolis 1929–1939*, 1959, pp. 244–46, pl. 36 (e–l) and pp. 288–92, pl. 59 (a, f–l).
- ⁵⁸ See Spencer, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein II*, 1989, pl. 84; Bailey, *Excavations at el-Ashmunein V*, 1998, pp. 155–56, pl. 95 (Z17–Z21).
- ⁵⁹ See Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 39–41.
- ⁶⁰ The indications “right” and “left” refer to the statuette’s point of view.
- ⁶¹ Most of the terracotta figurines discussed in this article are inventoried under the designation *Supplemento*, abbreviated Suppl. The objects under this designation mostly derive from the numerous campaigns of the Missione Archeologica Italiana, directed by Ernesto Schiaparelli and his collaborators; see Moiso, *La storia del Museo Egizio*, 2016, p. 64; Del Vesco and Moiso (eds.), *Missione Egitto*, 2017. Only two have an inventory number prefixed by the definition *Provisorio*, abbreviated Provv. The objects under this designation are of uncertain provenance and their modalities of acquisition are unclear.
- ⁶² As reported in the description of a similar piece analyzed by Török in the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts catalogue, the large round circles at the ears “may denote earrings, or, more probably, derive from a rather frequently occurring hairdress type worn by women on 5th and 6th century stelae”, see Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, p. 37 (G15), with further references.
- ⁶³ Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, pp. 112–14, pls. 70–72 (3389–3397); Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 37–40, pls. XXXIV–XXXVII (G18–G27); Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 38, 45, fig. 4.
- ⁶⁴ Palanque, *BIFAO* 3 (1903), pl. II (1); Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, pp. 112–14, pl. 71 (3392–3395); Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 37–38, pl. XXXIV (G18–G19); Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 38, 45, fig. 3.
- ⁶⁵ Del Francia, *Antinoe. Cent’anni dopo*, 1998, p. 110, fig. 115; Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, pp. 112–14, pl. 70 (3390–3391).
- ⁶⁶ Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 40, 55–58 (figs. 18–24).
- ⁶⁷ Palanque, *BIFAO* 3 (1903), pl. I (3–5); Del Francia, *Antinoe. Cent’anni dopo*, 1998, p. 110, fig. 117.

- ⁶⁸ Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, pp. 32, 42, pl. XXVII (G3) and pl. XLV (G38); Bailey, *Catalogue of Terracottas*, 2008, p. 112, pl. 70 (3387–3388); Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 39, 51, fig. 13.
- ⁶⁹ Del Francia, *Antinoe. Cent’anni dopo*, 1998, p. 110, fig. 118.
- ⁷⁰ Török, *Coptic Antiquities I*, 1993, p. 40, pl. XXVIII (G28–G29); Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 39, 49, fig. 11.
- ⁷¹ Palanque, *BIFAO* 3 (1903), pl. II (3–7); Del Francia, *Antinoe. Cent’anni dopo*, 1998, p. 111, fig. 121.
- ⁷² A close parallel is Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 38, 47, fig. 8.
- ⁷³ Ballet, *Figurines et société*, 2020.
- ⁷⁴ Parandowski, in: Godlewski (ed.), *Coptic Studies*, p. 303.
- ⁷⁵ Ballet, *Figurines et société*, 2020; Ballet, in Myśliwicz and Ryś (eds.), *Crossing Time and Space*, 2020, pp. 35–60; Incordino, *ArOr* 90 (2022), pp. 219–39.
- ⁷⁶ Frankfurter, *Female Figurines*, 2015, pp. 213–14.
- ⁷⁷ A broad range of scholars have made important contributions to the study of deliberate, intentional fragmentation of ancient objects at different places and in different historical periods. See Chapman, *Fragmentation in Archaeology*, 2000; Del Vesco, *Letti votivi*, 2010; Miniaci (ed.), *Breaking Images*, 2023.
- ⁷⁸ Jacquet, Karnak, 2001, p. 61; Brémont, in Miniaci (ed.), *Breaking Images*, 2023, pp. 129–49; Forte, in Miniaci (ed.), *Breaking Images*, 2023, pp. 243–58.
- ⁷⁹ Forte, in Miniaci (ed.), *Breaking Images*, 2023, pp. 244–46, with further references.
- ⁸⁰ Wilfong, *Women of Jeme*, 2002, pp. 115–16; Waraksa, in Wendrich (ed.), *UCLA Encyclopedia of Egyptology*, 2008, p. 2; Waraksa, *Female Figurines*, 2009, pp. 69–76, 148–53.

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