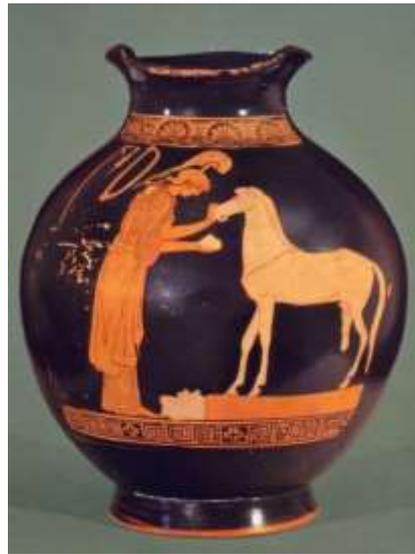


« When the clay is under the fingernail »¹ Modelling in the Ancient Greek World

International Colloquium, April 3-5, 2019, Aix-en-Provence

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Call for papers : Submission deadline: December 1, 2018

The « Centre Camille Jullian » is organizing an international colloquium on the hand-modelling of clay figurines in the ancient Greek world. Scheduled for April 3-5, April, 2019, this colloquium will take place at the Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme, 5 rue du Château de l'Horloge, 13090 Aix-en-Provence, France. <https://www.mmssh.univ-aix.fr/>

The preferred languages for the submitted proposals and accepted papers are French and English, and papers should not exceed 25 minutes. We invite submissions on one or more of the themes that are listed at the end of this call. To submit a proposal for a paper please send an abstract of 200 to 300 words to Hélène Aurigny (aurigny@mmssh.univ-aix.fr) and Laura Rohaut (laura.rohaut@univ-montp3.fr) as a Word document that include you full name, title, affiliation (if any), and email address.

¹ Plutarque, *Moralia* 86a et 636c. "Polykleitos the sculptor said that the work is hardest when the clay is under the fingernail."

Accommodation and meal expenses in Aix during the colloquium will be covered by the Colloquium, but participants must pay their own travel expenses. Final participants will be notified in January 2019.

Orientation of the Colloquium

Moulding techniques and their consequences on the organization of systems of production for Greek figurative terracottas, among other artefacts, have been the object of study for the last 70 years or so. But rarely are systematic coroplastic analyses focused on hand modelling. While modelled artefacts often have been examined within the context of larger coroplastic corpora, these artefacts appear to have been dismissed as unworthy of further comment in most of these corpora. The hand modelling of figurative terracottas has been associated predominately with the Archaic period, but this technique does not disappear entirely with the introduction and widespread use of the mould.

Modelling, the basic technical stage?

This relative lack of visibility in the bibliography for coroplastic studies is not unrelated to the status of hand-made figurines, compared to their mould-made counterparts, since they are often considered as belonging to a less advanced stage of production before the invention of the mould and its complex techniques. However, we can assert that modelling did not disappear when moulding techniques became common, and that hand-made figurines still existed in the Hellenistic and Roman Imperial periods.

The manipulation of clay by hand for image making is a technique that is so ancient that it appears in the creation mythology of a number of civilizations. The first man was created from clay, according to the Bible, and Pausanias (10, 4, 4) tells us that Prometheus modelled the first man from clay. In all these traditions the divine modellers can be considered the first *coroplastes*.

Hand modelling was the first step in the process of creation for moulded figurines, since it was used to manipulate and form a clay image, or prototype, from which one or several moulds were made for mass production. It is important to keep in mind that hand modelled figurines also could be mass produced, not only in the Archaic period, but, as is demonstrated by several sets of Classical and Hellenistic figurines, could be manufactured in large quantities for votive uses in later Greek contexts.

Techniques of modelling and objects

Hand modelling in clay is a simple technique. But this seeming simplicity also tends to obscure the countless possibilities for experimentation and combination with other techniques. Thus, modelling is used in combination with moulding to make figurines for which only the head is mould made; modelling can also be used in combination with wheel-made elements. It is this wide range of possibilities that this colloquium aims to explore.

Within this context, the focus is on the Greek world, including figurines, reliefs, ceramics with hand-modelled decoration, architectural models, or even large clay statues, in order to explore their inherent technical characteristics.

A broad Mediterranean perspective

The study of modelling in the ancient Greek world can best be viewed within a broad geographical framework such as is offered by the Mediterranean world. Indeed, the study of regional traditions makes it possible to highlight the persistence and diffusion of certain creative processes within different contexts and to question the notion of style. Nevertheless, hand modelling, which by definition does not belong within a mechanically reproducible system, is a technique that yields products created for local use. One can gain an informative perspective in the understanding of this production and its diffusion on a regional level. Particularly interesting are examples from the

eastern Mediterranean (Cyprus, Crete, Greek Mainland and the Greek islands), as well as southern Italy and Sicily.

Objectives and limits

Within the limited framework of a three-day colloquium, the goal is not to arrive at a comprehensive overview of hand modelling. While the presentation of corpora of small or poorly-known modelled figurines are welcomed, the objectives of this colloquium are to bring to the forefront an assessment of the methods of analysis of this type of material, for which the standard considerations of series and generations are not always relevant. It will also be an opportunity for a historiographic approach to modelling. In this way it is anticipated that more knowledgeable emphases will be placed on hand-modelled artefacts in the future and that these seemingly simple objects can take a more prominent place in the history of art and archaeology of the Greek world.

Themes :

1. Literary sources and the vocabulary of modelling. Myths and divinities pertaining to modelling. Iconography of clay modelling.
2. Creation of the model, relation to the technique of bronze casting. Workshops, local production and traditions, modelling and styles.
3. Techniques, including shaping, aggregate elaboration, surface manipulation, cutting, pinching, rolling, inclusion of moulded or wheel-made elements, etc. Produced objects: figurines, reliefs, ceramics with modelled decoration, large clay sculpture, architectural models...
4. Dating of modelled figurines; chronological issues. Historiographic approach.