The Terracotta Sculpture from Ancient Marion: Evidence of the Coroplast's Craft

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Abstract

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 BC. 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

Fig. 1: Map of Cyprus with Marion and Arsinoe.

Published in: Stéphanie Huysecom-Haxhi – Antonella Pautasso (Eds.), «Craft Economy» and Terracotta Figurines. Approaching Systems of Production through Coroplastic Studies, Panel 3.14, Archaeology and Economy in the Ancient World 16 (Heidelberg, Propylaeum 2022) 5–24. DOI: *https://doi.org/10.11588/propylaeum.874.c11407*

local production has been confirmed but also allows for tracking production over time from the Archaic through the Hellenistic periods.

One of the critical issues in the field of coroplastic studies involves the technical strategies employed in the production of terracotta sculpture. The following discussion provides an overview of various methodologies developed by artisans for the creation of sculpture made from clay and offers an important perspective in how coroplasts managed their craft.

During antiquity, Cyprus was known for a bounty of sculpture made from clay with a range of date from the Neolithic into the Roman period.[1] With clay beds being ubiquitous throughout the island, that material was readily preferred, especially since good quality stone for sculptural production was generally lacking. The number of sites that have produced terracotta sculpture in various contexts grows with continued excavation; however, it is the exceptional corpus of sculpture recovered from the ancient cities of Marion and Arsinoe that provides a good deal of information on various facets of coroplastic production.

Background

Ancient Marion, located on the northwest coast of Cyprus (fig. 1), was one of the city kingdoms of the island during the Iron Age. The city accrued wealth from nearby copper mines located some 5 km to the northeast, which already were in operation in the early Iron Age and, undoubtedly, attracted a Phoenician presence. Sited at the head of Chrysochou Bay, Marion benefitted from trade contacts with East Greece, the Greek mainland, and Phoenician merchants active in mercantile exchanges throughout the Mediterranean.[2] The material culture of the city reflects a variety of imported goods and stylistic influences from both within and outside the island.

Marion continued to prosper until 312 BC when it was destroyed. Diodorus Siculus (19.79.4-60) reports that in the wars of the Diadochi after the death of Alexander, Marion had sided with Antigonos, and in 312 BC, Ptolemy I razed the city to the ground.[3] It was in 270 BC that Ptolemy II Philadelphos established a new city, partially upon the remains of the earlier one, and named it Arsinoe after his sister-wife. The new foundation experienced a long life, thriving during the Hellenistic and Roman periods and continuing throughout the Byzantine and Medieval periods until it ultimately transitioned into Polis Chrysochous, the name of the modern town.

Both Marion and Arsinoe were the focus of periodic archaeological attention beginning in the 19th century,[4] but it was in 1983 when major exploration and excavation of the two cities was begun by a team from Princeton University, and study of the material remains continues to this day.[5] It was during the course of work by Princeton that two Iron Age sanctuaries were discovered that had functioned while Marion was thriving before its destruction (fig. 2). Both sanctuaries contained numerous votive offerings, but

Fig. 2: Marion Sanctuaries. Peristeries Sanctuary, left; Maratheri Sanctuary, right.

it was the dedications of terracotta sculpture that were particularly prolific. The earlier of the two sanctuaries, the Peristeries Sanctuary (fig. 2, left), known from its toponym, is a multi-phased, rural sanctuary dating to the Cypro-Archaic period and ultimately destroyed in the early 5th century. At its largest extent, it enclosed an altar and multiple cult buildings. Adjacent was a large *bothros* filled with building debris from various cleanup phases of the sanctuary and discarded votive materials.[6] During excavation, within the *temenos* wall and the *bothros,* a panoply of votive objects was recovered that included over 25000 fragments of terracotta sculpture. The sanctuary was dedicated to a female divinity with fertility associations, and many objects reflected close stylistic and typological parallels with the Levant and Egypt.

The second Marion sanctuary, the Maratheri Sanctuary (fig. 2, right) was also multi-phased and dated to the Cypro-Archaic and Cypro-Classical periods. Comprised of a forecourt, porch, and temple, the sanctuary was violently destroyed in 312 BC by soldiers of Ptolemy I.[7] Within the temple and its forecourt and the intervening space between the temple and the city wall to the east, an array of votive material was recovered, including nearly 5000 fragments of terracotta sculpture. The nature of the sculpture indicated that the sanctuary was dedicated to Aphrodite and, possibly, Zeus. In style and type, the sculpture had affinities with East Greece and the Greek mainland.[8]

Coroplastic Study

The terracotta sculpture from ancient Marion and Arsinoe provides an ample corpus that allows for studying coroplastic material from various perspectives. Significant

advantages are many. The volume of terracotta sculpture from the two Marion sanctuaries as well as from various contexts associated with the later city, Arsinoe, are exceptional and the sculptural cache, numbering roughly 30000 fragments, is the largest ever discovered in Cyprus. What makes the Marion material particularly attractive for study is that the context is secure – two flourishing sanctuaries, with the sculpture serving as votive offerings. Dating is confirmed by historical corroboration as well as dated parallels with pottery and other diagnostic sculpture from outside the island. The range of object size includes miniature to over-lifesize,[9] and the duration of production extends over the span of several centuries, from the late 7th century BC into the Roman period. Assessment of the clay and the volume of the corpus suggest local production.

What is most significant about the terracotta sculpture is that close examination has revealed different production strategies that included various procedures that served the skill of the coroplast, the availability of materials, and the demands of the market.

Technical Strategies

Throughout antiquity, the crafting of terracotta sculpture was accomplished by means of various techniques, and the Marion terracotta corpus reflects those most widely used: handformed, moldmade, and wheelmade approaches. Coroplasts often combined different methods, and a finished object might reflect diverse ways of handling clay. Objects similar in size and sharing a common typology sometimes reveal different crafting strategies, which likely suggests the work of different artisans, although a coroplast was always free to adopt different ways of making the same type of object.[10] Understanding how a coroplast worked is possible from close visual examination. Oftentimes traces of finger pressmarks are visible on the surface; wheelmarks might be present; and the remains of coil seams apparent. Examining the interior of an object is just as important as visual examination of the exterior and perhaps more so. A skilled coroplast would be far more careful to remove traces of his work on that part of an object that would readily be seen, and the interior and backs of sculpture receive far less attention than the front. Visual examination can be enhanced by using a magnifying glass or a handheld microscope, and not all traces of an artisan's work are apparent to the naked eye. It is equally important to handle an object in order to learn how a coroplast worked. Especially with handbuilt objects, it is critical to remember that a coroplast was touching and holding his work at various stages of the construction process while the clay was still moist. Pressure from the fingers will leave subtle furrows in the clay, and carefully noting where they occur will allow a researcher to understand how an ancient artisan held the object and how it was positioned in his hands. In some fortunate instances, the hand of a modern researcher will fit easily in the grooves left by the coroplast, and it is possible to determine whether the object had been held in the right or left hand as it was crafted.

Fig. 3: Hand Assembled Figurines. R11681 and R1753 (number denotes Princeton Excavation registry number).

Understanding various coroplastic procedures is not only possible through careful study of the object, but experimentation in replicating how an object was created by using clay or plasticene is an invaluable activity. In replication, one intuits the logical steps of the process, and by trial and error, one learns how a coroplast worked most effectively. Indeed, discussion of ceramic crafting processes has been thoroughly presented by modern artisans, and their expertise is most helpful. Because of the close correspondence between coroplastic techniques and those used by potters, critical reading still remains the analysis of methods used in ancient vase construction.[11]

The discussion that follows is based on the author's study of the Marion terracotta corpus through visual examination, replication studies, and critique of relevant comparanda from other archaeological sites.

Handbuilding

Certainly the most basic tool at the disposal of a coroplast was one's own hands, and hand construction was the primary and most expedient way to craft terracotta sculpture. Handcrafting was accomplished in various ways, and basic approaches were hand assembly, coiling, and slab construction. The methods were used for various sizes of objects, and all methods were detected in the Marion corpus.

Hand Assembly

As a technical process, hand assembly could be the sole method of creating a terracotta object or it might be used in tandem with other manufacturing procedures. The most simple way to craft a figurine was by an additive process of combining separately made component parts to create the whole. Known as the "snowman technique", body parts, headgear, and accoutrements would be fashioned individually and then assembled to complete the figurine (fig. 3). The coroplast would begin by forming a clay roll that would serve as the body and head;[12] the neck would be formed by pressing the side of the forefinger into the clay, about two-thirds the way up the shaft, and the clay above would be fashioned into the head, although added clay might be needed to augment the chin and create headgear. Arms were made from smaller clay rolls affixed to the side of the body and arranged in any configuration required by the figurine type. Separate pellets of clay were flattened or elongated to form the ears, eyes, nose, mouth, and breasts. Smaller strips of clay were added as hair lappets, helmet rims, etc. The bodies of hand-assembled figurines were normally solid, and to make the object self-standing, the coroplast would insert his thumb or forefinger into the bottom of the clay roll, forming an indentation that pushed the clay outwards at the base; the thumb and forefinger were then used to pull the clay to the sides, forming a flaring base. The addition of mineral-based pigments, quite often red ochre, manganese, or black soot, served to detail dress or jewelry.[13]

The technique of hand assembly is the most simple method of crafting a terracotta figurine and was most certainly the earliest strategy used. At Marion, it was the method of choice for the production of the earliest figurines, which date to the late 7th century BC, and it continued to be employed even when the mold was introduced at the site in the 6th century. Hand assembly lends itself well to the production of small-scale objects and was primarily used for sculpture of figurine size.[14] When a coroplast worked at a larger scale, simple finger manipulation of the clay was no longer practical, and different strategies were developed that were more efficient and time-saving. Separate applications of clay still served for the crafing of details augmenting garments, hair, and jewelry.

Coiling

Another common hand-building technique is coiling. It remains an efficient method in pottery construction for the formation of large vessels, and an ancient coroplast would have adopted the procedure for the crafting of large, hollow sculptural forms that were cylindrical or oval in shape. Coiling entails the placement of pre-formed clay rolls, end to end, in a circular or oval configuration as demanded by the shape of the sculpture. The ends of the coils are spliced together with finger pressure to create a join. The sequential addition of coils overlapping the top of the layer below continues until

Fig. 4: Coil Technique. Colossal Male Statue, R3247 and R12086.

the desired height of the object is achieved.[15] Squeezing the juncture of coils on both the exterior and interior is critical to guarantee the sturdiness of the form, and often extra clay is used to not only mask coil seams but to secure the join. Depending on the height of the object, after the construction of four or five layers of coils, the form is left to dry somewhat before the application of additional coils; otherwise the added weight would cause the form to slump and perhaps collapse. Once completed and when the clay is relatively hard, the exterior of the form is finished, often by scraping the surface perpendicular to the coil seams, and it is not unusual to see faint traces of vertical tooling or striations left by the passing of a moistened cloth over the surface.

Coil manufacture is the easiest to detect on a completed form if the coils have not bonded adequately during the drying process and firing. Inadequate bonding may also occur if a coil has dried too much before the next coil was added, so a coroplast must constantly pay attention to the moisture and plasticity of the clay. Separation along the coil seams may be visible, more frequently on the interior where a coroplast might have taken less care to blend adjacent coils and finish the surface. In addition to cracking along seams, surface marks, such as lines or grooves, can represent the presence of contiguous coils, and sometimes a slight undulation of the surface is indicative of a coil profile.

Of all the handbuilding strategies, coiling requires the greatest effort of the coroplast and is the most time consuming process. If done correctly, the technique results in a

Fig. 5: Coil Technique. Female Statue Torso, R1216.

sturdy form and is the preferred method for constructing large and heavy objects. Within the Marion corpus, coiling was used for large statues, lifesize and larger, and primarily for torsos (figs. 4. 5). The colossal Egyptianizing male statue (fig. 4) was constructed of hollow stacked drums to form the torso and belted kilt.[16] Evidence of coil construction is visible on the interior of one of the torso drums as well as the kilt, and horizontal grooves and a gentle parallel undulations are clearly seen.[17] Another excellent example of coil construction is the lifesize female torso that was part of a votive offering in the Maratheri sanctuary (fig. 5). The torso was constructed entirely of clay coils. Only the front of the statue carried surface decoration, which will be discussed in the section on slab technique. On the back, surface smoothing is evident in many places; however, the treatment of the surface remains rough. On the lower left back, coil seams are readily visible, indicating the coroplast's failure to adequately join adjacent coils.[18]

Slab Construction

Another handbuilding method that was useful for the crafting of large objects was slab construction. Formed by pressing or rolling clay on a flat surface or pressing between the hands, a slab was easily and quickly configured into the desired dimensions and thickness

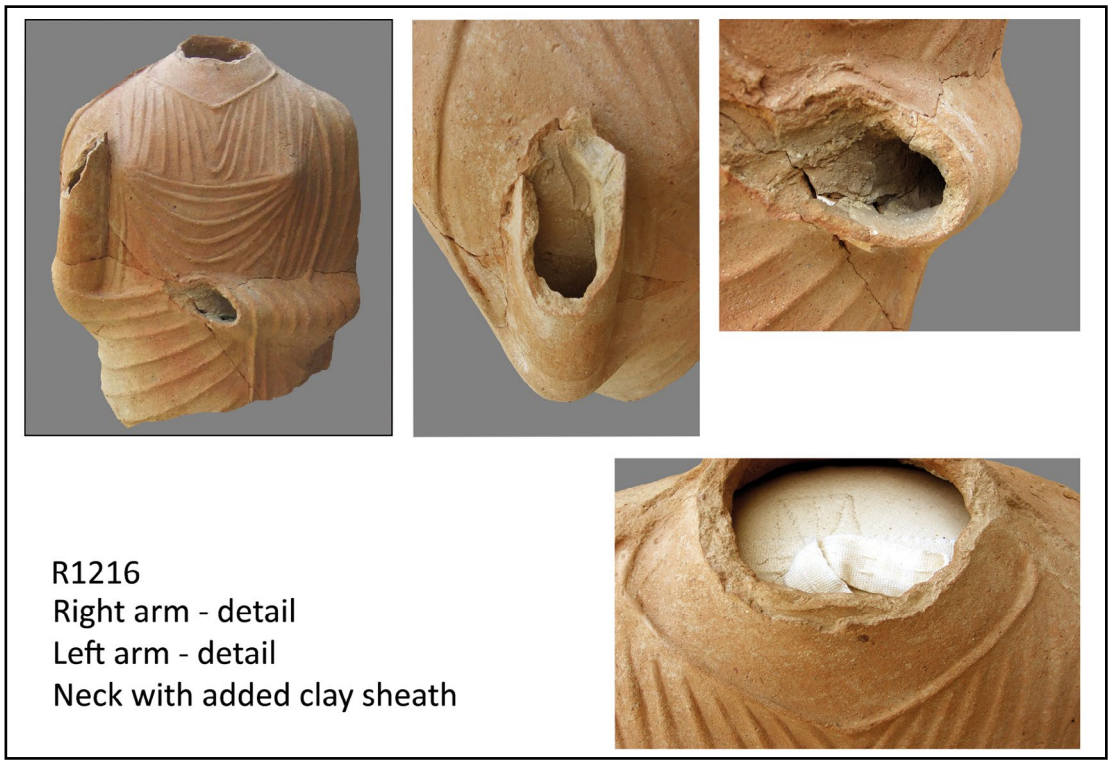

Fig. 6: Slab Construction. Female Statue Torso, R1216.

required by the coroplast. Slabs were often crafted into rectangular shapes that could be joined together by pinching and squeezing the ends of adjoining slabs.[19] Forms could be speedily fashioned, and the technique was readily employed for sculpture of statuette or statue size and for body parts of some breadth, such as backs and torsos. Although the method was versatile and quicker than coil construction, the sturdiness of the form was compromised by the use of a single slab of clay rather than the durability that resulted from the joining of multiple coils, and the thickness of slabs was less than the wider girth of coils. After slabs were formed and the clay had somewhat hardened, slabs could readily be shaped into a cylindrical or semi-cylindrical form, which was useful for the crafting of limbs. Because slabs were formed on a flat surface and any irregularities on the exterior of a slab could be easily removed by later surface smoothing, evidence of this technique is rarely visible, except where contiguous slabs were joined together.

Slab construction was used for various terracotta votives from Marion, and an excellent example is the lifesize female torso previously discussed (figs. 5. 6). The arms were fashioned from clay slabs that were configured into half cylinders and attached to the front of the torso (fig. 6). An unusual use of a clay slab was a thin sheath of clay that was added to the front of the coilmade torso, which the break at the neck clearly shows (fig. 6). It was the application of the outer clay slab that was present on the front of the torso and not the back that allowed for the articulation of the folds and rills of

the draped peplos. Drapery details were added by hand while the clay was still moist. The coroplast used the thumb and the forefinger to pinch the clay to form drapery folds, while the same fingers were drawn through the clay to create the furrows between the folds. What is most interesting is that detailed measurement of all the folds on the torso revealed that the width of the furrows was always the same as the width of an adult finger or multiples of digits. To create a narrow furrow, the tip of the forefinger was used; in instances where the fold widened, the angle of the forefinger to clay was decreased to an acute angle, with the pad of the finger tip and part of the underside of the finger drawn through the clay. When wider folds were required, the thumb was used or the forefinger and middle finger in combination.

The various methods of handbuilding that a coroplast could employ were several and allowed for crafting on a small scale for sculpture of figurine or figure size as well as for larger objects such as statuettes and statues. The size of the object dictated which technique would be most useful, and hand assembly was typically employed for smaller objects, while coiling and slab construction accommodated larger objects. A coroplast always had the option of using multiple methods, and the choice of technique was determined by which was the most advantageous in getting the job done. As none of the methods required special equipment, the coroplast depended on hand manipulation only. The crafting of small objects surely could be accomplished without help, and an experienced artisan could work unassisted when working with slabs or coils.

Wheel Construction

There were many instances when a coroplast might rely on mechanical means to aid in the fashioning of a clay object, and the use of a potter's wheel was a significant asset. There are numerous examples of terracotta figures and larger sculptures where evidence of wheel construction can readily be identified on the object, and this begs the question of the relationship between potter and coroplast.[20] As adept as a coroplast might be in using his hands to manipulate clay to craft an object, a different skill set was required handle clay on a rotating wheel. A wheel was surely a necessary piece of equipment in a potter's workshop, but it need not be requisite in the place where a coroplast worked. That being said, might a coroplast solicit the help of a potter when he was faced with the task of creating an object that required the use of a wheel or would a coroplast avail himself of access to a wheel owned by an accommodating potter? Either scenario was possible. Throwing clay on the wheel required a different plasticity of the material than was necessary for handbuilding strategies, and a coroplast, if, indeed, he were responsible for wheel construction, would have had to know his material well.[21] Different parts of the process, such as centering, opening, lifting, shaping, and removal demanded a specific way of using one's hands, and coroplast or potter would have to have been skilled in the process in a way that an artisan who engaged in handbuilding was not.

Fig. 7: Wheel Construction. Statue Limbs, R1640, R12083, and R2087.

Wheel construction was frequently used in the formation of larger forms that were cylindrical in shape. Limbs, both arms and legs of statues and statuettes, were easily fashioned by means of the wheel.[22] Smaller objects of figurine or figure size, could be partially wheel-crafted if the form was hollow, as was the case in some animal bodies, tubular lower bodies of humans, or the flaring skirt of female figures.[23] While wheel-thrown elements were certainly part of coroplastic production, it would be quite unusual for this to be the sole technique used in crafting an object, as handbuilding and the use of a mold were often employed as well.

The telltale sign of wheel use is the presence of wheel marks, known as rills, which are the repetitive ridges and grooves that spiral around the interior of a wheel-made form during the process of lifting or raising the clay.[24] Irregularities on the exterior of the form are usually removed while the object is still on the wheel, with the artisan applying the side of a sharp tool to the surface, which smooths and evens the form. It is not uncommon for the walls of a wheel-thrown form to be thicker at the base and thinning towards the top.

Examples of wheel construction used in the production of terracotta sculpture at Marion are best seen on the interiors of arms and legs of several large statues, all of which are lifesize or slightly larger in scale (fig. 7). The interior of R1640 (left arm and fist) clearly shows the repetitive sequence of wheelmarks, while R2087 bears the remains

of rills on what remains of the lower arm. R12083, a lifesize leg, retains wheelmarks on the interior. In all instances, the artisan was careful to remove traces of fashioning on the wheel on the exterior. Limbs such as these would have been added to body parts, torsos or thighs that likely were configured from slabs or coils.

The use of a wheel allowed the artisan to quickly create a cylindrical form that could be modified to shape an arm or leg. By applying finger pressure during the lifting of the clay, alteration to the diameter of the clay cylinder could be easily made to replicate the natural variation of the breadth of the limb. The size of a lifesize statue torso precluded effective use of the wheel, and coil construction was the norm for very large cylindrical or oval forms. Undoubtedly, wheelmade forms could be more rapidly constructed than by means of coils; however, coil fabrication ensured a solidity of finished product that wheel construction could not guarantee.

Use of a Mold

The use of a mold in the production of terracotta sculpture totally revolutionized the coroplastic arts. In the Mediterranean world, the mold appears to have been introduced sometime during the 7th century BC, and before that time, all forms would have been hand assembled.[25] As discussed above, as adept as a coroplast might be, the creation of separate elements that would comprise a clay statue of any size would be a time consuming process. With the introduction of the mold, certain elements were not only quickly and efficiently made, but multiples could be formed with little effort as long as a mold remained serviceable.

The use of a mold was tentative at first, and in crafting human figures, it was the face only that was fashioned from a mold. The back of the head and the rest of the figure typically were formed by hand. As the procedure involved in crafting a moldmade object, primarily figurines, is well-known, there is no need to document the process here.[26] A mold could be completely filled or a coroplast might choose to press clay into the mold, which left the molded part hollow, and attach a small slab of clay to close the back of the form. Size could well be a determining factor whether a molded figure would be hollow or solid, and adequate drying of all parts of the clay was imperative so that residual moisture would not cause an object to explode in the kiln during firing.

When mold construction was introduced into the Aegean world, it was the female face that was first replicated, with male molded heads following later. Depending on the mold and whether it was derived from an archetype or an existing figurine, hair and headgear might be included in the mold. It was not uncommon for only the face to be moldmade, and this allowed a coroplast to be inventive with coiffure and headdress added by hand. It is often easy to determine where a mold terminated and additional elements were applied after removal from the mold. During the firing process, there

Fig. 8: Use of a Mold. Female Figurines, R1760 and R7026.

might be subtle cracks that develop along the mold seam, and all coroplasts were not equally skilled in masking the application of clay to a molded section.

It was usual practice for coroplasts to use two different molds – one for the face and one for the body, if they were available. This allowed for greater flexibility in combining diverse parts that could result in a variety of products. Figurines produced from double molds that included a separate mold for the front of the figure and another for the back became more frequent during the 4th century BC and nearly standard practice during the Hellenistic period. It was at the same time that the practice of combining different molded body parts – arms, legs, heads, and torsos – became the norm, and the ability of a coroplast to choose from a selection of molded elements greatly increased the variety available to the purchaser.[27]

At Marion, the use of a diversity of molds was prolific, although molded female figures greatly outnumber male. Analysis of the moldmade figurines identified 37 different molded female faces and 67 different arrangements of drapery. Regarding female figurine faces, some were derived from molds where the hair had been included (fig. 8, left), while in other cases, a coroplast used a mold that included the facial features only (fig. 8, right). Examination of R1760 (fig. 8) clearly shows that the coroplast had used additional clay to form the pointed headdress that overlapped the stippled hair on the crown of the head and the hair framing the forehead and the ears on the side. R7026

(fig. 8) provides an excellent example of two separate molds for the figurine, one for the head and a different one that included the drapery and the left arm; the right arm was separately added. A slight fracture across the lower neck evidences the extent of the mold used for the head, and it is clear that the hair and headdress were elements that the coroplast added once the head had been removed from the mold. The photograph that shows the left raking rear view of the figurine demonstrates that the back was closed by a separate application of clay that was distinct from the molded front.

Certainly the use of a mold allowed a coroplast to work quickly, and the effort required to craft specific features of face or body was greatly reduced, as details were contained in the mold. Attention was needed for every part of the fabrication of terracotta sculpture, but when a mold was employed, many of the aesthetic decisions were removed from the artisan, and work could proceed quickly. The demand for molded figurines grew with the proliferation of sanctuaries and temple construction as well as the practice of offering votives as part of ritual practice. The phenomenon of the commercial exchange of moldmade figurines throughout the Mediterranean not only guaranteed the diffusion of popular types but also played a large part in guaranteeing that a coroplast's shop could be well-stocked with a variety of molds from which a range of products might be produced. A coroplast could easily make a mold from any sculpture available to him, and a successful artisan would do well to meet the demands of his clients by offering a selection of interesting merchandise.

Conclusion

Within the field of coroplastic studies, one of the most significant approaches to studying terracotta sculpture has been the assessment of technical processes and production strategies. Consideration of how a coroplast worked and how he fashioned a diversity of products has always been dependent upon archaeological material derived from excavated sites. Hundreds of sites throughout the Mediterranean have yielded a bounty of objects that demonstrate the diversity of manufacturing techniques and the efforts innumerable artisans. One of the most important places where terracotta sculpture was produced in antiquity was the island of Cyprus, and the ancient cities of Marion and Arsinoe have emerged as the location where an extraordinary corpus of coroplastic material has been recovered. Local production that has been confirmed across a continuum of six centuries and documented secure archaeological contexts have only increased the value of the material. Equally important is that the sculpture demonstrates a range of typological subjects and amply reflects a diversity of scale. The artisans who worked at Marion and Arsinoe made use of the gamut of manufacturing strategies that were employed elsewhere throughout the ancient world. The discussion presented in this article reflects an initial investigation of how sculptors in clay proceeded in their work, and continued analysis will augment what is known of how coroplasts practiced their craft.

Notes

[1] Important publications that treat Cypriot terracotta sculpture over a range of types and chronological spread continue to multiply. Diverse attention includes typological groupings, distinct time periods, stylistic assessments, and site-specificity. The multivolume series The Coroplastic Art of Ancient Cyprus (Karageorghis 1999; Karageorghis 1991, 1993a, 1993b, 1995, 1996, 1998) as well as the proceedings of the first international conference devoted to the subject of the Cypriot terracotta sculpture (Vandenabeele - Laffineur 1991) remain significant.

[2] Gjerstad et al. 1935, 181–459; Nicolau 1976; Rupp 1987; Childs 1988, 1997; Childs et al. 2012.

[3] Hill 1949, 156–160.

[4] Hermann 1888; Munro – Tubbs 1890; Munro 1891; Ohnefalsch-Richter 1893. In the 20th cent., critical work was undertaken by the landmark exploration of tombs in the area that was conducted by the Swedish Cyprus Expedition (Gjerstad et al. 1935, 181–459).

[5] Childs et al. 2012.

[6] Childs 1997, 40; Smith 1997; Smith et al. 2012.

[7] Smith et al. 2012.

[8] Smith et al. 2012; Serwint 1991; 1992; 1993; 2008.

[9] Serwint 2000.

[10] Investigation of the gender of coroplasts continues, and whether men, women, and children were all involved in various stages of production remains unsubstantiated. For this paper, the term "coroplast" will be gender-neutral. Ethnographic studies of pottery production have been helpful in identifying gender roles, and for Cyprus, see London – Krull 1990; Rice 2005, 113–166 offers an important overview of ethnography and pottery manufacture. As the crafting of terracotta sculpture shares some commonalities with pottery during many phases of production, the issue of correspondences between coroplast and potter continues to be addressed. See Uhlenbrock 1990. Papadopoulos – Schilling 2003 passim provide a discussion of the identity of potters, coroplasts, and other artisans in Iron Age Athens and Monaco 2000 presents the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Treatment of the close correspondence of metalsmith, potter, and coroplast has been made as well; see Barr-Sharrar 1990. For a discussion of the location of coroplast workshops in urban space, see Sanidas 2017; more focused attention on the correlation of workshops of the coroplast and potter at Sagalassos is provided by Murphy – Poblome 2011.

[11] Numerous publications that document processes used in sculpting clay are available. Most informative are: Peterson 1992; Midgley 1999; Taylor 2011. For discussion of ancient pottery construction, see Noble 1988; Schreiber 1999. Significant resources on ceramic technology are Shepard 1985; Rye 2002; Rice 2005.

[12] From detailed examination of the bodies of hand-formed figurines, it is clear that the clay coils were usually formed by rolling on a flat surface, rather than rolling the clay between the hands. The latter method results in a lumpy exterior because of the uneven pressure of the hands on various parts of the surface.

[13] Higgins 1970. Important discussions of the application of color to figurines crafted in later periods is provided by Bourgeois 2010; Pagés-Campagna 2010; Jeammet et al. 2010.

[14] Size classification of the Marion terracotta corpus is as follows: 1–15 cm (figurine), 15–30 cm (figure), 30–50 cm (statuette), and 50+ cm (statue).

[15] Although sequential rows of coils might be placed directly on top of each other, this is far less stable than having the coil rows overlap a bit, which increases the surface area of contact. Pressing the coil seams together and the application of additional clay strengthens the join. This is the usual placement of coils in pottery manufacture, and likely coroplasts followed suit. See Shepard 1985, 57–59. 184 f.; Rye 2002, 67–69; Blandino 2003; Rice 2005, 127 f.; Taylor 2011, 62–65.

[16] The statue is comprised of the following: R496 (head), R12084 (shoulders), R3247 (upper torso), R12085 (lower torso), R12086 (Egyptianizing kilt), R2087 (right fist), and R1640 (left arm and fist). The statue is calculated to have once stood at 3 m in height. The discrepancy in color of the various statue parts is due to various conservation treatments by different conservators. Found in fragments in the Maratheri sanctuary, it served as an impressive and expensive votive dedication.

[17] See Serwint 2000 for further discussion.

[18] Measurements of the width of coils on the back of the statue ranged from 3,83 cm to 4,48 cm, indicating that the coil widths were not consistent.

[19] Rye 2002, 71 f.; Rice 2005, 124 f.; Taylor 2011, 70 f.

[20] Discussion of how potters and coroplasts may have collaborated or might even have been the same individual will not be taken up here; see note 10 above for bibliography that addresses the question.

[21] Shepard 1985, 50–54.

[22] Karageorghis 1993b, 102–105.

[23] Higgins 1987, passim.

[24] Rye 2002, 74–80; Rice 2005, 129.

[25] Sporadic use of the mold prior to the 7th cent. BC has been documented for Crete. Moldmade bull rhyta of LM IA date have been found on Pseira, and Late Minoan molds were discovered at Gournia for the production of faience and clay objects. See Higgins 1967, 12.

[26] Higgins 1967, 2 f.

[27] Uhlenbrock 1990.

Image Credits

Fig. 1: Wikimedia.org. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Satellite_image_of_Cyprus,_cropped.jpg> (accessed 15th December 2018). – Figs. 2. 4: Photograph courtesy of Princeton Cyprus Expedition. – Figs. 3. 5–8: by the author.

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