

Call for papers

TERRACOTTAS OF THE EDIBLE IN THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN

Panel for the international conference

TERRACOTTAS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN THROUGH TIME II

March 12-15, 2018, University of Haifa, Israel

Deadline for submissions: December 1, 2017

Meritxell Ferrer (Postdoctoral Researcher, Departament d'Humanitats, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain) meritxell.ferrer@upf.edu

Mireia López-Bertran (Lecturer, Department of Art History, Universitat de València, València, Spain) mireia.lopez@uv.es

Several studies have revealed that food should not be examined exclusively in connection with the act of meeting a basic biological need for human subsistence. On the contrary, most of these studies have shown that the analysis of food, foodways and food preparation and consumption practices are crucial to understanding the dynamics of ancient societies.

Following these studies, this panel we explores clay representations of food in its wider sense. That is, it focuses on terracottas of the edible –such as fruits, animals or bread–, human-like clay figurines undertaking activities related to food preparation, presentation and consumption, as well as clay tools related to food processing, such as clay stamps.

We invite papers that present materials from diverse contexts (domestic, sacred and funerary) and different chronologies. We encourage a focus on connections with other materials from the same context to propose interpretative links between terracottas and other types of material culture –such as cooking and serving vessels or seed and animal remains– in order to analyse the relationship between “real” and “imagined” food, taking into consideration a critical approach to this division.

We are also interested in engendering both the space and the use of terracottas. Food processing is mostly considered to be a female activity where children could offer assistance. When we consider practices such as the votive offering of figurines of the edible, however, the gender issue seems to be broader. Other topics to be considered are the size of the food represented in terracottas –such as fruits or loaves of bread– in relation to real food; the possibility of distinguishing patterns in the kind of food represented across time and culture; and the relationship between food representations and the identity of those who owned and produced these objects.