ANTHROPOMORPHIC FIGURINES AND FRAGMENTS FROM NEOLITHIC CRETE AND THESSALY:

Analysis of their context, age, sex and gender



Paz Ramírez Valiente

Department of Classics and Archaeology

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Abstract

This thesis examines the subjects of context, age, sex and gender in the Neolithic Aegean, focusing on the regions of Crete and Thessaly through an analysis of anthropomorphic figurines. Studying the figurines' archaeological contexts aims to shed light on the uses and practices involving Neolithic figurines through a methodology that recognises structured deposition as part of ritual practices. The main aim of studying age, sex and gender is to understand the meaning of figurines that do not show sex indication (Asexual), as well as those that show sex ambiguously (Probably Female/Male) or present sexual traits of both sexes (Double-sex).

The thesis is organised into eight chapters. Chapter I presents the aims and research questions of the thesis and a short introduction to the sample of figurines analysed and the chronological framework of the Neolithic Aegean. Chapter II delves into the main literature and contributions of previous studies on anthropomorphic figurines and the theoretical approaches previously applied. In Chapter III, I apply a methodology to understand Neolithic ritual practices through the recognition of structured deposition. I further review the available archaeological evidence for the findspot context of figurines and how it may be interpreted. Chapter IV establishes a methodology to recognise age-stages in Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly and then presents the results of possible age differences with evidence from figurines and burials. Chapter V presents the analysis of sex and gender with a methodology developed for figurines from Neolithic Greece. Chapter VI examines colour and decoration on Neolithic figurines and their relationship with sex, gender and age. I also explore the possible meanings of figurines' decoration as representing clothing or textile patterns, scarification or tattooing, body painting, jewellery and headdress. Chapter VII outlines the main results and findings of the thesis regarding the analysis of context, age, sex and gender. I further discuss the results and offer a series of interpretations of the uses and practices involving figurines such as fragmentation, foundation deposits, ritualised food consumption, rites of abandonment or closure, and rites of passage. In the final section, I delve deeper into the possible interpretations of Asexual and Double-sex figurines. Chapter VIII summarises the main

contributions of my research to the knowledge of Neolithic social organisation in diverse regions of Greece. I highlight the need to apply new methodologies to the study of prehistoric ritual that are not completely subjective and the importance of applying new approaches that understand gender from an intersectional perspective considering other axes of difference such as age.

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List of abbreviations

Techniques

XFR – X-Ray Fluorescence

SEM – Scanning Electron Microscopy

Chronology

IN – Initial Neolithic

EN – Early Neolithic

MN – Middle Neolithic

LN – Late Neolithic

FN – Final Neolithic

BA – Bronze Age

EBA – Early Bronze Age

MBA – Middle Bronze Age

LBA – Late Bronze Age

EM – Early Minoan

Other

NI – Non-Identifiable

inv.no. – Inventory number

Chr. – Chronology

N. – Number

Str. –Stratum

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research questions, Aims, and Objectives.

1.1.1. Research questions

My research questions in the thesis are:

1. Was age represented in Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly, and if so, how was it represented? Was differentiation in age-stages important for Neolithic communities? What is the evidence in the archaeological record for different age identities?
2. How were sex and gender represented in Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly? Are Female figurines overwhelmingly predominant in the assemblages? What is the meaning of Asexual figurines? Do they represent different genders or ages, or should they be considered part of one of the binary genders? What is the meaning of Double-sex figurines? Can they represent a 'third gender'?
3. Were figurines' decoration and colour related to gender and age? How may we interpret the meanings of decoration? Does it represent clothing, tattooing, scarification, body painting or markings, or have other meanings? Does decoration have an identity purpose? Were figurines a reflection of real human bodies or do they represent an unreal, perhaps divine figure as they are interpreted in the Mother Goddess theory?
4. What are the find contexts of Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly and what can they tell us about their potential uses, meanings, and acts of deposition? What were figurines used for? Were figurines used in rituals and/or were they mundane objects? Were figurines used as toys and playthings or were they multifunctional?

1.1.2. Aims and Objectives

The main focus of this thesis is the study of age, sex, gender, uses and practices involving Neolithic figurines from Greece, particularly from Crete and Thessaly. These topics were previously overlooked or addressed with different perspectives. The representation of possible age-stages in Aegean Neolithic figurines has never been considered before, although some scholars had already suggested the possibility that Asexual figurines may depict children or individuals of young age (e.g., Hamilton 2000; Mina 2008b; Marangou 2009). Sex and gender are topics included in some studies of Neolithic figurines. However, most studies have reflected a heavy influence from Gimbutas' Mother Goddess theories especially regarding a preconceived predominance of Female figurines in the archaeological record. Therefore, my sex and gender reanalysis of figurines aims to apply new gender perspectives to the interpretations that consider further possibilities to the binary sex interpretation (e.g., queer archaeology). Thus, my analysis of sex and gender has focused mainly on ambiguous classifications such as figurines not showing sexual features (Asexual), figurines showing indications of both sexes (Double-sex), and ambiguous figurines which do not display sex clearly (e.g., Probably Female and Probably Male). The aim is to investigate different ways in which sex and gender are represented with an intersectional view considering other options to the variations in sex, perhaps indicating age or other non-binary genders. My study of the figurines' colour and decoration, although aspects previously addressed by scholars, focuses on their link with aspects such as age, gender and the interpretations of figurines based on their ornamentation. It is noteworthy that context is still mostly ignored in interpretations of Neolithic figurines from Greece. The scarcity of published information regarding the retrieval context of figurines in specific sites may explain some disregard for interpreting contextual information. However, there is enough published information to consider context as one of the main avenues to interpret the meanings and uses of Neolithic figurines where relatively more recent approaches like structured deposition may be helpful.

To meet those aims, I will synthesise the main characteristics of the figurines needed for the analysis, elaborating a table (see Appendix 1-2). I will classify the figurines by age, sex and gender following the methodologies described in sections 1.2, 4.1 and 5.1. I will analyse sex categories statistically to assess the predominance of any of them, particularly of female figurines. I will also collect the bibliographical data of the archaeological find-contexts of figurines from Thessaly and Crete. Thus, I will interpret the patterns that may emerge, using archaeological theories on structured deposition, deliberate fragmentation, feasting and prehistoric ritual. I will also produce an interpretation of figurine decorations regarding their possible meanings (tattooing/scarification, body painting, or clothing) and a comparison with pottery decoration.

1.2. Methodology

This thesis uses critical approaches to gender, particularly queer archaeology and intersectional perspectives. Queer archaeology favours a critical point of view of the past that escapes from the traditional normativity and binary assumptions. This means challenging previous binary literature views on gender, sex and figurines and focusing instead on ambiguity in sex depiction (see section 1.1.2). Intersectionality means considering other axes of social differentiation beyond gender. In this thesis, an intersectional view focuses on addressing age as part of gender identities that change through the life-course of an individual (see chapter 4). To understand sex, gender and age representation on figurines, it is necessary to assess the features of figurines to establish analytical categories. Through the physical examination of figurines from Crete and Thessaly, I have elaborated an enhanced methodology defining a set of sex categories in these corpora of prehistoric figurines. The main distinctions from the sex categories used by other authors (see chapters 2 and 5.1-5.2) are the inclusion of features such as gesture, posture, decoration, and material of manufacture as indicative of gender (Table 1.1). These aspects overlooked in the bibliography may shed light on sex and gender identification. For a critique of the categories used by

previous authors (e.g., Mina 2005; 2009; Ucko 1968), see chapters 2 and 5.1-5.2. To categorise sex and gender, we need to look for the sexual attributes present in figurines and also the occurrence of primary or secondary gendering characteristics which share patterns of association with sexual attributes (e.g., decoration, clothing, posture and gesture, or indications of age) (see Table 1.1).

To analyse age as represented on figurines from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly, I use categories from bioarchaeology and sociology to define age-stages from childhood to elderly stages (Table 1.2). These categories are challenging to define, considering the fuzziness of details in Neolithic figurines. However, when possible, I have selected the most appropriate term to define the characteristics of figurines indicating possible age-stages (Chapter 4.1). The methodology to assign age categories to figurines looks at differences in size, sex (or absence of), gestures and postures that may be gendered, anatomical details, especially differences in the development of sexual traits or body hair growth, and decoration (see Chapter 4.1).

Category	Definition
Female	Clear presence of breasts or female genitalia. Other traits such as exaggerated buttocks and an exaggerated protruding belly are also identified as part of the Female sex.
Probably Female	Breasts or female genitalia might be present but are unclear due to weathering, partial damage, fragmentation, or vague modelling. Secondary attributes must be analysed compared to their presence or absence in definite Female figurines, such as wide hips and buttocks, the material of manufacture, decorative motifs, painting, anatomical details and incisions, posture and gesture.
Male	Clear presence of male genitalia and, in general, absence of breasts. Secondary patterns may include the body shape, decoration, posture and gesture.
Probably Male	Male genitalia may be ambiguously indicated in these figurines, but it is unclear if it represents a penis, a cloth accessory or a bulge. Other indications such as the material of manufacture, body shape, posture, arm-position, or decoration can suggest male bodies and must be analysed compared to definite Male figurines.
Asexual	Absence of sexual attributes, including male and female genitalia, breasts, and the lack of any pattern of secondary traits present in figurines categorised as probably sexed. These figurines can also be understood as sexless figurines. However, the term third sex might not be accurate as the sexual identity could be indicated by other traits or accompanying objects and decoration. We cannot exclude the possibility that Asexual figurines represented a third sex, but this was probably not the case for all of them.
Double-sex	Presence of both male and female sexual attributes with the occurrence of breasts and male genitalia on the same figurine. To categorise such figurines, the genitalia need to be clearly identifiable as an elongated neck does not always represent a phallus; the head and neck must have a clear phallic appearance.
Non-identifiable	Parts of figurines that cannot be assigned to any sex category due to their fragmentary preservation state.

Table 1.1. Definition of sex categories used in this thesis

Term	Definition
Infant	Early stage of development from 0-2/3 years old, ending with weaning
Child/ Prepubescent	From approx. 2/3-12 years old, in a stage of development previous to puberty
Adolescent	With the onset of puberty from approx. 12-17 years old
Subadult/ Juvenile	Terms used in bioarchaeology to denote a non-adult (i.e., under 18 years old)
Adult	From 18-50 years old with reproductive and sexual maturity
Older adult/ elderly	In bioarchaeology, this stage is considered from 50+ years old

Table 1.2. Definition of age-stages used in this thesis

Throughout the thesis, I use ethnographical parallels that may provide insights into figurine's uses, bodily and figurine decoration, rituals and gender. However, ethnographic analogies must be used carefully as ethnographical and archaeological societies may be geographically and temporally distant. Ethnography may serve as an example, a possibility of different explanations for a practice, but archaeological data must be used to support the interpretations. Ethnographical analogies can provide hints of evidence but not definitive answers to a research question.

1.3. Introduction to the material

1.3.1. The Sample

The material analysed in this thesis encompasses Neolithic figurines found and published to date from Crete and a selection of case studies from Thessaly. The two research areas were selected because of the existence of a good corpus of figurines with published data and contextual information. The selection of sites from Thessaly considered the same parameters but also included sites in various areas of the region

to avoid localisms, covering all Neolithic chronological phases (IN-FN) and sites without contextual data to compare with well-published sites. The figurines I analysed were limited to those published with photographs or drawings. Descriptions and references in published catalogues without available images or drawings were not included in my study as verification of the descriptions and identifications was not possible. However, the tendency to publish illustrations of anthropomorphic figurines in most excavations leaves very few unpublished pieces. Figurines without published photographs or drawings are mostly limited to the selected sites from Thessaly and consist of very fragmentary pieces that do not affect the conclusions and analysis of the present study. Also, a small collection of Neolithic figurines from A. Evans' excavations at Knossos in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, 16 in total, could be handled and studied personally.

1.3.1.1. Crete

In Crete, not all the material recovered from excavations has been published. For instance, a few figurines from A. Evans' early excavations at Knossos kept in the Stratigraphical Museum could not be studied as they are not yet published. Also, Efstratiou *et al.* (2013: 43) mention the finding of figurines in their excavation at Knossos but these were few due to the limited extent of the excavation and unfortunately, they have not been published yet.

The published corpus of Cretan Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines consists of 127 figurines from Knossos, Kato Ierapetra, Phaistos, Gortyna, Gerani cave and Spelaio Pelekiton (Table 1.3) (Fig.1.1). Three figurines considered in the study come from unknown sites and are referred to in the bibliography as 'from central Crete', 'unknown provenance', and 'said to come from the Mesara plain'. It is noteworthy that most figurines come from Knossos, which is the main and most long-lived site known of Neolithic Crete, covering the whole sequence of the Neolithic period from EN-FN.

Site	N. of Figurines
Knossos	113
Phaistos	4
Gerani cave	4
Spelaio Pelekiton	1
Kato Ierapetra	1
Gortyna	1
Central Crete	1
Mesara plain	1
Unknown provenance	1
Total	**127**

Table 1.3. Sites from Crete with Neolithic figurines.

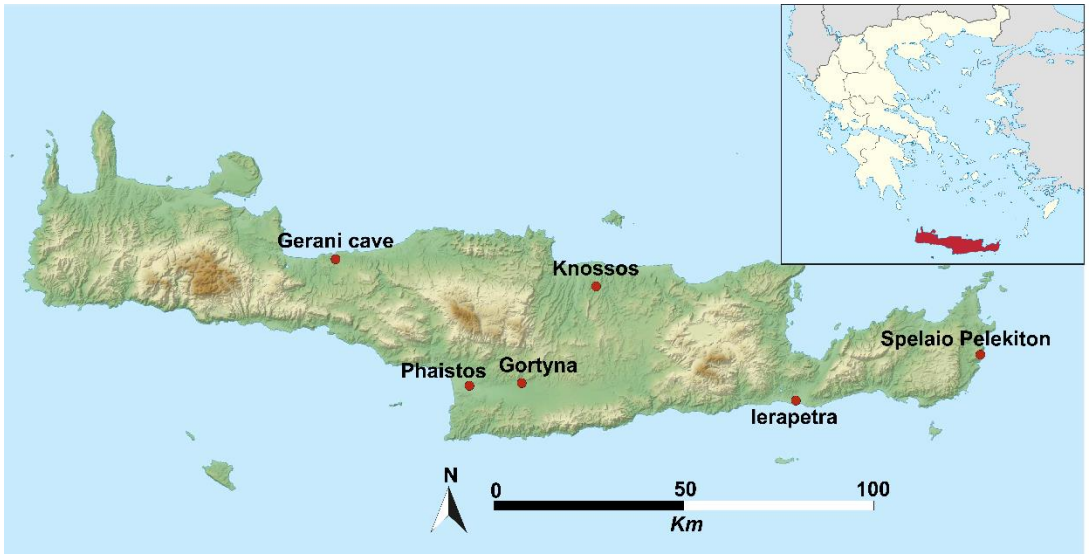

Figure 1.1. Map of Crete and sites with Neolithic figurines

1.3.1.2. Thessaly

In Thessaly, not all the figurines recovered from excavations have been published with photographs and drawings, I have not considered these for the statistical analysis. I examine a corpus of 208 figurines from Thessaly from a selection of case studies including the excavated sites of Sesklo, Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Platia Magoula Zarkou and Rachmani, and the surveyed sites of Zappeio 2 (Magoula Koutsouro), Chara 1 (Magoula Panagou), Sitochoro 1, and Nees Karyes (Sarliki) (Table 1.4) (Fig.1.2). The figurines from surveyed sites are surface finds, although a chronology may be attempted based on pottery typology (Gallis 1992) and figurine styles analysed in this study.

Site	N. of Figurines
Sesklo	61
Tsangli	31
Tsani Magoula	5
Platia Magoula Zarkou	10
Dimini	37
Rachmani	14
Zappeio 2	14
Chara 1	22
Sitochoro 1	13
Nees Karyes	1
Total	**208**

Table 1.4. Selected sites from Thessaly and number of figurines analysed

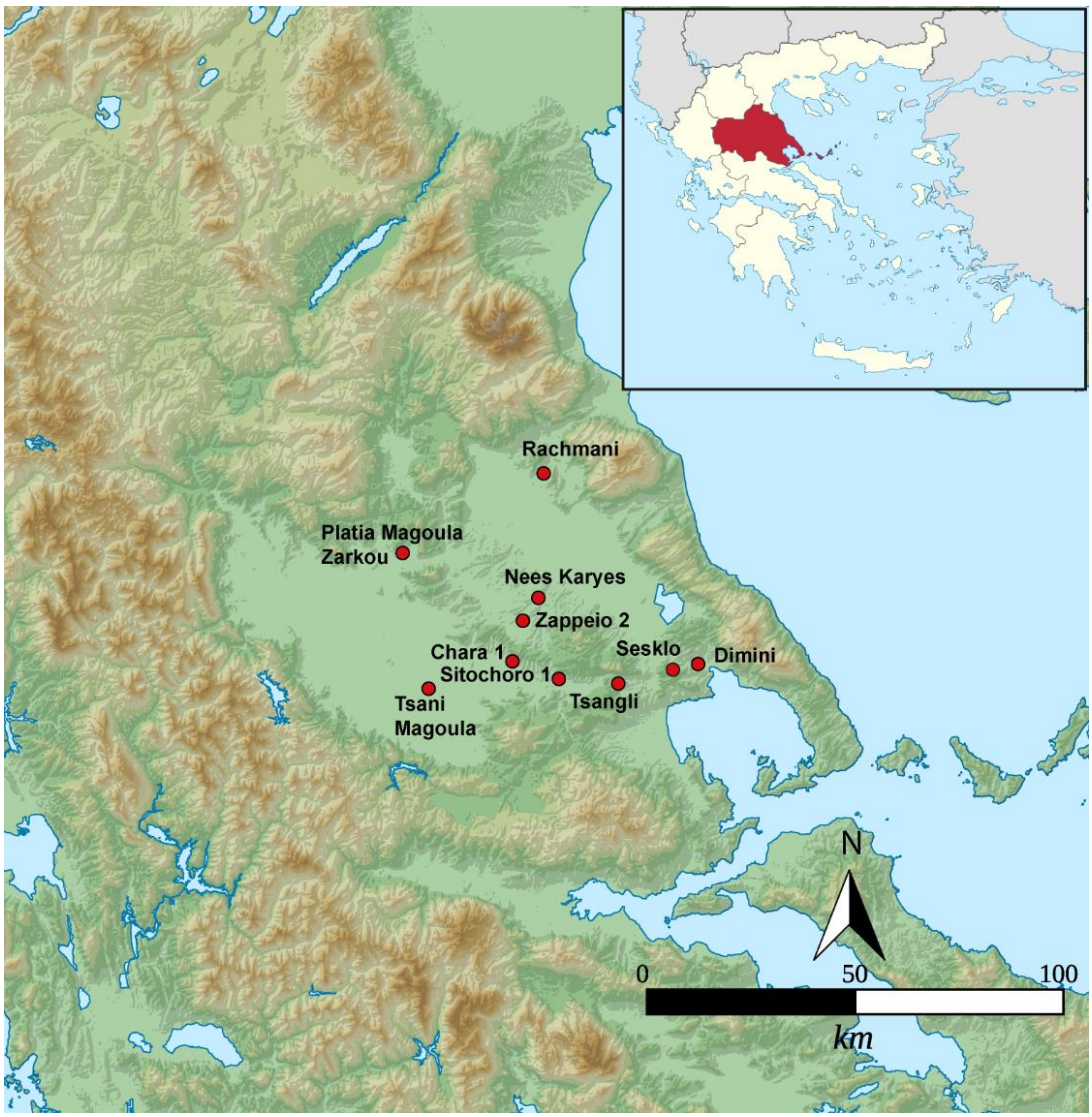

Figure 1.2. Map of Thessaly with selected sites

1.4. Chronological framework

1.4.1. The chronology of Neolithic Crete

The first chronology established in Crete derived from the early excavations at Knossos (Mackenzie 1903; Evans 1904) which divided the Neolithic into three phases: Early, Middle, Late. Subsequently, this chronology was refined by later scholarship (Furness

1953; Evans 1964; Vagnetti and Belli 1978) that added the earliest Aceramic phase or IN, and the final phase or FN. These phases were later redated with radiocarbon dates. Most of the radiocarbon dates available for Crete, especially those dating contexts with figurines, come from Knossos. I follow Tomkins' phasing (Fig.1.3). Efstratiou *et al.* (2004: 47; 2013: 31) already reflected upon the long-time span for the duration of the EN period given by Evans' chronology from the second half of the sixth and beginning of the fifth millennia BC (*c*. 1,500 years), opening the question of whether the later dates represented an EN horizon or a LN in the Aegean relative chronology. The radiocarbon dates regarding the earliest horizon at Knossos from Evans' 1960s excavations and the latest 1997 excavation (Efstratiou *et al.* 2013; Douka *et al.* 2017: table 1) confirmed the early date of around 7000 *cal.* BC for the IN phase (Str.X and level 39). Tomkins' chronology (2007b; 2008) is based on a stratigraphical and phasing review at Knossos and the restudy of ceramic material from the well-stratified deposits excavated by J.D. Evans (in 1957-60 and 1969-70) (Fig.1.4). Tomkins' new chronology increases the number of sub-phases and integrates them with neighbouring Aegean regions, allowing for comparisons with the rest of Greece. The downside of Tomkins' chronology is that it is based on the ceramic sequence (stylistic, petrology and SEM study), with the radiocarbon dates from Knossos (Evans 1994: 20; Efstratiou *et al.* 2004: 44) serving only as a control (Tomkins 2008: 24-25). Tomkins' proposal to subdivide the FN into phases I-IV should be ruled out since the last phases were possibly part of the early EM (Tomkins 2019: pers. comm.). However, these changes in the chronology of the later FN phases at Knossos are not relevant to the study of figurines since none were found in the latest FN phases now considered EM. Most of the disagreement between Tomkins' chronology and the radiocarbon dates regards the later strata (Efstratiou *et al.* 2004: table I.I; Facorellis and Maniatis 2013: table 10.1). Str.III and, particularly, Str.II-I have radiocarbon dates that suggest an earlier date than Tomkins' chronology and fall into the LN or have a large standard deviation. Nonetheless, these strata have only yielded five securely identified figurines which are classified as LN (Str.III) and FN (Str.II). Therefore, the present study has not adopted Tomkins' subdivision of the FN period into four phases as the radiocarbon dates available so far do not support his phasing.

New Cretan Neolithic phases	Revised Knossos sequence	Traditional Cretan Neolithic phases	Greece	W/SW Anatolian and East Aegean	Syria	Approx. Dates (cal. BC)
IN	Str.X	Aceramic	Aceramic/ Initial	Aceramic/EN	Final PPNB or PPNC/ EN	*c*.7000-*c*.6500/6400
EN	Str.IX-VIII	EN I (Furness 1953)	EN Franchthi FCP1	LN Hacilar IX-VI Ulucak IV-V Kuruçay 13-11	LN (Pre-Halaf and 'Transitional' Samarra)	*c*.6500/6400-*c*.5900
MN	Str.VII-VIB; Str. P		MN Franchthi FCP2-3	Early Chalcolithic Hacilar VI-I Kuruçay 10-7	Early Chalcolithic (Halaf)	*c*.5900-*c*.5300
LN I	Str.VIB-V Str. N, M, L		LN Saliagos Franchthi FCP4	Middle Chalcolithic Emporio X-VIII Kum Tepe IA Beşiktepe Kizilbel/ Lower Bagbasi	(Late Ubaid)	*c*.5300-*c*.4900
LN II	Str.IV Str. K, H, G	EN II (Furness 1953; Evans 1964)	LN II Saliagos		(Late Ubaid)	*c*.4900-*c*.4500/4400
FN IA	Str.IIIB; Str. F, D, E	MN (Furness 1953; Evans 1964)	FN	? Middle Chalcolithic ? ----------	Late Chalcolithic 1	*c*.4500/4400-*c*.4200
FN IB	Str.IIIA; Str.C, B	MN-LN 'Transition' (Evans 1964)	Franchthi FCP5	Late Chalcolithic 1 Beycesultan XXL-XXXV Kum Tepe IB1	Late Chalcolithic 2	*c*.4200-*c*.3900
FN II	Str.IIB	LN I (Evans 1964; Manteli 1993)		Late Chalcolithic 2 Beycesultan XXXIV-XXIX Tigani I	Late Chalcolithic 3	*c*.3900-*c*.3600
FN III	Str.IIA	FN (Vagnetti 1973; Vagnetti and Belli 1978)	Kephala	Late Chalcolithic 3 Beycesultan XXVIII-XXV Kuruçay 6 Kum Tepe IB3 Emporio VII Tigani II	Late Chalcolithic 4	*c*.3600-*c*.3300
FN IV	Str.IC	FN (Vagnetti 1973; Vagnetti and Belli 1978)	Ayia Irini I	Late Chalcolithic 4 Beycesultan XXIV-XX Kum Tepe IB4 Emporio VI Tigani III	Late Chalcolithic 5	*c*.3300-*c*.3000

Figure 1.3. Tomkins' chronology, traditional Cretan chronologies and other Aegean and East Mediterranean regional chronologies (after Tomkins 2008: Table 3.1)

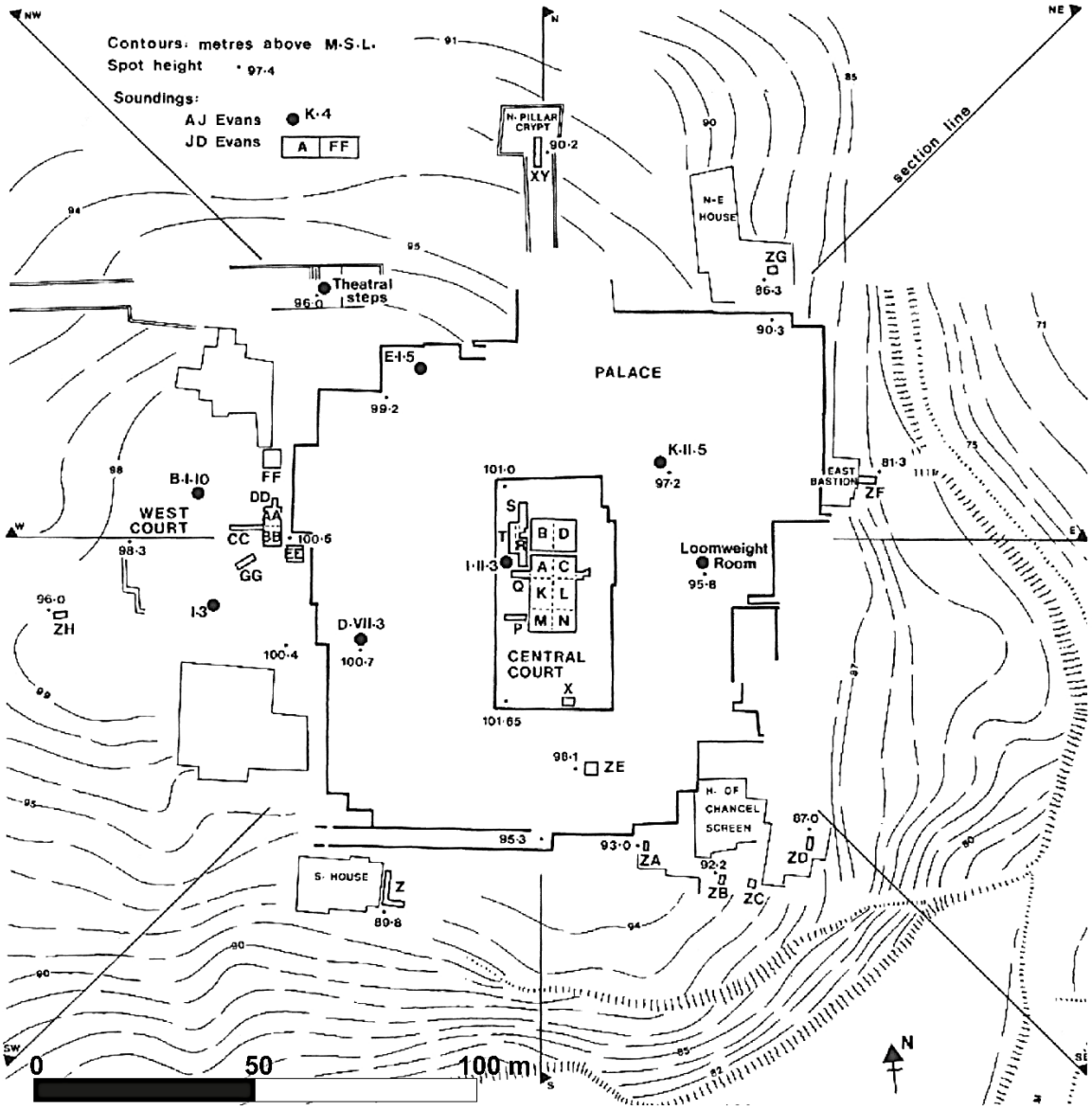

Figure 1.4. Location of trenches at Knossos from J.D. Evans' excavations in 1957-60 and 1969-70 and main Neolithic soundings from A.J. Evans (after Tomkins 2007b: fig.1.1)

1.4.2. Chronology in Thessaly

Fig.1.6 shows a synthetic comparison between Tomkins' chronology for Crete and that of Thessaly, including other areas of mainland Greece and the Aegean. The earliest Neolithic phase in Greece is still a matter of debate. The 'Aceramic', 'Preceramic' or 'Pre-pottery' Neolithic as first suggested by Milojčić (1952) for the site of Argissa, was

considered the earliest Neolithic period, interpreting levels that contained small baked clay artefacts like figurines but little or no pottery. At Knossos, the 'Aceramic' or IN level is accepted and dated to the 7000 *cal*. BC. I use the term IN to refer to the first Neolithic phase (Str.X) at Knossos. However, in Thessaly, the existence of a 'Preceramic' phase is still controversial. At Sesklo, Theocharis (1967) reported 'Preceramic' levels, which are still considered with scepticism (Nandris 1970; Bloedow 1991; Perlès 2001; Perlès and Johnson 2004; Reingruber *et al.* 2017). The existence of a 'Preceramic' Neolithic phase in Thessaly raises serious problems due to unclear stratigraphic sequences and dubious radiocarbon dates. The radiocarbon dates from 'Preceramic' Sesklo are too late (Bloedow 1991: 41), dating this phase to *c*. 6500 *cal*. BC (Maniatis and Kotsakis 2016). Therefore, the IN phase in Sesklo overlaps with the first EN in Knossos and other sites (Figs.1.5-1.6) which suggests that this phase was either a very thin layer of occupation or its very existence must be questioned.

At Sesklo, the subphases of EN were defined following Milojčić scheme (1956; 1959a-b), however, it has limited regional value and cannot be used as a general Thessalian or Greek sequence. Therefore, rather than using a regional chronology I have preferred to use a more general term such as EN, and only on occasion referring to EN I-III phases for the site of Sesklo. Similarly, I have not employed other terms used for traditional relative chronologies and based on their ceramic assemblages (Fig.1.5).

Initial Neolithic / Aceramic (IN): *c*. 6600-6500 *cal*. BC

Early Neolithic (EN): 'Early Ceramic' (Frühkeramikum), Proto-Sesklo, Pre-Sesklo *c*. 6500-6000/ 5900 *cal.* BC

Middle Neolithic (MN): Sesklo I, II, III *c.* 6000 / 5900-5600 / 5500 *cal*. BC

Late Neolithic (LN): Tsangli-Larisa, Arapi (LN I); Otzaki, Classic Dimini (LN II); *c*. 5600 / 5500-4500 *cal*. BC

Final Neolithic (FN): Rachmani *c.* 4500-3500 *cal*. BC

Figure 1.5. The Thessalian chronology combining radiocarbon calibrated dates and relative chronology terms (After Perlès and Johnson 2004: 66; Reingruber *et al.* 2017)

Mainland Greece	Absolute Chronology	Peloponnese	Central Greece, Euboia	Thessaly	Cyclades	Stratigraphy of Knossos (Tomkins 2007)	Chronology of Crete (Tomkins 2007)
Late Chalcolithic /FN Early	3100/3000 4300	Lerna Franchthi 5.2 Franchthi 5.1	Athens North Slope Tharrounia 4 Tharrounia 3 Attica-Kephala-Culture	Petromagoula Rachmani III Rachmani II Rachmani I	Ayia Irini I Kephala	Knossos IC Knossos IIA Knossos IIB Knossos IIIA	FN IV FN III FN II FN IB
LN II (Late)	4500 4900	Kastria Gonia II Klenia Prosymna/ Yerogalaro East	Tharrounia 2 Corycian Cave	Classical Dimini Otzaki Agia Sophia	Phtellia Saliagos	Knossos IIIB Knossos IV	FN IA LN II
LN I (Early)	5300	Franchthi C. Ph. 4 Korinth Forum W. Franchthi C. Ph. 3	Corycian Cave Elateia IV-Drachmani Tharrounia 1 Elateia III/ Bothros	Arapi Tsangli-Larissa	Saliagos	Knossos V Knossos VIA	LN I
MN	5400 5900	Franchthi C. Ph. 2 Lerna II	Chaironeia II-III Elateia II	Zarko Sesklo I-III		Knossos VIB Knossos VII	MN
EN	6300 6500	Lerna I Nemea/Cave Franchthi C. Ph. 1	Chaironeia I Elateia I	Early Sesklo Protoseskl o 'Preceramic' Argissa	Sikinos Maroulas	Knossos VIII Knossos IX	EN
IN	7000	Franchthi 0/1		Theopetra		Knossos X	IN

Figure 1.6. Synthetic chronological table of the Neolithic in Mainland Greece, Thessaly, and the Aegean (after Alram 2011: fig.1)

CHAPTER II. PREVIOUS STUDIES ON PREHISTORIC FIGURINES

Early interpretations regarding prehistoric figurines argued for the existence of a Mother-Goddess cult from Palaeolithic and Neolithic times. The Mother Goddess theory dates back to the nineteenth century to Bachofen's (1867) *Myth, Religion and Mother Right*. This theory was followed by Evans (1921), Nilsson (1927), Crawford (1957), and Vermeule (1964). Sir Arthur Evans (1921: 463-464) interpreted the Minoan figurines from his excavations at Knossos as belonging to the Great Mother-Goddess cult. Firstly, Evans became convinced of the Goddess's existence in Minoan times and extrapolated it to the Neolithic period (Evans 1921: 51-52). As Morris (2006: 70) suggests, Evans associated this form of religion with a more primitive stage of human development influenced by late 19th and early 20th centuries ideologies including social evolutionary theory and the idealisation of motherhood.

Hutchinson (1938: 54-57) also followed this thesis, tracing connections between Neolithic figurines and the Greek Goddess of childbirth in the Classical period. Evans (1921: 45) also referred to most Neolithic female figurines as steatopygous and compared them to modern Bushman women. Prehistoric female statuettes were thus compared with contemporary African women and considered equally 'primitive' with racist, colonialist and sexist connotations; therefore, we should abandon the use of such a loaded term. However, this term has been widely influential in figurine studies later than Evans (e.g. Weinberg 1951) and although now in disuse, the emphasis on exaggerated or protruding buttocks appeared in subsequent studies (e.g., Ucko 1968). Nilsson in his *Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion* (1927) considered Minoan religion 'primitive', that is, in an early stage in the evolution of Greek religion interpreted as a matriarchy. He followed Evans' view of a Great Mother Goddess represented in figurines from the Aegean, the Adriatic to the Persian Gulf and even beyond the Caspian. Crawford in *The Eye Goddess* (1957) interprets the so-called schist plaque idols and bone idols from the Iberian Peninsula as anthropomorphic and female, and therefore, as depictions of the Mother-Goddess. In *Greece in the Bronze Age*, Vermeule (1964: 19-21) considers that Neolithic religion was expressed through

female idols and a single Mother-Goddess was worshipped all over Greece with similar rituals, sacrifices and hymns, a cult recognisable in Anatolia, Syria, Mesopotamia, the Aegean islands, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

In 1968, under the influence of processual Archaeology, Peter Ucko published *Anthropomorphic Figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete with Comparative Material from the Prehistoric Near East and Mainland Greece*. His study was based on a quantitative statistical analysis of the figurines' attributes by date, sexual categorisation, facial features, materials, arm-position, posture, and representation of anatomical and decoration details. He proposed different interpretations of the figurine's function based on: 1) figurines' individual features; 2) their archaeological contexts; and, 3) relevant historical and ethnographic practices of figurine uses (Ucko 1968: 427). Ucko rejected the Mother Goddess interpretations for figurines of Predynastic Egypt and Crete arguing that other than female there are also male and a high number of sexless figurines; the absence of any signs indicating the divinity of the figurines; and the absence of figurines representing mother and child. Ucko (1968: 434-437) interprets Cretan figurines as objects used in initiation ceremonies or vehicles for sympathetic magic, discarded after use. He offers similar interpretations for figurines of the Near East and Mainland Greece. Following a functionalist approach, Ucko's study was one of the first to emphasise the multifunctionality of figurines. Although he tried to give different context-specific interpretations for each region analysed, he ultimately offers three main conclusions: teaching devices in initiation rites, objects of sympathetic magic and dolls.

Marija Gimbutas subsequently popularised the Mother-Goddess theory with the publication of *The Gods and Goddesses of Old Europe* (1974). Gimbutas (1974: 17) designated the 'Civilization of Old Europe' as a collective identity of Neolithic-Chalcolithic (*c.* 7000-3500 BC) southeastern Europe, which extended from the Aegean and the Adriatic, including the Aegean islands and Sicily, to the Czech Republic, southern Poland and western Ukraine. She interpreted the figurines found within that area as documenting a religion with a shared female fertility divinity: 'many figurines were ex-votos dedicated to the Great Goddess, the Bird or Snake Goddess, the Vegetation Goddess' (Gimbutas 1974: 236). According to her categorisation, each

cultural area of Old Europe had its way of portraying the Mother-Goddess in figurines that included Neolithic Thessaly, Vinča, Cycladic, Cucuteni and Gumelniţa cultures. The accentuated pubic triangle and the huge abdomen are considered representations of the divinity and the large size of many figurines as portrayals of a goddess (Gimbutas 1974: 159). Gimbutas interpreted the Neolithic and Chalcolithic miniature clay house models as representing communal sanctuaries dedicated to a particular goddess. Accordingly, the rectangular houses divided into two rooms with a dais are considered shrines where figurines are found on benches, interpreted as ritual altars (Gimbutas 1974: 88). However, figurines are also found in pits, near the oven, close to the entrance or hearths, beside grindstones, inter alia. Gimbutas (1974: 152) posited that in the cult of the Great Goddess she rules over life, death and regeneration; she is the giver of life and fertility and the wielder of the destructive powers of nature. The image of the Great Goddess was projected in anthropomorphic form and in the shape of insects and animals like dogs, does, toads, hedgehogs, chrysalises, butterflies, caterpillars, and bears which symbolically expressed the cycle of life and regeneration (Gimbutas 1974: 195-196). Therefore, in Gimbutas' view, figurines representing those animals are part of the Mother-Goddess cult.

Representations of phalli, male figurines and bulls found in the same area of 'Old Europe', were taken to represent the worship of the Male God, a prototype of Dionysus, a Year God or even the Great Goddess herself (Gimbutas 1974: 216-235). Gimbutas interpreted figurines with a pillar-head shape and female features (breasts, pubic triangle), such as the Hamangia and specific mainland Greek figurines, as phallus-shaped headed arguing for their androgynous nature (Gimbutas 1974: 152-155). This interpretation has been widely influential considering that authors such as Dimitra Kokkinidou and Marianna Nikolaidou (1997), Chapman (2000b: 76) and Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 60), refer to the Hamangia figurines as androgynous.

Overall, Gimbutas (1974; 1982: 9, 238; 1986; 1989a-b) interpreted the predominance of female figurines in Neolithic contexts as evidence of the dominance of women in society and the worship of a Goddess, which was replaced by the patriarchal system brought by the Indo-Europeans in the Bronze Age with new masculine images that replaced the previous ones. The hypothesis of a matriarchal society in the Neolithic has

been widely criticised. As Lynn Meskell (1995: 75) states, the contemporary struggle for gender equality was projected onto the past without basing the interpretation on archaeological evidence. Nilsson (1927), Vermeule (1964) and Gimbutas (1974) posit the existence of a single female Goddess worshipped from Greece to Anatolia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Syria, Mesopotamia, and the islands, homogenising Mediterranean and Balkan figurines and cultures that are not contemporary or uniform. Gimbutas' theories have been particularly influential in popular feminist writings: e.g., *The Chalice and the Blade* (Eisler 1987), *Motherself* (Rabuzzi 1988), or *The Myth of the Goddess* (Baring and Cashford 1991); considering it posits a matriarchal society where women exerted power.

However, there are serious flaws in this hypothesis. Firstly not all figurines are female; in fact, around half of the figurines from Neolithic Greece show no indication of sex and their assignment to any sex category is more complex than previously thought. The worship of a Great Mother Goddess is not proven for the Greek Neolithic. It is misleading to suppose that even if it was the case, the status of women in the religious sphere had a direct correlation in the social sphere. It is wrong to assume that an elevated status of Neolithic women was due to their nurturing capabilities, meaning that such power was only based on their capacity for reproduction. As Talalay (2000: 10) points out, the notion of the Mother Goddess ultimately relegates women to a static and conventional role where power is based on biological capacities.

Typological classifications were significant in the foundations of the first figurine studies. Cycladic figurines were particularly studied from this point of view, acclaimed for their artistic quality, with an object-centred approach, an aesthetic and art historical perspective. Renfrew (1969) was among the first to set out the main typological categories and chronology of the Cycladic figurines. His systematic study of the figurines' various forms and contexts led him to divide the material chronologically and spatially into three cultures: 1) Grotta-Pelos, 2) Keros-Syros and 3) Phylakopi I. He further differentiated the Cycladic sculptures into 'types', a term he employed 'to indicate a distinct form defined by the clustering of several traits or features, repeated in several examples' (Renfrew 1969: 2). Renfrew's typology divided the figurines into schematic, Plastiras, Louros, Folded-Arm, or Apeiranthos types. Most studies of

Cycladic figurines followed this classification and, with modifications, is currently in use. Similarly, Hourmouziadis, although less influential than Renfrew published a significant work focused on the typological division of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly: *Η ανθρωπόμορφη ειδωλοπλαστικλή της νεολιθικής Θεσσαλίας: προβλήματα κατασκευλης, τυπολογίας και ερμηνείας* (1973) proposed a typology of figurines for most sites in Neolithic Thessaly. Hourmouziadis considered sex, posture, gesture, body and belly shape to categorise figurines. Authors like Skafida (1992) and Nanoglou (2005) followed this classification with slight modifications, especially applied to studies of figurines from Thessaly.

Renfrew addressed the longstanding idea that figurines were used in rituals in *The Archaeology of Cult. The Sanctuary at Phylakopi* (1985), where he interpreted the figurines from LBA Phylakopi as cult objects with a different perspective than the Mother-Goddess theory. He presents a well-documented excavation of Phylakopi on Melos and posits the existence of two shrines: the East and West Shrine. Many figurines and fragments, including anthropomorphic and animal forms, were found in the area of the buildings considered shrines. He interpreted the figurines as related to a deity or deities and the other materials as offerings. The processual approach followed in his study aimed to establish criteria to identify cult places and ritual practices in the archaeological record in general, a hypothesis that he specifically applied to the site of Phylakopi. The publication had a vast influence, particularly on figurine studies and Mycenaean religion (for a critique, see Insoll 2011).

Renfrew (1985: 19) established a framework to identify religious behaviour in the archaeological record based on: 1) the spot, its special and natural associations and the display of public and hidden architecture; 2) the iconography of decorations and images with gestures and movements associated with worship practices; 3) evidence of dance, music and the use of drugs as part of rituals; 4) architecture and equipment such as altars, benches, pools or basins of water, hearths, pits for libation; 5) sacrifice of animals or humans, and libations, identifiable in the archaeological record, offerings of food or drink, material offerings and votives; 6) the presence of portable equipment such as lamps or special receptacles; 7) the appearance of symbols associated with the deities worshipped, e.g. animals; 8) the concepts of cleanliness and pollution may

apply to the sacred area; 9) the architecture of the shrine, equipment and offerings should involve a great investment of wealth. In general, the essential criterion is that the assemblage should not be explicable in secular terms: 'the most convincing indications of cult practice are generally the symbols employed, especially when these include representations of men or of animals' (Renfrew 1985: 20-21).

To support the hypothesis of religious ritual at Phylakopi, Renfrew (1985: 363-364) summarised the evidence: elements in the architecture of the buildings such as platforms or podia where objects were displayed; special categories of artefacts with symbolic representations; figures and figurines and other offerings like sealstones. Renfrew (1985: 363) considered that some evidence may be argued to document domestic activity in the area instead of cult, i.e., the presence of mortars and pestles, grindstones, obsidian artefacts, animal bone debris or the quantity of pottery. He argued that the buildings were unlikely to be utilitarian because of their assemblages: sealstones, beads, and metal objects. The presence of figures and figurines at the shrines together with 'special objects' or 'offerings' is enough to view the site as a sanctuary.

Renfrew also aimed to identify the function of figurines and figures and deemed their differences in size as a way to recognise their classification as votaries or cult images. The larger figures on the platforms are cult images, while the smaller ones could represent votives or votaries as they held objects considered offerings (Renfrew 1985: 372). One of the main problems with the ritual interpretations of the figurines and figures at Phylakopi is that they are based on a circular argument. Renfrew interprets the place as a shrine because he found figurines and figures which are deities, cult images or votaries because they were found in a religious building. One of the reasons why the building was interpreted as a shrine was because the figurines and figures are considered related to religious rituals.

Christina Marangou published a major synthesis of figurines from Neolithic, Chalcolithic and Early Bronze Age Greece, except for Crete, in *Eidolia: Figurines et miniatures du Néolithique Récent et du Bronze Ancien en Grèce* (1992). She analysed the following five aspects of the figurines using a typological approach: the techniques and materials of fabrication; the iconography of typological prototypes differentiating

between naturalism and schematism and figurines' sex; imitation; function; context and associations. According to Marangou (1992: 221), the techniques and materials evidence the existence of craft specialisation with centralised production and control of the figurines by families restricted to a few households within each village. She considered that the 'badly made' figurines indicated variable expertise with the possible existence of miniature-making apprentices, maybe children.

Her later contribution *Assembling, displaying, and dissembling Neolithic and Eneolithic figurines and models* (Marangou 1996), addresses the significance of sets of figurines accompanied by mobile miniature elements found in different areas of Neolithic and Copper Age South-eastern Europe. She suggests that displaying sets of figurines on prominent benches or oven platforms may have been related to initiation rites or rites of passage, involving the participation of spectators, movement of figurines and, conceivably, a performance including dance and music (Marangou 1996: 196). Conversely, some assemblages of figurines may reflect concealment, for instance, groups found inside containers, vases or house models (Marangou 1996: 197). Marangou's interpretations, therefore, do not differ substantially from the earlier interpretations of figurines as ritual objects. Gimbutas (1974) already considered the association of figurines with house models and other miniature equipment as cult assemblages. Gimbutas (1974) and Renfrew (1985) also interpreted the presence of figurines on benches as the means to identify a shrine.

Conversely, Talalay (1993) adopted a broader perspective in her work on *Neolithic figurines from Franchthi Cave (Greece)*. She followed the earlier functionalist view that Ucko (1968) applied to recover a range of possible multiple functions of the figurines (Talalay 1993: 38). Talalay (1993: 39) proposed focusing on the study of the figurines themselves, their archaeological and socioeconomic contexts, and the use of ethnographic analogies to understand their use and meaning. She interpreted the figurines in a more multifunctional way, treating aspects such as the cognitive abilities involved in making figurines, the possible economic practices in which they were embedded, gender issues or the idea of the human body as a symbol. Following her analysis of the different types of figurines at Franchthi Cave, she proposed a range of functions (Talalay 1993: 45-49):

1) The split-leg figurines served as economic contracts or identifying tokens, suggesting they were originally attached to matching halves that could be easily separated or split.

2) The zoomorphic figurines are considered to be items of sympathetic magic. This interpretation is based on an ethnographic parallel, inspired by Parsons' work with the Zuñi. In that study, Parsons relates how the Zuñi use small zoomorphic figurines in fertility rites to increase the herd.

3) The figurines found in 'domestic' contexts are interpreted as dolls or toys. These anthropomorphic figurines appear associated with hearths, stone drills and other artefacts like shell beads. Talalay (1993: 48) considers these contexts as working areas related to women's activities. Women may have given the figurines to their children while carrying out tasks such as grinding, spinning or bead production (Talalay 1993: 43).

Other possible interpretations are the use of figurines as teaching devices in initiation rites, curing rites and witchcraft practices documented in ethnographic literature (Talalay 1993: 41-42). The number of ethnographic and historical evidence to suggest different functions is extensive in Talalay's work. However, considering figurines as dolls just because they appear in a domestic, i.e., house or building structure, seems simplistic when the evidence also relates them to the deposition of beads and other precious artefacts. Figurines used as dolls may also be employed later in rituals.

Douglass Bailey first introduced a gender perspective into anthropomorphic figurines influenced by the gender discussions in archaeology by Gero and Conkey (1991; Conkey and Gero 1991). In his paper *The Representation of Gender: Homology or Propaganda*, Bailey (1994: 217) argued against the existence of a static male-female dichotomy in the past as in our present-day, going beyond binary categories of gender and gender roles. However, his proposed interpretation for the site of Golyamo Delchevo, partially based on the figurines, considered that females were restricted to the domestic space in the form of anthropomorphic figurines and males dominated in the public sphere overall, but particularly in the mortuary arena. In addition to an essentialist opposition of gender tensions, he interpreted the high number of asexual figurines as representative of a third gender (Bailey 1994: 220-221). However, one of

the problems with his categorisation is that his identification of the figurines' sex is not explained.

Biehl (1996) treated the study of figurines from a different perspective, interpreting the figurines' decoration as acting in a symbolic communication system. He analysed figurines from the late Neolithic to early Chalcolithic period from north-western Bulgaria, the Gradešnica-Krivodol archaeological culture. His main contribution was the idea of the deliberate breakage of figurines. He differentiated potential breakage at the weak parts of the figurine, and non-potential breakages, for those that could indicate intentional breakage of the figurines. Biehl (1996: 167) considered that half of the Gradešnica-Krivodol culture figurines were deliberately broken based on the horizontal breakage at the hips, which is one of the strongest parts of the figurines.

Biehl's (1996: 154) empirical-statistical approach is based on the typological attribute analysis of form, content and context of figurines to provide their encoded meaning. Biehl (1996: 155) considered that meaning is held in the figurines' body shapes, sex, positions, gestures, masks and decoration: clothing, jewellery, or symbols. His study of the Gradešnica-Krivodol culture complex differentiated between 24 main design motifs with variants. The different design motifs are analysed according to their disposition on the figurines, thus revealing a selected placement on the various body parts. The symbols evidence a complex thought system of abstract ideas related to birth or the need for food and death (Biehl 1996: 170), engaging with the recurring idea of fertility posited by the Mother-Goddess supporters.

However, his study did not explain the meaning of the symbols engraved on the figurines. The statistical analysis of the disposition of symbols is not helpful if we aim to find a meaningful interpretation of the figurines other than to understand that there is a certain homogeneity in the decoration of figurines with patterns in the arrangement of symbols. A study of figurines' decoration should also consider addressing the possible significance of those patterns, lacking in Biehl's work.

Dimitra Kokkinidou and Marianna Nikolaidou's (1997) paper *Body Imagery in the Aegean Neolithic: Ideological Implications of Anthropomorphic Figurines* first tried to apply a feminist perspective. Their research is influenced by the feminist research in

Archaeology of the late 80s and early 90s, such as the work of Gero and Conkey (1991) or Walde and Willows (1991). Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou aimed to examine the ideological role of figurines in the construction of gender identities and power relations in the Aegean Neolithic communities.

They considered certain aspects of femininity and masculinity to be emphasised in the figurines. Female figurines are characterised by exaggerated modelling of the breasts, belly and buttocks, while facial features are scarce. Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 101) propose a link between the visual emphasis on the female attributes as a possible source of power. They consider feminine symbolism as central in Neolithic imagery without implying women's authority in the past but rather an important role in the power dynamics of the households (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997: 101). The exaggerated sexual attributes in Neolithic figurines, described as an 'iconography of sexuality', might be a symbol of fertility and reflect the importance in this period of the woman's body as essential to the creation and sustaining of life (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997: 93). In early Neolithic communities, reproduction and maternity may be metaphors for agriculture, as both imply transforming natural elements into life (Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997: 96). Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 96) suggested that the presence of several female figurines close to hearths and storage places engages with this idea of fertility and life-cycle. They further analysed two other iconographical types of Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines: 1) the so-called portraits, considered to represent actual persons, and 2) the asexual or ambiguous acrolith figurines, which they considered to convey the general concept of human. Overall, the interpretations follow those of Gimbutas' Mother-Goddess theory except for the notion of a developed pantheon, as Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 102) consider that this notion cannot be sustained.

The first work that incorporated feminist and masculinist approaches together with queer theories was Bernard Knapp and Lynn Meskell's paper *Bodies of Evidence on Prehistoric Cyprus* (1997), which reflected on the concepts of sex and gender as more fluid over the trajectories of time, context, culture, or age (Knapp and Meskell 1997: 186). Queer theories and post-structural feminism, especially Judith Butler's work (1990), which criticised second-wave feminists that predicated sex as an essentialist

category, has led to what has been called third-wave feminism. Over the past thirty years, these theories have had a vast influence on archaeology. Consequently, research has started to focus on gender ambiguity and fluidity, considerations of 'third genders' and, in general, has moved away from the traditional binary categories (Bolger 2009: 42). Knapp and Meskell (1997: 190) suggested that sex in and of itself was not what automatically mattered the most in prehistoric societies. Instead, they adopt an intersectional view of sex and gender, considering other axes of difference, such as race, class or ethnicity.

Also, Knapp and Meskell applied an individualising perspective, focusing on the sexually-ambiguous Chalcolithic cruciform figurines. By re-studying these figurines, they argued that only 12 out of 83 depicted breasts (which they do not consider as indisputably female), and only one has an unclear representation of genitalia. Previous studies (a Campo 1994: 134-135) considered these figurines as female whether or not breasts were depicted. Conversely, Knapp and Meskell (1997: 194) suggest that such figurines convey sexual characteristics of males and females due to their elongated necks. However, they posit that this could represent individual characteristics rather than sexual duality (Knapp and Meskell 1997: 195). They tried to go beyond the traditional binarisms in gender and preferred to use the term intersexuality in those cases where sexual features of both sexes are depicted in the figurines. This term is borrowed from modern genetics, defining chromosomal males that develop fully as females and vice versa (Knapp and Meskel 1997: 187). However, genetics says nothing about the final appearance, and it is the external characteristics that classify sex as male or female. A significant contribution is their concept of the body as not universal, ahistorical or natural. Instead, the concept of the body has changed and has been considered in different ways in different societies. Sex and gender are similarly constructed concepts, being both socially constituted (Knapp and Meskell 1997: 190).

A different perspective in the study of prehistoric figurines was Chapman's (2000b) essay on fragmentation. His work *Fragmentation in Archaeology: People, Places, and Broken Objects in the Prehistory of South Eastern Europe* concerns the Balkan Neolithic and Copper Age, a long period between approximately 7000 and 3000 BC. His argument was based on three important concepts: fragmentation, enchainment and

accumulation. Chapman (2000b: 6-9) understood fragmentation as deliberate acts of breakage, exchange and deposition of material items. He argued that many incomplete objects found in the Neolithic Balkans in contexts of structured deposition, such as pottery, figurines, bones, salt pots, flaked stone, *Spondylus* shells, and metals, are the result of deliberate breakage, dispersal and deposition. Chapman (2000b: 6) argued that the process of enchainment requires the selection of material fragments used in social exchanges, linking objects to people and places with their own life stories. The mechanism for enchainment through fragmentation implies, according to Chapman (2000b: 6): 'two people who wish to establish a social relationship or conclude some sort of transaction agree on a specific artefact appropriate to the interaction and break it in two or more parts, each keeping one or more parts as a token of the relationship'. Those fragments are then kept until reconstruction of the relationship is required and then they may be deposited in a particular manner (Chapman 2000b: 6).

Accumulation refers to metal objects that were deposited or gathered as social capital but not broken, as in the case of the hoards. Chapman (2000b: 53) considered the incorporation of incomplete objects in these hoards, graves and pits as proof of the intentional deposition of broken objects as a widespread social practice. The use of complete objects by accumulation in hoards is interpreted as a different type of relationship between persons and objects as opposed to enchainment, representing an abstract value (Chapman 2000: 47-48). While Chapman (2000b: 23-24) recognised that damage as a result of excavation or post-depositional processes could fragment materials, this type of fragmentation is recognisable in the artefacts and although breakage might be accidental, deposition is not. Among the main types of broken objects analysed by Chapman are the anthropomorphic figurines of Goljamo Delchevo, Ovcharovo and Vinica in Bulgaria, the Cucuteni sites of Hăbășești and Trușești, and Hamangia figurines from Durankulak. He argued that the high percentage of fragmentary figurines at those sites was indicative of deliberate breakage, dispersal and deposition. Chapman (2000b: 71; 2001: 90) argued that selecting a particular manufacture technique could have been used to facilitate deliberate breakage and stated that the strong points of figurines could be broken as often as the weak points.

In a later work, Chapman and Gaydarska (2007) further developed the theory of fragmentation. They argued that fragmentation is connected to a type of personhood: the fractal or dividual personhood (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 9) evidenced by Strathern (1988) in Melanesian communities. They interpreted Hamangia figurines as being mostly hermaphrodites or androgynous (Chapman 2000b: 76; Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 60) based on the suggestion made by Gimbutas (1974) and Kokkinopoulou and Nikolaidou (1996: 93) that the long cylindrical necks or heads of the figurines represent the phallic form. Following this interpretation, they considered that figurine head fragmentation of Hamangia figurines 'alters the gender identity, as the removal of the head means that the maleness is lost or divided from the female part' (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 62).

The hypotheses concerning fragmentation have been widely influential in other contexts of prehistory (Brück 2006; Gamble 2007) but also much criticised. Most of the criticism of Chapman's thesis has been centred on taphonomic issues and post-depositional factors that could explain better the recovery of fragmented assemblages (Whittle 2001: 723; Brittain and Harris 2010: 583). The controversial deliberate fragmentation approach is justifiably argued to have flaws because of the existence of unintentional fragments and the difficulties of distinguishing accidental from intentional fragments (Bailey 2002: 1182). As a response to the critics, Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 111) have studied the refitting of fragments, but most of the conjoining fragments have been found in the same settlement and the same structure. The relation between enchainment, fragmentation and dividual personhood has also been the focus of criticism. In the ethnographic studies from Melanesia, enchainment is not connected to the fragmentation of artefacts and can relate to both dividual or individual forms of personhood (Fowler 2004: 67-69; 2008: 51; Brittain and Harris 2010: 585-588). However, Chapman's fragmentation theory is significant as it proposes a postprocessual interpretation, introducing concepts such as personhood or challenging gender identity bias concerning Neolithic figurines, but with a theoretical background that remains processual. The processual influence may be seen in the method of gathering data from site-specific assemblages that included statistical and quantitative analysis of fragmented objects. Later scholarship has reflected about

figurine fragmentation in other contexts, for instance, Renfrew *et al.* (2007) *Keros: Dhaskalio and Kavos, early Cycladic Stronghold and Ritual Centre*; or Harrel and Driessen (2015) *Thravsma: Contextualising the Intentional Destruction of Objects in the Bronze Age Aegean and Cyprus.*

The first gender studies of Greek and Balkan figurines were influenced by second-wave feminism, especially in the mid and late 90s with the above-mentioned works of Bailey (1994) and Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1996). However, towards the late 90s and especially the early 2000s, the paradigm shifted towards an influence of queer and third-wave feminisms that now included multiple or gender fluid categories in the discussion: male, female, neuter, third gender persons and a fluid category that could move in and out of sexual/gender identity (Rautman and Talalay 2000: 2). An awareness of gender ambiguities and fluidity affects gender assignment when interpreting anthropomorphic images and the ascribed gender roles.

Following this perspective, Naomi Hamilton published *Ungendering Archaeology: Concepts of Sex and Gender in Figurine Studies in Prehistory* (2000). She criticised the generally applied methodology that classifies figurines by sex, where sex is understood as the Western stereotypical division into gender roles that might not be relevant to prehistory. Hamilton argued that the male/female dichotomy restricts and neglects the multiplicity and fluidity of gender constructs that could characterise non-Western preindustrial societies. Hamilton proposed an approach that considers the sexual ambiguity of figurines by focusing on dual-sexed and sexless categories. Figurines that lack any indications of sex should not be considered female or representing sex through coded symbols. Instead, these figurines could have different meanings: maybe expressing sex was irrelevant or not important, or the sex of the figurines was known in their original context of use without the need of indicating it, or they might represent children (Hamilton 2000: 23). Other figurines should be considered 'dual-sex', perhaps representing a 'gender-crosser' (Hamilton 2000: 23). Broadly, Hamilton (2000: 25-27) suggested going beyond the stereotypical boundaries of binary sex to identify those figurines that might appear to be biologically males but depict more ambiguous features in Prehistoric Cyprus. She argued that in Cypriot 'plank idols', the absence of breasts or the presence of small breasts does not prove that these figurines

represent maleness. She suggested that breastless figurines should be considered male or sexless, and those with breasts represent females. Sex and gender according to Hamilton (2000: 28) have to be analysed within the parameters of each society since they are expressed differently in the material culture.

In the same year, Lauren Talalay published *Archaeological Ms.conceptions: Contemplating Gender and Power in the Greek Neolithic* (2000), in which she studied Neolithic Greek figurines with a similar gender perspective to that of Hamilton. She proposed a methodology to classify figurines' sex into different categories: definite females, probable females, definite males, probable males, dual-sexed and sexless or sexually ambiguous images. Regarding the notion of gender, Talalay (2000: 8) suggested that sexless figurines could have different meanings, as images viewed as 'neuter' and transcending sexual classification, or as a mixture of both male and female sexes. In which case, such a figurine could move from one sexual category to the other by using temporary clothing or ornamentation or by its particular use on a specific occasion. In the later study, *Sexual Ambiguity In Plank Figures From Bronze Age Cyprus* (2002), Lauren Talalay and Tracey Cullen also argued for going beyond assigning individual figurines to binary categories of sex. They adopted an approach centred on gender ambiguity in the absence of explicit sexual traits. They argued that the generic form and decorative style of plank figurines may have been conceived deliberately to represent a corporate identity in which elements such as sex and gender are not clearly represented (Talalay and Cullen 2002: 186-188).

From a completely different viewpoint and a postprocessual theoretical background, Douglass W. Bailey published *Prehistoric Figurines. Representation and corporeality in the Neolithic* (2005). He presents an analysis of three case studies referring to Neolithic figurines from south-eastern Europe alternated with modern examples of a theoretical nature such as miniatures and bonsais, Disneyland, anatomical doll use in police interviews, Barbie dolls and photographs. With that combination, Bailey moves beyond the traditional interpretations focusing his analysis on three groups of Neolithic figurines: Hamangia, Cucuteni/Tripolye, and Thessaly. Although Bailey examines the context of figurines, he does not consider it determinant in the interpretation: 'in each of the examples examined for this book, I found no evidence from the details of

excavation that facilitated a better understanding of what figurines mean' (Bailey 2005: 203). That constitutes a significant difference in approach to that of Chapman, whose assumptions were based on a careful excavation of Neolithic sites requiring particular attention to the post-depositional and taphonomic processes. Instead, Bailey's (2005: 203) approach consists mainly of providing new questions for the available archaeological data by analysing modern uses of the body.

From a theoretical perspective, Bailey (2005: 32-41) considered concepts such as miniaturism, three-dimensionality, abstraction and compression. Miniaturism implies the reduction of details and, subsequently, the lack of accuracy and the intentional selection of particular attributes to be rendered on the figurines. This absence of details and abstraction means that a miniature is not restricted to single meanings and alters the observer's understanding and comprehension of the object (Bailey 2005: 32). Compression in size empowers the spectator, gives physical control over the object and facilitates imagination and fantasy (Bailey 2005: 32-33). Most importantly, three-dimensionality engages with the sense of touch combined in a personal and intimate individual experience (Bailey 2005: 38). Bailey (2005: 67-74) exemplifies via the analysis of modern dolls like Barbie, how identities are created and manipulated through miniatures and how as representations of the human body they play a role in educating children to unconsciously understand their place in power hierarchies. In this sense, he pays particular attention throughout his work to the importance of figurines and visual culture in the construction of identities, sexuality, power relationships, status, individuality, difference and similarities. The work of Bailey although significant for understanding the conception of the body in modern societies is unhelpful for interpretations of the past as he considers the meanings of figurines are now lost.

Another monograph dedicated to the study of figurines is *Anthropomorphic Figurines from the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Aegean. Gender Dynamics and Implications for the Understanding of Early Aegean Prehistory* (2008b), by Maria Mina. She focused on the study of gender in anthropomorphic figurines. The methodology used aims to identify the represented sex of the figurines based on their anatomical attributes: mainly genitalia and the presence or absence of breasts, but also of secondary

features, such as a swollen abdomen (which she interpreted as an indicator of pregnancy), accentuated hips or buttocks, traits that according to Mina (2005: 95-96) can suggest the female body. For the classification of sex, Mina utilised similar categories to Talalay (2000) but expanded in number to include 'Female Form' categories and 'Probably Asexual'. She defined *Female Form figurines* as those without female genitalia and breasts, but with accentuated hips and occasionally accentuated buttocks, or general 'female body shape'. As a result of this classification with four different female categories, the percentage of female figurines of the Neolithic and EBA assemblage is higher than previous studies. One of the problems is the assumption that body shape, accentuated buttocks, accentuated hips or swollen abdomen are always a representation of female attributes or pregnancy, while this may not always be the case. In fact, numerous male figurines from Thessaly present swollen abdomen and, at times, wide hips (see Chapter 5.3). In their work on Neolithic figurines from Çatalhöyük, Nakamura and Meskell (2009: 208) suggest that the emphasis on swollen abdomen and hips rather than representations of fertility and pregnancy could denote excess, abundance or maturity/age. Criteria such as accentuation of buttocks or hips can be subjective and what is considered 'accentuated' and what is not remains unclear and vague.

Regarding other categories, there does not seem to be a clear difference between 'Probable Female' and 'Female form'. In both cases, female genitalia and breasts are absent and secondary traits such as accentuated hips and buttocks are present. Another category that should be re-considered is 'Probably Asexual' since figurines with a missing part cannot be recognised as Asexual. Once they are classified by sex, the analysis of figurines provides statistics for each region of Neolithic Greece. In the statistical analysis, she also considered other parameters such as chronology, the context of recovery (domestic, funerary and ritual), decoration or material to correlate with the various categories of sex. Although this analysis produced a rich dataset, the final interpretation of the data is, however, limited and mostly used to suggest the overwhelming predominance of female figurines.

In another paper, *Figurines without sex; People without gender?* (2007), Maria Mina focuses exclusively on asexual figurines. Applying the preceding methodology, she

argued that asexual figurines are the second most common category in the Aegean, after female figurines. However, the methodology is biased towards demonstrating a preponderance of female categories. She writes: 'asexual figurines, or at least the decorated ones, instead of representing a genderless social class, should be read as alternative expressions of the anatomically female gender category' (Mina 2007: 278). This interpretation is due to the sharing of motives between some asexual and female figurines. However, most decorated figurines are female and a very small percentage is asexual. In her later paper, *Island Histories and Gender Stories: A Comparative View through Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Anthropomorphic Figurines from Crete and Cyprus* (2009), she simplified her sex categories to compare Crete and Cyprus. She considers that the EBA predominance of asexual figurines in both Crete and Cyprus is due to their being represented as clothed and therefore concealing their physical body (Mina 2009: 179). This might be the case in some instances, but not for the whole assemblage of Cypriot plank figurines and of Cretan EBA figurines as depictions of sexual attributes are also present.

Christina Marangou, in her later paper *Gendered/sexed and sexless beings in prehistory: readings of the invisible gender* (2009), also focused on the study of gender in figurines from Neolithic and Early Bronze Age Greece. She considered sexless figurines without any sexual indicators as a 'third sex'. These figurines could be gendered with accessories, or in some cases, depicting biological sex was irrelevant. When in association with male/female figurines, Marangou (2009: 89) argued that sexless figurines could represent young individuals. Instead, her intersexual or 'fourth (double) sex' category comprehends figurines with both breasts and penis. This category occurs in exceptional instances. Marangou (2009: 82) was cautious identifying androgynous or hermaphrodite figurines when, for instance, breasts are less emphasised or if the so-called phallus resembles a simple clothing accessory and the figurine might be female. It is also characteristic of some EN and MN figurines, including female figurines, that the head and neck have a phallic appearance, and she includes these in her intersexual category.

Douglass W. Bailey, in *Figurines, Corporeality and the Origins of the Gendered Body* (2013), argued against the general belief that the majority of the European Neolithic

figurines are female, while male representations are very few. He emphasised the large number of figurines that are neither male nor female: sexless or asexual. He defined the sexless category as 'corporeal figurines' representing a general shape of the human body and classified figurines with both male and female body parts as 'hermaphrodite' or 'hybrid' figurines (Bailey 2013: 246). Bailey (2013: 247) addressed the problems of 'sexing' figurines, arguing that the distinction between male or female is in most cases impossible to determine, especially due to the fragmentary state of the figurines. While there are explicit representations of genitalia in some figurines, sexual features are unclear or absent in a greater number. Features such as the representation of nipples or hips are used in some cases to state the sex of a figurine on the assumption that the concepts of male and female were somehow singular, static, universal and shared across different communities, no matter their chronology and geography.

Recently, Insoll edited in the *Oxford Handbook of Prehistoric Figurines* (2017) different regional studies on figurines, offering innovative methodological perspectives and theoretical approaches. This volume includes an analysis of Neolithic figurines from Çatalhöyük (Meskell 2017), Malta (Malone and Stoddart 2017), Eastern and Central Europe (Bánffy 2017), Cyprus (Knox 2017), Italy (Skeates 2017), Sardinia (Vella Gregory 2017) or Southeast Europe (Bailey 2017) focusing on themes such as context, sex and gender, age (particularly, old age in Meskell 2017), posture and dress, performance, agency, fragmentation, or materiality.

New technologies have also been introduced in the study of figurines, especially 3D scanning and photogrammetry. Leading projects are 'Figures in 3D' that focus on 3D scanning and analysing Bronze Age peak sanctuaries figurines (Morris *et al*. 2018); and Neolithic Figurines from Koutroulou Magoula, Greece (Papadopoulos *et al*. 2019), that uses various digital computational methods to explore the material. These projects lead the way to make figurines a more accessible material through 3D models and 3D prints, which enable researchers and the general public to engage with the material physically since very few people can handle the original.

In conclusion, the literature explores an array of different topics, including figurines as ritual objects or cult images, possible representations of a goddess, deliberate

fragmentation, figurines' decoration, the variety in the depiction of sex and gender and present and past body conceptions. However, there is still a scarcity of analysis based on the contexts where figurines have been retrieved and the different interpretations of their uses in those contexts. Similarly, although a number of explanations have been put forward to explain the varieties of sex categories: e.g. asexual figurines as children or dual-sex as third genders, this has not been explored more deeply in the literature. Other aspects of gender such as posture, gesture and decoration or the vague means of representing sex as signs of age remain largely unexplored. Therefore, this thesis will address those topics which have been neglected or not fully developed in the literature.

CHAPTER III. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF FIGURINES. STRUCTURED AND RITUAL DEPOSITS

3.1. Introduction

An essential aspect of the study of figurines is their archaeological context, yet it has often been neglected and overlooked in the interpretations of figurines from Neolithic Greece, with few exceptions. For instance, Gallis' (1985) excavations at Platia Magoula Zarkou led him to interpret a house model with figurines as a foundation offering considering its findspot. Other authors like Ucko (1968) neglected the importance of context as he considered that most figurines in Crete were found in habitational refuse and had lost their original contexts of use. Mina (2005) classified and analysed statistically the figurines according to the contexts where they were found depending on the type of site and place within it. She identified three categories of contexts within the sites: habitational or domestic, funerary, and ritual. This division is problematic as she understands figurines found in houses, courtyards, and activity areas as 'domestic', their presence in fills or pits as discards, and in caves also as habitational. However, figurines used in rituals may appear in all such contexts. She concluded that most figurines were found in 'domestic' areas accompanying their Neolithic owners in their daily activities, a statement that prevents the understanding of figurines' uses and meanings. Figurines have often been treated as works of art or without consideration of the other archaeological artefacts and structures associated with them. The most recent post-processual approach has even called for the abandonment of a search for explanation and meanings of figurines as pieces of the past, to focus instead on the figurines' materiality in the present, disarticulated from prehistory (Bailey 2017). However, the importance of studying a figurine's context is manifold. Context allows us to understand figurine changes through time and space as they had different meanings depending on the communities that created and used them. By looking into the figurine's context, we may begin to understand the purpose of why those figurines were created, their possible uses on everyday or special

occasions and social practices of the communities. Context may also inform us if figurines were intentionally deposited and about ritual practices such as deliberate fragmentation or structured deposition. An excellent example of a contextual approach is Tzonou-Herbst's (2002) analysis of 4593 Mycenaean figurines and their find-contexts. Figurines appeared in tombs, households, administrative and storage spaces, and household refuse. However, larger figures were found in rooms with platforms interpreted as possibly ritual (Tzonou-Herbst 2002: 229). Lesure (2011) also compares figurines cross-contextually but analysing spatially and temporally distant case studies: Gravettian Palaeolithic, Pre-Pottery Neolithic Near Eastern and Formative Mesoamerica figurines. He tried to find theoretical avenues to interpret the sharing of female themes in figurines across different contexts.

This chapter aims to analyse the information available on the contexts where figurines have been found, the objects and features associated with them at the micro-scale level of each site to understand the social practices in which they are embedded, and the role figurines had in them. No such work has yet been carried out for figurines of Neolithic Thessaly or Crete. For this analysis, I use the currently published information concerning all Neolithic sites with figurines selected in this study. The types of contexts in which figurines are found vary from deposits in houses, structures or buildings, burials, pits, and enclosures.

Figurines have been considered ritual objects: for instance, Renfrew (1985) interpreted the existence of a shrine at LBA Phylakopi by looking at a cluster of features (including the presence of figurines and figures), which point to ritualised space (see Chapter 2). However, the consideration of figurines as ritual objects tends to be couched as a circular argument by authors such as Gimbutas (1974; 1982; 1989a) where the presence of a figurine or figurines is used for the interpretation of the context and the artefact as ritual, while figurines are understood as objects of cult or representing the divinity.

The definition of ritual in archaeology is controversial. For the contextual analysis in this chapter, my definition of ritual is based on Bradley (2003: 5-12) as a kind of practice, a performance that is defined by its own conventions and is not necessarily connected with religious beliefs and separated from daily life activities. This

conception also places the focus on the practice of ritualisation where ritual is seen as a form of action rather than a specialised kind of communication: 'ritualization is both a way of acting which reveals some of the dominant concerns of society, and a process by which certain parts of life are selected and provided with an added emphasis' (Bradley 2003: 12). Particular aspects of social life were ritualised, which provided them with an added meaning and the formal deposition of the artefacts used imbued them with a greater significance (Bradley 2003). To assess whether figurines were used in ritual practices, in this chapter, I will apply a contextual approach to the figurines' findspots, their associations with other objects and the spatial patterning of their deposition together with the concept of structured deposition (see section 3.3). Inventory numbers are given when known and mentioned in the publications. However, many figurines found were not given an inventory number in the reports. Therefore, not all the contextual information concerning figurines' findspot is associated with the specific figurines found at that place.

3.2. The formation of deposits in the archaeological record

A contextual approach to the interpretation of the archaeological record needs to address the process of its formation. A contextual approach aims to identify the factors, actions or activities that led to material deposition. Schiffer (1987) understood the formation of the archaeological record as affected by cultural and natural processes that reflected human behavioural laws. However, archaeological deposits are formed following cultural rules rather than natural laws (Moore 1981), arbitrary and conventional rules open to being manipulated and reinterpreted over time (Thomas 1999: 62).

This chapter will analyse deposits previously identified as refuse or discards. For my contextual approach, it is important to assess if the deposited materials were discards or refuse or were instead specially deposited for some other reason. Some objects found in the archaeological record may have been lost or abandoned. The main difference stems from the intentionality of their depositions. An artefact that was lost

is unintentional, while an object that has been abandoned was intentionally left behind. Rubbish or refuse is another intentional deposition. Our modern conception of rubbish is unwanted material that is discarded (Hughes 2014: 15). However, anthropological analyses of refuse (e.g., Moore 1981; 1982) have shown that certain acts of deposition of rubbish may have symbolic meaning and patterning, even if unintentional. Archaeologists understand rubbish as the end life of an object discarded once it has no more utility. An example of deposition of discarded materials is a midden, large areas rich in materials with evidence of episodic dumping of refuse (Needham and Spence 1997: 79). Even if they are discards or rubbish, the depositions may be patterned and have different meanings depending on the spaces where they are placed. For instance, Moore (1982) mentions how ash, animal dung and chaff are deposited in separated locations since each has a separate place in the conceptual symbolic scheme of the Marakwet, which is expressed unconsciously in the acts of deposition. Therefore, the depositional practices depend on the cultural classification of materials and substances. For instance, the disposal of animal bones may relate to the classification of animals regarding their habitat (Bulmer 1976) or their domestic or wild status (Tambiah 1969), their relationship with humans or other characteristics. The spatial patterning of discards or other intentional depositions may give us insights into the meanings of the refuse and the structuring principles in place in a society. However, not all intentional or meaningful depositions exhibit patterning.

3.3. Structured deposition

One way theorists have approached the intentional nature of seemingly mundane deposits is through 'structured deposition' (Hughes 2014: 14). 'Structured deposition' is a term that Colin Richards and Julian Thomas (1984) proposed to designate a form of prehistoric ritual behaviour. Their archaeological approach to ritual aimed to examine symbolism and structure as embodied in material culture and its deposition (Richards and Thomas 1984: 190). Ritual activities, to be identified as such, need to show a highly formalised, repetitive behaviour, with depositional patterns highly structured

(Richards and Thomas 1984: 191). They also argued that the objects deposited in a ritual context should be of a symbolic nature and, at times, exclusively used in ritual activities. Archaeologically, ritual behaviour may be identified in specific forms of deposition, which involve particular rules that appear in the contexts and associations of the various objects deposited. With these theoretical premises, Richards and Thomas (1984) aimed to investigate ritual activity in Late Neolithic henge monuments from Wessex, especially at Durrington Walls, by examining the deposition of material culture, which appeared to be domestic rubbish. The analysis of the spatial patterning in the distribution of artefacts between the north and south henges and their deposition into the various features of the henges showed a differentiation, a clear spatial patterning involving formal deposition. Also, they concluded that particular forms of deposition in pits and ditches from Neolithic henges were too formal to be utilitarian and part of ritual practices rather than domestic usage (Richards and Thomas 1984: 214). Thus, they argued that certain deposits are the result of deliberate deposition rather than natural post-depositional processes and involve ritual practices of feasting to reinforce social relations and obligations and social cohesion within the group. They finally concluded that structured deposition could be one archaeologically visible aspect of ritual behaviour. Domestic activity can reveal a high degree of structure since principles of purity and taboo may have been relevant.

Later, Thomas (1991; 1999) expanded the analysis of structured deposition to other henges, pits and ditches from Neolithic Britain. He pointed out that not all the deposition of materials at excavated henges was determined by a formulaic and inclusive structure of rules. However, each site has spatial patterns of deposition with particular objects and types of material that were kept separate or are restricted to certain areas (Thomas 1999: 81). He interpreted the distributions of archaeological material inside henges as the result of ritualised activities. Furthermore, he challenged the interpretations of Neolithic pits as utilitarian storage spaces. Thomas argued that Neolithic pits, in contrast with Iron Age pits, are small and shallow, unsealed and unsuitable for grain storage. Furthermore, other evidence suggests that they are special deposits. Other evidence suggests that pits are special deposits: e.g., the evidence of burning in pits is not *in situ,* the presence of deliberately broken materials,

and numerous animal bones and whole ceramic vessels suggest feasting and consumption events (Thomas 1999: 64-74).

Other authors applied the concept of structured deposition to different periods than the Neolithic. For instance, Hill (1995) for Iron Age Wessex or Brück (1999) for Late Bronze Age Britain. Structured deposition has also been used to explain depositions in pits in geographical areas outside Britain. For instance, Chapman (2000a) used the concept to analyse depositional patterns in pits across sites from the Balkan Neolithic and Copper Age. Chapman (2000a) examined pits under houses and in the open air, which included deposits of human bones, burnt deposits and unusual combinations of rare and quotidian objects placed in a structured manner. Chapman (2000a: 61-62) considered that the contents of pits are not filled with discarded rubbish but rather are the foci of structured deposition, including everyday and exotic materials used in social practices. He questioned the idea of Archaeology as the science of rubbish and the general interpretations of archaeological remains as rubbish as utterly misleading because the conception of rubbish applied to the past is a modern construct (Chapman 2000a: 62). The principle is that object disposal links living people and their material culture with the ancestors, especially on tell sites. Chapman considers that pit-filling involves the 'death' of many objects through their deposition at a particular stage of their life-cycle. Pits are linked with the realm of the ancestors since they require the removal of the previous cultural layer and then the deposition of a new one (Chapman 2000a: 64). Chapman (2000a: 65) also rejected the traditional interpretation of large pits in the Neolithic as pit-dwellings. He considered that deposition in pits involved a deliberate accumulation of a variety of materials with rare associations and implying the structuring of such associations in an unusual manner. Structured deposits in open-air pits present particular contents and, at times, a large number of finds with contexts that may evidence deliberate burning. The special finds in these pits may include deliberate placement of animal bones, anthropomorphic and animal figurines, the combination of natural and cultural objects in an unburnt or burnt state, and a mixture of other objects such as bone tools, antlers, pendants, perforated shells, or whole pots. Widespread practices that Chapman (2000a: 70-71) identified in Neolithic and Copper Age pits from the Balkans are the deliberate smashing of the pots and deposition of

selected sherds in the pit and the incorporation of burnt material or the *in-situ* firing of the fill. Chapman (2000a: 76-81) reinforced his interpretation presenting a variety of over 40 examples of structured deposits in different types of pits using a wide range of materials. He also reflected on the difficulties of identifying structured deposits in old excavations.

Mark Pearce (2008) also applied the concept of structured deposition to the interpretation of pits in EN (late 6th-early 5th millennium *cal. BC*) settlements in the Po Valley of northern Italy, particularly the sites around Vhò (Piadena, Cremona). Traditionally, these pits have been interpreted as pit-dwellings, although the analysis of the deposition of findings suggests otherwise. The finds from the pits at Campo Ceresole included a two-headed female figurine, faunal remains, pottery, polished stone axes and 'lithic' rings, *Dentalium* and *Glycimeris* shells used as beads or ornaments, and flint material (Pearce 2008: 24). Pearce (2008: 24-25) suggests that the fillings of the pits at Vhò are not simple domestic discards; for instance, figurines, polished stone tools, fossil-shell beads and ornaments have a symbolic meaning even if they are broken. Two pits discussed in more detail, Pits XXXII and XVIII, evidence separate deposition episodes. Pit XXXII contained remains of 45 pots, six different marine fossils and wild and domesticated animal bones; while Pit XVIII had a fill of flint tools, 400 potsherds, fragmented greenstone and sandstone tools, a high number of bones, two pieces of clay figurines and one polished pebble (Pearce 2008: 25). According to Pearce (2008: 27-28), the deposition in these pits does not reflect simple everyday refuse but rather structured deposition and ritual behaviour that included feasting, offerings and deliberate fragmentation of the objects (Chapman 2000b).

Garrow (2012) explored the changes in the concept of structured deposition since its conception. He criticised Richards and Thomas' homogeneous interpretations (1984), such as considering that not all deposits were contemporary or the differences in depositions between different features at Durrington Walls. He also maintained that Richards and Thomas pushed the interpretations of patterning to support their theories. He challenged whether the spatial patterns were always the result of intentionally ritualised depositions (Garrow 2012: 61) and suggested a shift in the focus from ritual to 'everyday' practices to understand quotidian depositional practices

further. However, Garrow's idea that everyday practices are also commonly expressed in patterned deposits with no meaning does not contradict that such deposits may still have symbolic or other meanings.

Searching for an interpretation of the Neolithic pit structures excavated in the Criş Culture (6000–5700 *cal*. BC) site of Măgura (Buduiasca, Romania), so far considered as 'pit-dwellings', Bailey (2018) reassessed the historiographical evidence argued by diverse scholars that led to that functional interpretation. Bailey then reviews alternative interpretations to the pits that focus on deposition acts in these structures, particularly structured deposition. Finally, Bailey (2018: 29-30) focuses on an aspect that has been devoted little attention: 'the creation of the physical context in which the deposit takes place,' i.e., the digging of the pit, posthole, or enclosure ditch. He considers that the cutting of the ground had its own set of references, meanings, and engagements for Neolithic people, independent from the acts of deposition (Bailey 2018: 30). Following Gamble (1999: 399), he proposes that the digging of pits should be viewed as an 'action of attachment: digging a hole into the ground as an act of attaching-to' (Bailey 2018: 35).

Therefore, structured deposition considers depositional patterns, formalised deposits, the presence of symbolically meaningful objects and other factors as a way to interpret special deposits possibly used in rituals. Practices such as deliberate fragmentation, the presence of burnt material and firing in the pits are also common in some of the contexts of pits and structured deposits from Neolithic Greece (Harrell and Driessen 2015; Tomkins 2007a). Yet, the idea of structured deposition has barely penetrated analyses of Greek Neolithic ritual. For instance, the interpretation of pits as dwellings is still dominant for the Greek Neolithic. Souvatzi (2008: 166-172) accepts this interpretation of pit-dwellings proposed by their excavators at the Macedonian sites of Stavroupolis (Grammenos and Kotsos 2002, 2004), Thermi (Grammenos *et al.* 1990, 1992; Pappa *et al.* 2002, 2003) and Makriyalos I and II (Pappa and Besios 1999); and for the Thessalian sites of Achilleion (Winn and Shimabuku 1989) and Mandra (Toufexis 2001-2004a). At the same time, Souvatzi (2008: 196, 220) introduces the concept of structured deposition to interpret a structure from FN Palioskala with evidence of burning and Pit 24 from LN Makriyalos II, which suggests 'formalised large-scale

ceremonies'. In his paper *Communality and Competition: the social life of food containers at Aceramic and Early Neolithic Knossos, Crete* (2007a), Tomkins also introduces the concept of structured deposition of ceramic vessels and other artefacts. He further considers other practices such as deliberate fragmentation of figurines and vessels in the deposition in MN pits at Knossos. Isaakidou and Halstead (2013) have reviewed the evidence for structured deposits containing animal bones from the Neolithic to the Iron Age in the Aegean. They argue that grand ceremonies of social or religious significance may be recognised in intentional depositions separated in time and space, the selection of animals, the selective deposition and display of the carcass and processing methods (Isaakidou and Halstead 2013: 88). The concept has also been used in studies of Bronze Age Greece, for instance, to explain the deposition in pits of fragmented objects from LBA Malia (Driessen, Farnoux and Langohr 2008); or the Temple Repositories and other deposits in cists and pits at the Minoan Palace of Knossos (Hatzaki 2009; 2011). Therefore, specific Neolithic contexts in Greece may be defined as structured deposition. This chapter will analyse the contexts with structured deposits and other ritual behaviours, particularly those containing figurines.

3.4. Contextual interpretation of the case studies

3.4.1. Crete

3.4.1.1. Knossos

Context plays a major role in figurine interpretation. Part of the problem stems from poorly defined or unclear contexts. Therefore, I have decided to focus on the contextual data from J. Evans' excavations (1964). Earlier excavations by Sir Arthur Evans (1921) divided the strata mainly into Neolithic and Sub-Neolithic phases (the latter now known as FN/EM transition). A. Evans notes only some of the figurines found in his excavation diaries. However, information is scarce regarding the figurines' findspots and other associated objects. For this reason, the core of the interpretation

will be based on the figurines with better-known findspot contexts, and comparisons will be drawn with the figurines from earlier excavations only as a complementary material for this chapter. The sample includes 113 figurines found at Knossos (Table 3.1). The chronology and strata in which figurines were retrieved from the 1950s excavations directed by J. D. Evans (1964) are shown in Table 3.2, mostly found in LN I-II periods.

Excavator	N. of Figurines
A. Evans	63
J. D. Evans	37
Doubtful parts of figurines J.D. Evans	13
Total	**113**

Table 3.1. Figurines from Knossos and their excavators.

Strata	Chronology	N. of Figurines	Doubtful
Stratum X	Aceramic/IN	0	0
Stratum IX	EN	1	0
Stratum VIII	EN	4	0
Stratum VII	MN	1	0
Stratum VI	MN	1	0
Stratum V	LN I	9	2
Stratum IV	LN II	23	6
Stratum III	LN II/ FN	2	1
Stratum II	FN	6	2
Stratum I	FN	2	2
Sounding X (unknown stratum)	Neolithic	1	0

Table 3.2. Chronology and strata of the figurines from J.D. Evans' excavations at Knossos.

J.D. Evans (1964: 60, 238) stated that most figurines from Neolithic Knossos were found in the habitation debris outside the houses. He reported that all houses were found almost empty of finds and their contents were thrown outside the houses. Following J.D. Evans, Ucko (1968: 435) argued that the figurines were found in levels of domestic refuse, discarded in the periodical cleaning of the interior of the houses once they were no longer in use, outdated or broken. This interpretation could explain the little importance that most scholars have given to the context of Neolithic Cretan figurines, the associations between them and with other archaeological materials. Evans and Ucko probably considered that the figurines' original context had already been lost as they were mere discards. However, Evans's interpretation of these layers as discarded habitation debris was re-evaluated by Efstratiou *et al.* (2013: 6) as black

layers rich in finds on top of habitation floors. To interpret figurines as discards outside houses or intentional deposits, we need to consider specific factors of the contextual data from Knossos:

1. The identification of houses in Neolithic Knossos. There is a difficulty identifying 'houses' or structures in the different strata due to the types of architecture employed to build the walls. Stratum X (IN) lacked traces of permanent structures (Evans 1964: 142). In Stratum IX (EN), remains of post-holes and wall foundations made of fired mudbricks and stones have been identified as House E. 'House D' in Stratum VIII (MN) had only two remaining parallel walls of mudbrick and packed mud (Evans 1964: 148). The technique used from Stratum VII onwards was the construction of walls of packed mud (*pisé*) set on a foundation of unworked stones and lumps of kouskouras (very soft limestone) (Evans 1964: 150). The material used for the walls was clay, and the houses and other structures no longer contained any bricks, fired or unfired (Evans 1964: 150). This fact makes it challenging to identify walls that had collapsed or were levelled, as they only leave traces in deposits of light clay colour. Furthermore, most figurines have been found in strata V and IV (LN I-II), where no houses have been identified, only remains of very badly preserved flimsy walls that could be part of structures. From this data, it would seem possible to affirm that figurines are not associated with houses. However, we cannot completely exclude that none were in fact associated with houses, both because of the lack of preserved walls and houses and the small extension of the excavated area.

2. The figurines were possibly not recovered from secondary habitation deposits; certain factors suggest intentionality in their deposition. For instance, Pit A, where two marble figurines were found, does not seem to be a simple rubbish pit (see interpretation below). Also, specific strata (especially Str.V-IV) (Tables 3.3-3.4) show multiple depositional events with groups of figurines together with other materials, including miniature vases and animal figurines, all within a restricted area.

3. Arthur Evans' (1928, II) excavations at Knossos found at least the remains of three or four figurines inside LN/FN houses (see below). It suggests that the depositional pattern was perhaps not the same throughout the Neolithic, opening the possibility that figurines could be found inside houses in the future.

4. Tomkins (2007b) has identified new houses from J.D. Evans' excavations that were not recognised before. However, the assemblages possibly found in those houses have not yet been published.

Even if most figurines were not found inside houses, their deposition might still be intentional and patterned. Symbolically obsolete objects may be reused, discarded, or specially deposited in rituals (Schiffer 1987: 48). It may be useful to consider the possibility of structured deposition to understand if the deposition of figurines was more than mere discards. At Knossos, some depositional patterns are distinguishable. The oldest figurine found at Knossos (60/250, Fig. 3.1), was found in Stratum IX (EN), in context AC.24a, the same area and level as other materials (Table 3.5), including a small lump of malachite and azurite. J. Evans (1964: 146, 238) considered malachite and azurite minerals in the deposit as possible pigments, rather than evidence of ores intended for copper production. However, these minerals have not been analysed for use striations and their interpretation as pigments remains speculative. Structured deposits tend to be formed by objects of symbolic meaning and the presence here of these exotic minerals may, therefore, be an indicator of a special intentional deposit. The colour variety of the deposit which includes green minerals (greenstone, malachite), blue (azurite) and white (marble) may have had symbolic meaning and indicate a ritual context. For instance, malachite and azurite appear in Neolithic burials of women and infants at Çatalhöyük (Çamurcuoğlu 2015: 149). Figurines and polished stone axes may be considered both utilitarian objects and highly symbolic artefacts (Pearce 2008: 25).

The successive Stratum VIII (EN) yielded two figurines (60/253, 60/251; Figs. 3.2-3.3) found in context AC.22 (Table 3.5). More exceptional are the figurines deposited in a closed structure, Pit A (59/153, L2623; Fig. 3.4a-b). According to Evans (1964: 149-150), Pit A belongs to a later deposit after the destruction of the EN 'House D' and earlier than MN 'House C' (Fig. 3.5). Pit A, cut into Stratum VIII from the overlying stratum, probably dates to the beginning of the MN and contained in its filling of ash and soil (context C27) the two marble figurines (Table 3.5). Together with the figurines, a restorable bowl of brown burnished ware was found with two perforated ears at each end (Fig. 3.6). Next to it was found Pit B, containing another whole bowl and a large

number of animal bones (Evans 1964: 150) (Fig. 3.6). The overlying deposits of Pit A and B (contexts C25a and C26) contained successive hearths and ashes together with four vessels, including a miniature pot (Fig. 3.7). According to Tomkins (2007a: 189), one more vessel was reconstructed during the re-study of the material. A noteworthy characteristic of these vessels mentioned by Evans (1964: 150) is their missing base. This may indicate a consistent, deliberate act of fragmentation which is also plausible for the two figurines from Pit A. Both figurines have their heads and one of their legs missing. The fragmentation of the ceramic vessels rendered them useless, and it may represent a deliberate act of killing the objects before deposition (Tomkins 2007a: 190). Both deposits in Pits A and B likely represent structured deposits, considering the inclusion of highly symbolic objects together with evidence for the practice of feasting and ritual consumption indicated by the presence of whole and fragmented bowls and the animal bones associated with them, deliberate fragmentation and *in-situ* firing (Chapman 2000a). Furthermore, complete or restorable vessels are considered a strong indicator of primary deposition (e.g., Schiffer 1989: 38, 42; Nelson 1985: 319). Whole vessels are also a good indicator of structured deposits. Pits A-B are situated next to the later MN 'House D', but it is unclear if the space is outside the house.

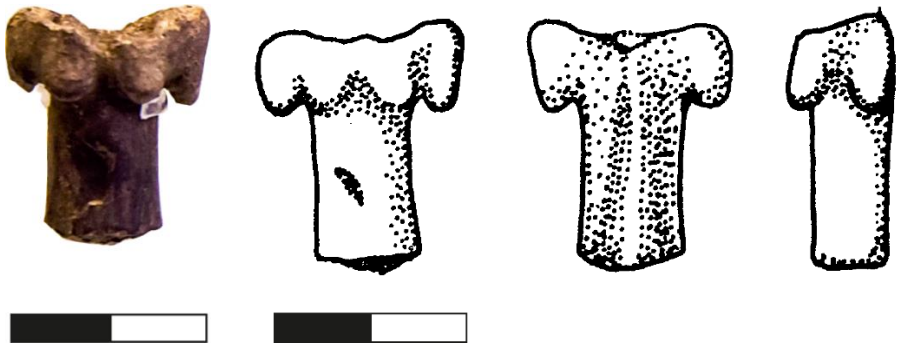

Figure 3.1. Clay Female figurine 60/250 from EN Str.IX, Knossos (Photograph https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurines,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144520.jpg; 27/05/2020; Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.4)

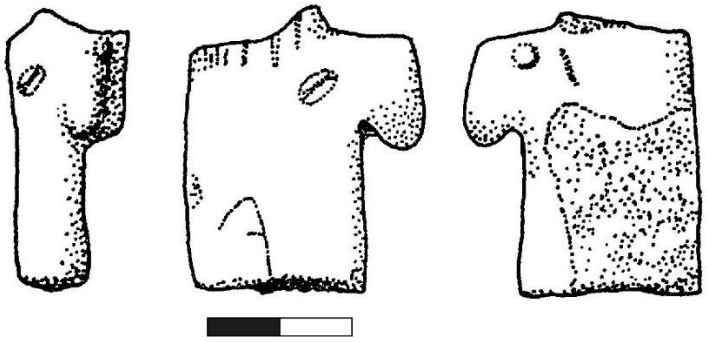

Figure 3.2. Fragment of head 60/253 from EN AC.22, Str.VIII, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.1)

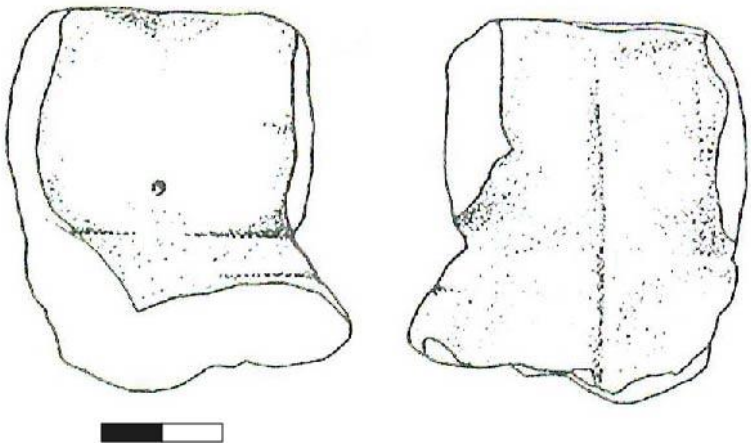

Figure 3.3. Marble figurine 60/251 from AC.22, Str.VIII, EN Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.3)



Figure 3.4a. Marble Male figurine L2623 (https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_male_figurine_from_Knossos.jpg; 12/02/2021). b. Marble Asexual figurine 59/153 front and back sides (after Evans 1964: pl.66,4).

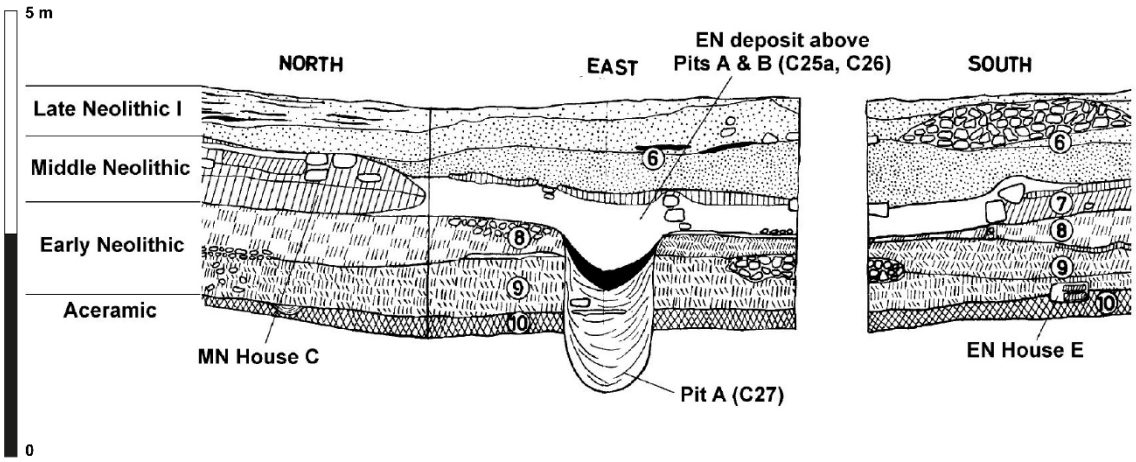

Figure 3.5. Stratigraphy of Pit A and overlying deposits C25a and C26, in area AC from Knossos (after Tomkins 2007a: fig.12.4)

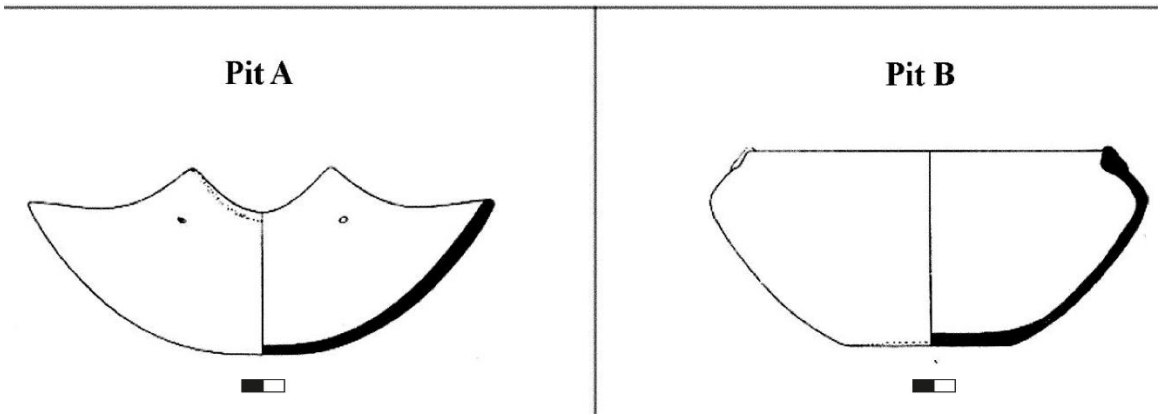

Figure 3.6. Whole bowls from Pits A and B, (C27) cut in Str.VIII (after Tomkins 2007a: fig.12.5)

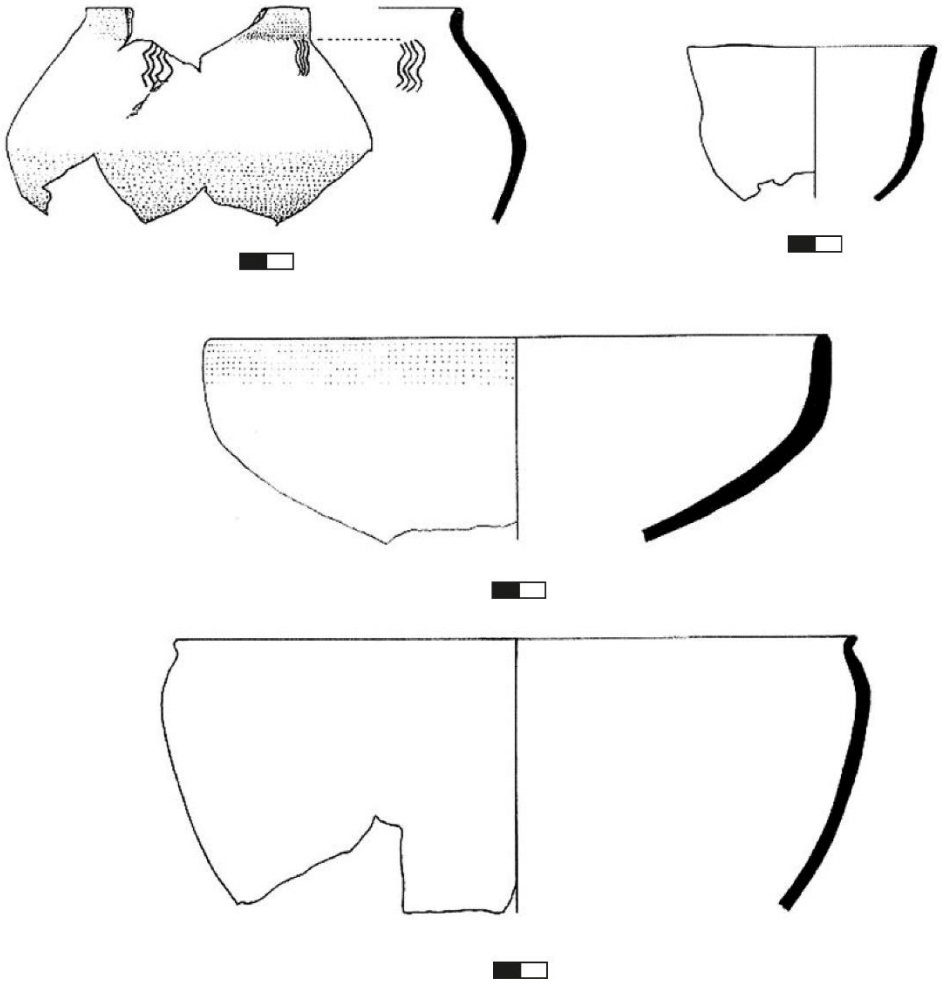

Figure 3.7. Vessels with the base missing from the deposits overlying Pits A and B (C25a and C26, cut in Str.VIII) (after Tomkins 2007a: fig.12.5)

The later MN deposits from J. Evans' excavations only yielded figurine 60/252 (Fig. 3.8) in context A20 (Str.VII, MN) with a fossil shell and two bowls (Table 3.5). Noteworthy is the association of figurines with bowls in MN contexts, at times smashed *in situ* or with the base missing which may suggest that figurines were associated with feasting and drinking rituals. Another example comes from context C23 in Str.VII (LN I), where a fragment of a figurine's torso (59/138, Fig. 3.9) was found, in the same area as a complete bowl and a shallow cup or dish together with a high number of other materials (Table 3.5). I would argue that this association is not random as it appears in all MN and early LN I contexts with figurines mentioned previously, perhaps indicating a patterned deposition of figurines with complete and broken bowls, possibly as a result of ritualised fragmentation events that implied activities of drinking and consumption. Therefore, these deposits cannot be interpreted as the result of mere discards. For instance, Skeates (1991b: 19-20) notes that the deliberate breaking of vessels is sometimes associated with conspicuous feasting in ethnographic accounts.

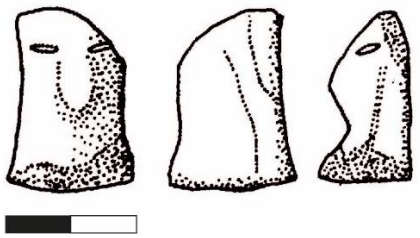

Figure 3.8. Clay head fragment 60/252 from A20, Str.VII, MN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.2)

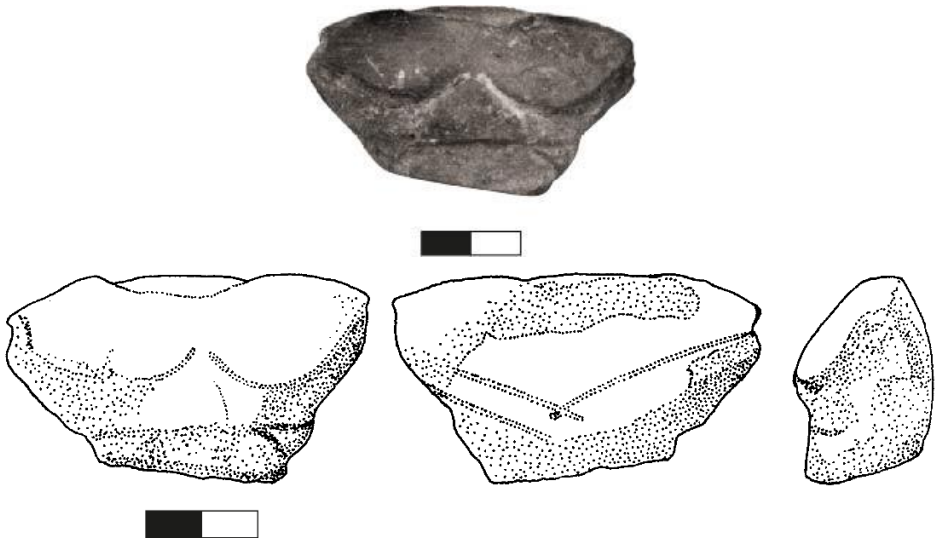

Figure 3.9. Clay figurine 59/138 from C23, Str.VI, LN I Knossos (Photograph after Evans 1964: pl.67, 1; drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.20)

The figurines found in Stratum V (LN I) were deposited in groups in a restricted area in the eastern part of Square A and under the Baulk between Squares A and C (Evans 1964: 238) (Table 3.3). The nine figurines unearthed include two dubious fragments of figurines. Therefore, the depositions of groups of figurines in Stratum V are patterned in a significant way. Furthermore, the figurines are now rarely found with bowls or other vessels as in the MN period, except for miniature pots, and appear together with other artefacts (Table 3.5). In A14b, figurine 59/170 (Fig. 3.10) had no objects associated. Two whole figurines and a possible marble fragment of a leg (L3273, 60/183, 60/174, Figs. 3.11-3.12) were found in context A15a. In the same level and area, a high number of materials were also found, particularly stone tools (Evans 1964: 162) (Table 3.5). In context AC7, another two figurines were found together with a chisel (O431, 60/196, Figs. 3.13-3.14). Another figurine was found in A15c (60/191, Fig. 3.15) with fragments of stone tools. The overlying deposit (A15e) yielded a set of 16 ox knucklebones in 8 matching pairs. Evans (1964: 164) suggests that they could have been used in a game. In Antiquity, knucklebones were used as gaming pieces (similar to dice) and as ritual objects in the practice of divination (*astragalomanteia*) (Amandry 1984: 377; Grossi-Mazzorin and Minniti 2013: 372). However, the use of knucklebones in the Neolithic is unknown, although both gaming and ritual uses may be considered.

Finally, the marble figurine L3271 (Fig. 3.16) was found with stone tools in context A16. The deposition of figurines in Str.V was associated mainly with polished and chipped stone tools: maces, axes, chisels, obsidian and chert tools. This change perhaps suggests a change in the meaning of figurines, their use and symbolism in the structured deposits of LN I, since the archaeological materials found in their proximity differ from those found in EN and MN. These deposits show recurrent ritual events occurring in successive times at the same place. The figurines show stages of development in women's bodies from childhood to adulthood identified by the different sex (Asexual, Probably Female and Female) and other characteristics such as breast development, decoration (clothing, ornamentation) and size (see Chapter 7.3.1). This perhaps corresponds to transitions or coming-of-age rituals performed every few years, similar to those described by Joyce (2000) in ancient Mesoamerica or Lesure (2011) in Valdivia figurines.

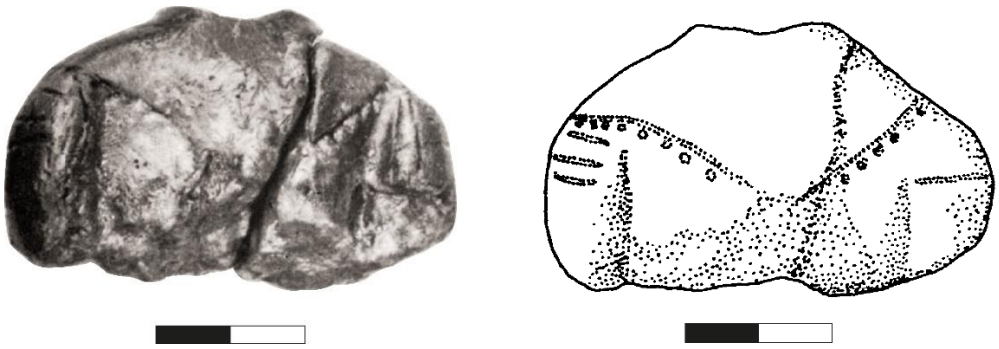

Figure 3.10. Clay figurine 59/170, from A14b, Str.V, LN I Knossos (Photograph after Evans 1964: pl.67,3; Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.13).

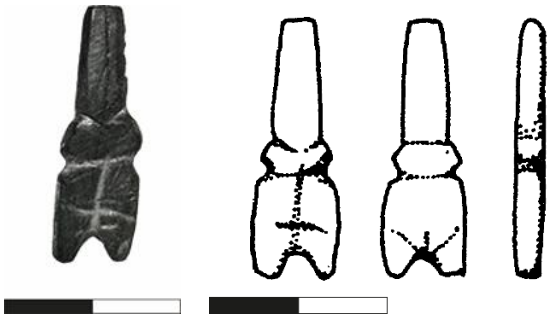

Figure 3.11. Slate Female figurine L3273 with elongated neck-head. The photograph shows the back side, drawings show back, front and side (Photograph after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.7; drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.12)

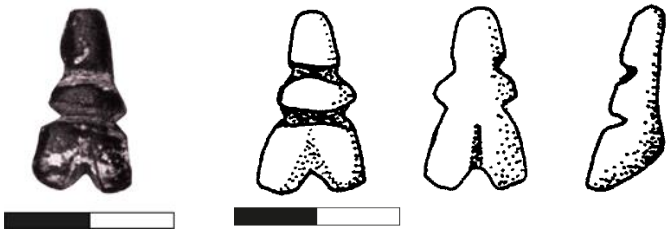

Figure 3.12. Front and side of steatite Asexual figurine 60/183 (Photograph after Evans 1964: pl.66,5; Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig. 11)

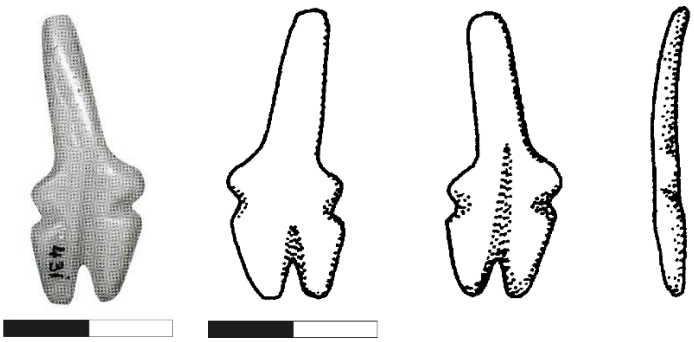

Figure 3.13. Shell Asexual figurine O431 from AC7, Str.V, LN I Knossos (Photograph after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.6; Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.10).

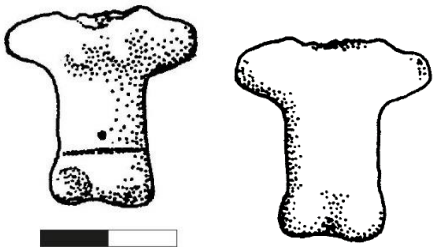

Figure 3.14. Front and back of clay Female figurine 60/196, AC7 Str.V, LN I Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.7).

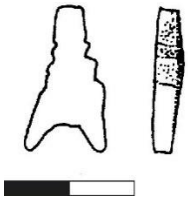

Figure 3.15. Steatite Asexual figurine 60/191 (after Ucko 1968: fig.9)



Figure 3.16. Marble Female figurine L3271, A16 Str.V, LN I Knossos (Photograph after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.8).

Contexts	N. of Figurines	Doubtful
A.14a, Str.V	1	1
A.14b, Str.V	1	0
A.15a, Str.V	3	1
AC7 (Baulk), Str.V	2	0
A15c (Baulk) Str.V	1	0
A16 (baulk) Str.V	1	0
Total	**9**	**2**

Table 3.3. Contexts with figurines from Stratum V at Knossos.

Contexts	N. of Figurines	Doubtful
A9, Str.IV	5	2
A9b, Str.IV	2	1
A11, Str.IV	5	2
A12, Str.IV	2	1
A13, Str.IV	1	0
A14, Str.IV	7	0
C16, Str. IV	1	0
Total	**23**	**6**

Table 3.4. Contexts with figurines from Stratum IV at Knossos.

Context	Chr.	Objects
AC24a (Str. IX)	EN	Female figurine 60/250, domed terracotta object, fragment of stone axe, marble bead, lump of malachite and azurite.
AC 22 (Str. VIII)	EN	2 figurine fragments of clay and marble 60/253, 60/251, and a terracotta stud.
C27 Pit A (Str. VIII)	MN	2 marble figurines 59/153, L2623, fragments of pottery and a bowl.
A20 (Str. VII)	MN	Fragment of figurine head 60/252, a shallow bowl in black burnished ware and a handled burnished bowl with a decoration of plastic cordons, and a fragment of fossil shell.
C23 (Str. VI)	LN I	Fragment of figurine torso 59/138 with incised, painted and impressed decoration, bowl (restored), shallow cup with one handle and similar incised and impressed decoration as the figurine, black stone mace-head, a bone needle, 204 bone points, eight bone chisels and a pierced pottery disk.
A14a (Str. V)	LN I	Doubtful fragment of a figurine 59/150
A14b (Str. V)	LN I	Fragment of decorated figurine torso 59/170
A15a (Str. V)	LN I	2 whole figurines and 1 doubtful fragment L3273, 60/183, 60/174, a terracotta stud, a clay conical object, fragment of a green/grey stone axe, a stone bead of dark-blue black stone, a schist pot-lid, 188 obsidian chips and 9 chert stone tools (one lunate microlith).
AC7 (Str. V)	LN I	2 figurines one with head missing O431, 60/196 and a tiny chisel of green stone
A15c (Str. V)	LN I	Small figurine 60/191, fragment of grey/green stone mace-head cracked through heating, polished stone axe of blue/grey stone and a marble chisel.
A16 (Str. V)	LN I	Figurine L3271 except head, fragment of small black stone chisel, green stone-axe

Table 3.5. Contexts from Neolithic Knossos with figurines and other artefacts (Str.IX-V)

Context	Chr.	Objects
A9 (Str. IV)	LN II	5 figurines (2 doubtful) 59/44, 59/45, 59/46, 59/77, 59/155, 2 fragments of animal figurines, a terracotta shuttle decorated with incised lines and impressed holes, a curved clay object, pottery object decorated with grooves, 3 stone axes two of green stone (one of them cracked by fire action) and another polished of blackish stone, a grey stone hammer, a small stone tool, a lump of chalk material with bone, a spherical lump of limestone, a bone needle, a bone chisel, a spindle whorl, two pierced pottery disks
A9b (Str. IV)	LN II	2 figurines (1 doubtful) 59/83, 59/84, an animal figurine, a fragment of spindle whorl, a clay object with fingerprints and nail impressions and a stone mace-head
A11 (Str. IV)	LN II	5 figurines (2 doubtful) 59/102, 59/111, 59/115, 59/116, 59/121, a clay bead, and a clay conical object
A 12 (Str. IV)	LN II	2 figurines (1 doubtful) 59/119, 59/122
A13 (Str. IV)	LN II	1 figurine 59/129
A14 (Str. IV)	LN II	7 anthropomorphic figurines (5 have only remains of the base) 59/134, 59/135, 59/136, 59/142, 59/143 59/144, 59/169, 2 animal figurines, a miniature pot fragment with a small handle, a decorated bowl in black burnished ware with base missing, a grey-blue stone axe
C16 (Str. IV)	LN II	1 bone figurine 59/40, 2 curved clay objects (tokens?), a perforated stone disk, a flat polished pebble of oval shape, a stone disk, 16 chipped obsidian tools, a lunate microlith of chert, two chips of chert and two of rock crystal
B16 (Str. III)	LN II/ FN	Fragment of doubtful figurine 59/100
XY2a 8 (Str. III)	LN II/ FN	Fragment of half figurine 60/222 and alabaster bead

Table 3.6. Contexts from Neolithic Knossos with figurines and other artefacts (Str.IV-III)

Context	Chr.	Objects
C9a (Str. II)	FN	Head fragment of figurine 58/56, fragment of stone mace-head and a stone axe
4F. Ext (Str. II)	FN	Fragment of figurine 60/232
B7 (Str. II)	FN	Figurine fragment 57/133, part of a miniature bowl, a black stone mace-head, a green stone bead
A3 (Str. II)	FN	Doubtful fragment of figurine, spoon
A4 (Str. II)	FN	Doubtful fragment of figurine, clay object, decorated red clay, conical object, stone axe, stone bead
C8 (Str. II)	FN	1 figurine 59/9 in coarse clay decorated with impressed holes, fragment of white stone mace-head
C2 (Str. I)	FN	1 doubtful fragment of figurine 57/139, fossil shell
A1 (Str. I)	FN	1 doubtful figurine cut from a broken pot 57/111, two stone beads one white and one grey and a stone axe

Table 3.7. Contexts from Neolithic Knossos with figurines and other artefacts (Str.II-I)

Another similar concentration of figurines in a restricted area was found in Stratum IV, where 16 clay figurines were found in Square A, although from several different levels (Evans 1964: 238). One of the groups, found in level A9, included five anthropomorphic clay figurines (with two dubious fragments of figurines) (59/44, 59/45, 59/46, 59/77, 59/155; Figs. 3.17-3.19) together with animal figurines, other clay objects, stone tools, a lump of a chalky material with pieces of bone embedded and shaped to fit the hands (possibly a pigment), bone implements, a clay spindle whorl and two pierced pottery disks (Evans 1964: 235) (Table 3.6). Similarly, in the overlying deposit of level A9b two figurines (including one dubious fragment) (59/83, 59/84, Fig. 3.20), an animal figurine, other clay objects and a polished stone tool were found (Table 3.6). In context A11, another five figurines (including two doubtful fragments) (59/102, 59/111,59/115, 59/116, 59/121, Figs. 3.21-3.23) were found, with a clay bead and a jar lid. Context A12 yielded two figurines (including a doubtful fragment) (59/119, 59/122, Fig. 3.24), found

with no associated materials. Another figurine was found in context A13 (59/129, Fig. 3.25). In context A14, another group of seven figurines was found (59/134, 59/135, 59/136, 59/142, 59/143 59/144, 59/169; Figs. 3.26-3.32) along with two animal figurines, a miniature pot, a bowl with the base missing and a stone axe. Most figurines in A14 are of miniature size and fragmented except for figure 59/143. Five figurines consist of only part of the base and waist of the body, which suggests either a selection of these parts of the body for deposition or an intentional breakage pattern. Furthermore, these five figurines are in a similar sitting position, with the legs scarcely suggested and drawn-up at the front. Together with the broken bowl with missing base, the miniature pot and the polished stone tool, this context is probably a ritual deposit with deliberate fragmentation involving the bowl and the figurines. The last figurine found in Stratum IV was unearthed in context C16 (59/49, Fig. 3.33) and is a rare piece made of rib-bone found with clay objects (tokens?) and chipped stone tools (Table 3.6). The contexts of Stratum IV, especially those in Square A, suggest structured deposition given the variety of objects in different materials, some unfinished, some cracked by fire or deliberately fragmented, with a patterned spatial arrangement in the same area over successive layers, perhaps suggesting that they were originally placed in a pit or a series of pits. Like Str.V, these deposits may relate to rites of passage as suggested by anthropological evidence of similar contexts with deposits of figurines, stone tools and spindle whorls (see Chapter 7.3.1).

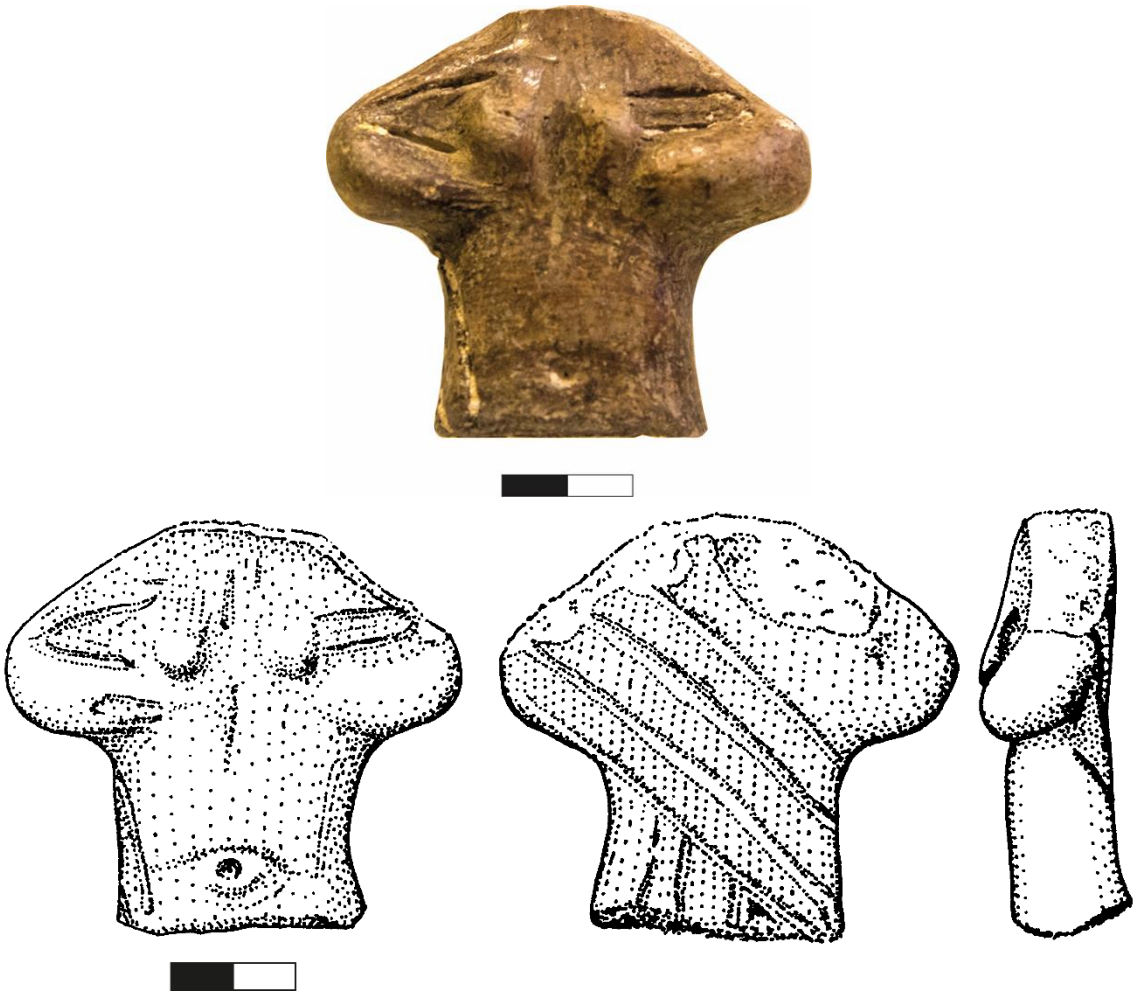

Figure 3.17. Clay Female figurine 59/44, A9, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (Photograph https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Female_figurine_schematically,_Knossos,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144519.jpg; 27/05/2020) (Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.34).

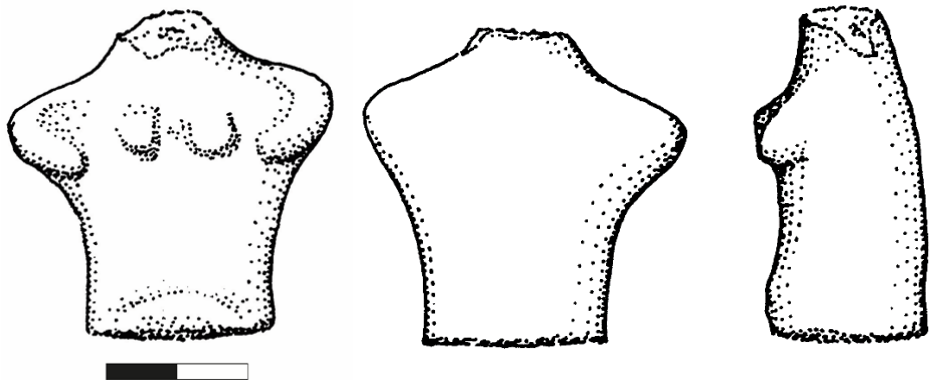

Figure 3.18. Clay Female figurine 59/45, A9, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.33).



Figure 3.19. Clay Female figurine 59/77 front, back and side, A9, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (Photograph https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurines,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144520.jpg) (Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.31).

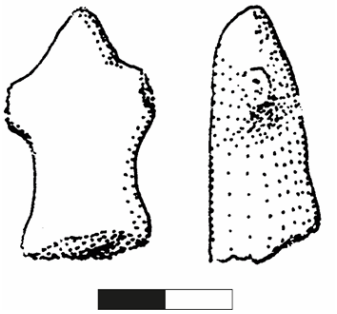

Figure 3.20. Clay Asexual figurine 59/84, front and side, A9b, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.30)

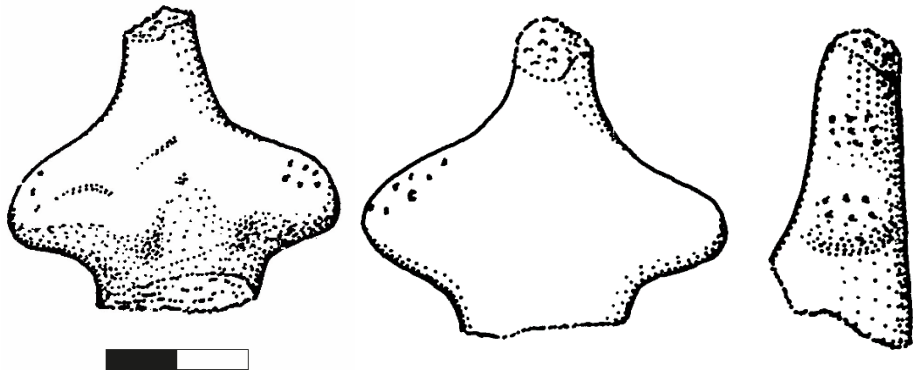

Figure 3.21. Clay Female figurine 59/102 front, back and side (after Ucko 1968: fig.29).

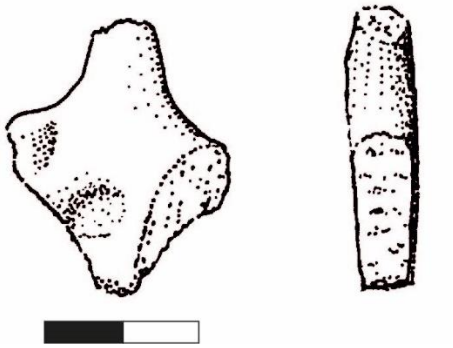

Figure 3.22. Front and side of clay figurine fragment 59/111, A11, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.28).



Figure 3.23. Front, back and side of clay Asexual figurine 59/121, A11, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.27).

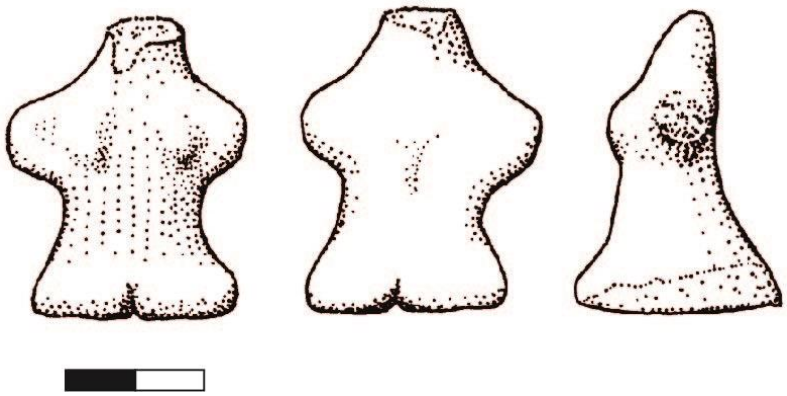

Figure 3.24. Front, back and side of clay Female figurine 59/122 (after Ucko 1968: fig.26)

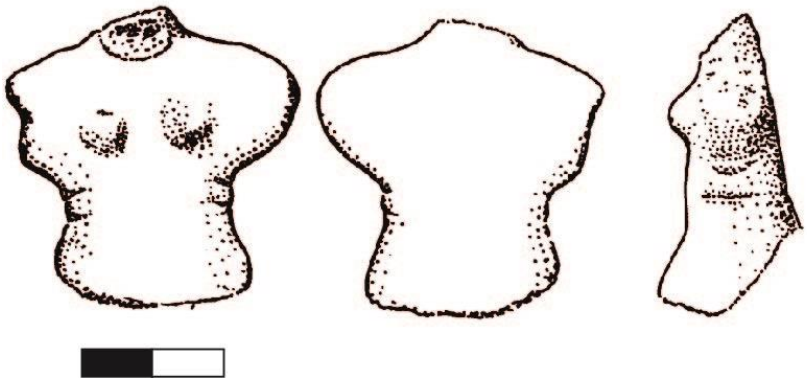

Figure 3.25. Front, back and side of clay Female figurine 59/129 (after Ucko 1968: fig.25)

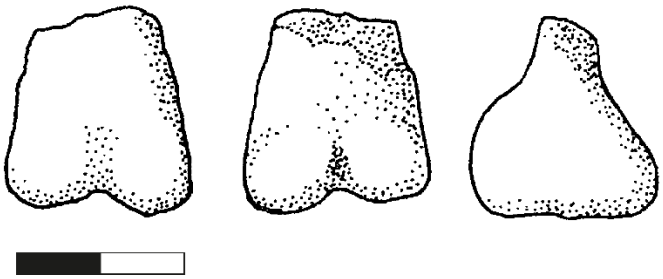

Figure 3.26. Front, back and side of figurine 59/134 (after Ucko 1968: fig.23)

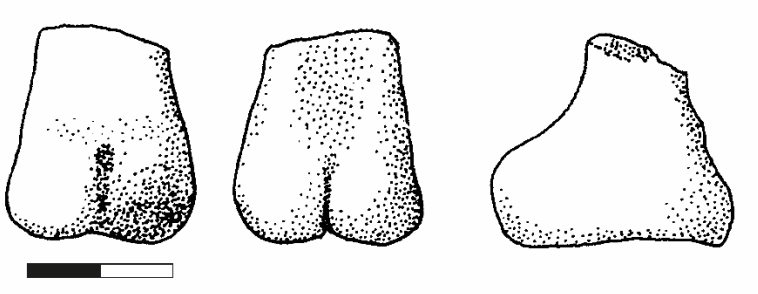

Figure 3.27. Front, back and side of Probably Female figurine 59/135 (after Ucko 1968: fig.22)

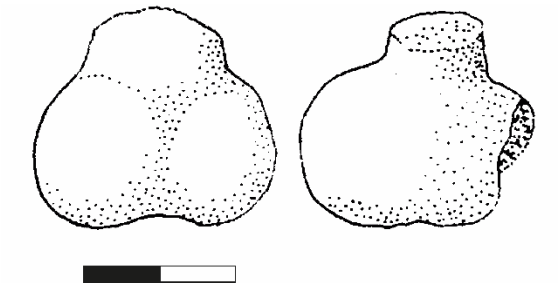

Figure 3.28. Front and side of Probably Female figurine 59/136 (after Ucko 1968: fig.21)

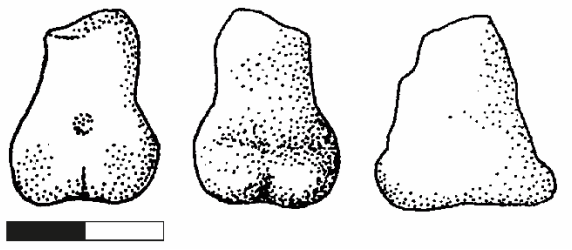

Figure 3.29. Front, back and side of figurine 59/142 (after Ucko 1968: fig.19)

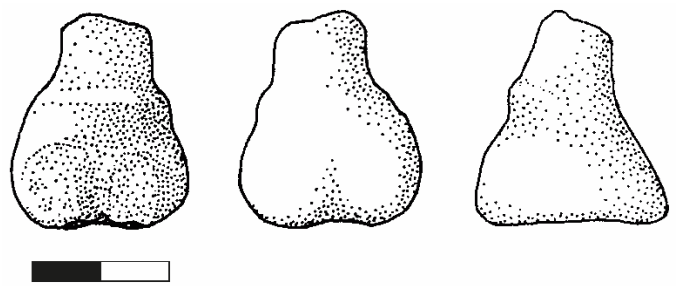

Figure 3.30. Front, back and side of figurine 59/144 (after Ucko 1968: fig.17)

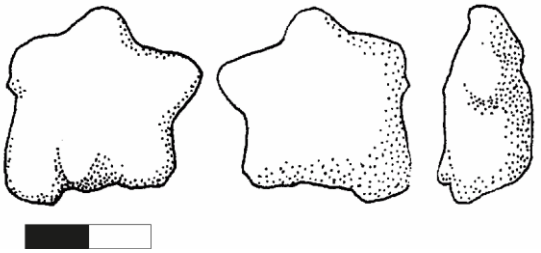

Figure 3.31. Front, back and side of figurine 59/143 (after Ucko 1968: fig.18)

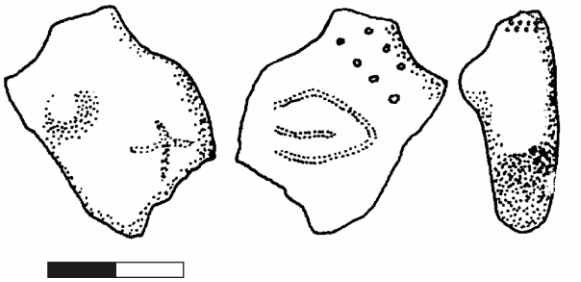

Figure 3.32. Front, back and side of figurine 59/169 (after Ucko 1968: fig.14)

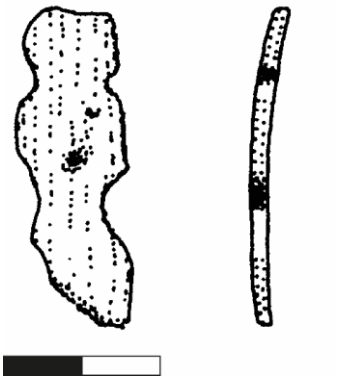

Figure 3.33. Rib-bone figurine 59/40 from C16, Str.IV, LN II Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.35).

No further groupings of figurines appear in the later strata from J.D. Evans' excavations at Knossos (1964), and the number of figurines decreases dramatically after Str.IV. In Stratum III (LN II/FN), a figurine cut in half (60/222, Fig. 3.34) and a bead were found (Table 3.6) in the small sounding in context XY.2a. In Stratum II (FN), four figurines were found, each in a different context: C9a, F.Ext III, C8 and B7 (58/56, 60/232, 59/9, 57/133; Figs. 3.35-3.37, 6.7) (Table 3.7). The objects found in the same areas and levels were polished stone tools, a miniature bowl and a stone bead. A fragment of an animal figurine, possibly a bull, was found in the nearby context C8a. Another two figurines found in Stratum II are very dubious (57/95, 57/110); they are said to be part of the foot of figurines (Evans 1964) but, given the lack of representation of feet in figurines from Knossos and the ambiguity of these representations, it is more probable that these fragments were parts of a clay object or a vase. In Stratum I (FN), the two figurines found are rather dubious (57/139, 57/111; Fig. 3.38); associated with them were a fossil shell, two stone beads and a stone axe (Table 3.7).

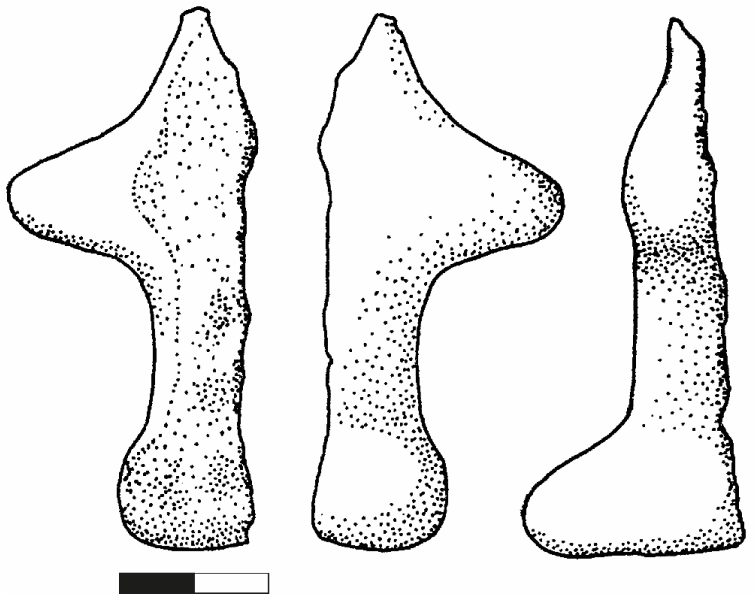

Figure 3.34. Clay figurine 60/222 from XY.2a, Str.III, FN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.6)

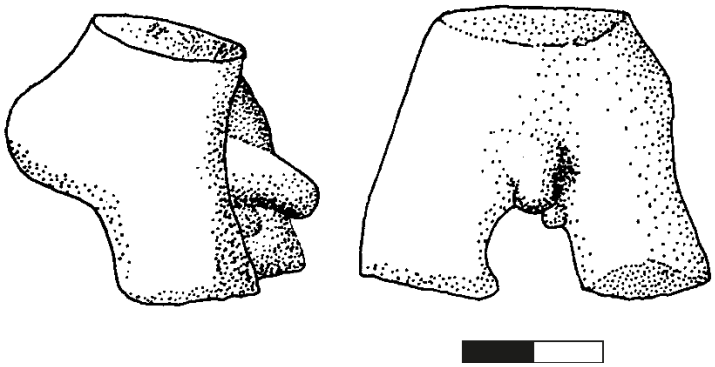

Figure 3.35. Side and front of Male figurine 60/232, Str.II, FN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.5)

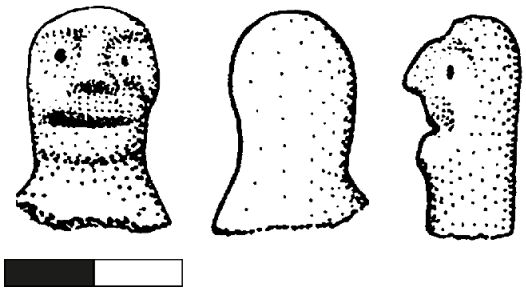

Figure 3.36. Clay head fragment 58/56 from C9a, Str.II, FN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.32)

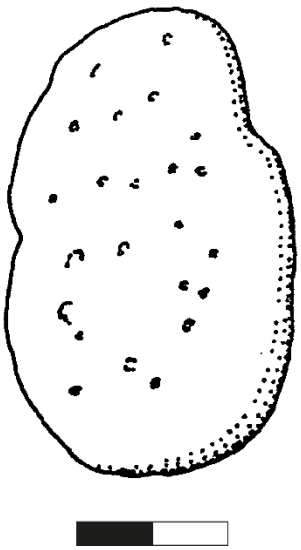

Figure 3.37. Figurine 59/9 with a featureless body, FN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.36)

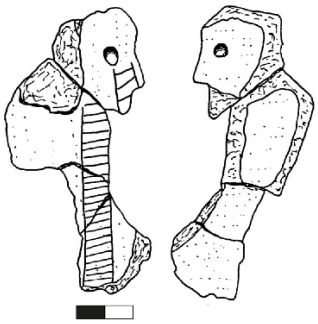

Figure 3.38. Fragments belonging to a dubious figurine 57/111 cut from a broken pot, FN Knossos (after Evans 1964: fig.60,4)

Therefore, after the MN (Str.V-IV), figurines are associated with stone tools and a range of other materials such as weaving equipment as in context A9, including spindle whorls, bone tools and clay shuttles. It is noteworthy that anthropomorphic figurines are also associated with animal figurines in contexts A9, A9b and A14, and even a miniature pot and a bowl in A14. Except for a fragment found in Stratum I (FN) which represents the head of a snake, all the animal figurines depict domestic animals. The animal figurines represent mainly bovines, including bulls and cattle. A dog might also be represented, but only part of the head remains (59/154, Evans 1964: fig. 60,17). The use of animal figurines in contexts A9, A9b and A14 suggests their importance a ritual context, perhaps including feasting or the offering of these animal figurines in substitution to their consumption. Animal figurines may reflect the importance of the animals for the household economy, perhaps intending to protect them with sympathetic magic (Talalay 1993: 46-48).

Similarly, in Thessaly most representations are domesticated species, cattle being the most numerous, followed by goats/sheeps, pigs and dogs (Toufexis 2003: 264). These relative numbers in Thessaly and Knossos, in Crete, contrast with the evidence of bones for the regions which suggest that sheep and goats were more numerous, especially on the Aegean Islands, followed by cattle, pigs and, less frequently, dogs that were also eaten (Trantalidou 1996: 100). This data perhaps suggests that cattle were more appreciated animals given the difficulties of raising these animals due to the environmental character of the Greek regions. Animal images appear for the first time at Knossos in LN I (Stratum V) and especially in LN II (Stratum IV), while only one

example is present in each of the successive strata (III, II, I). In the FN period strata (III, II, I), figurines are mostly found with polished stone tools, stone beads and, on one occasion, with a miniature bowl, but no longer with chipped stone tools or other artefacts.

In the previous excavations by Sir Arthur Evans (1928, II), four figurines were found inside houses. The finding of two LN/FN houses under the area of the Central Court is exceptional. House B contained a series of large vessels in the floor levels of 'Stratum a' and, near the hearth, a large pot containing a primary child burial together with a serpentine stone-axe, with abundant remains of animal bones and shells in the same area (Evans 1928, II: 10). Not far from there, in the same house towards the East corner (area A16) in the floor deposit, was found a large hand possibly of a clay figure (unknown inv.no., Fig. 3.39), another large piece of the waist of a figurine according to Evans (1928, II: 12) and figurine 96 (Appendix 1; Fig. 6.8) missing the head and upper torso and covered with punctured holes. Also, in the lower levels of the same house, a black steatite miniature stone axe perforated for suspension, a dark pebble with holes filled with white paste and three pieces of iron ore were found in what seems to be a structured deposit. The deposit in House B displays ritual activities, including food preparation and consumption beyond the domestic/household level, perhaps as part of the burial rituals or another communal or ceremonial activity that also involved the use of figurines in the same area. Deposits suggesting feasting at Knossos tended to be outside the houses (pits and other deposits in MN), or inside (LN/FN house excavated by A. Evans) but in quantities beyond the household level, suggesting an emphasis on ritual activities beyond the individual and significant for collective solidarity rather than reflecting social asymmetries (Isaakidou and Halstead 2013: 94).

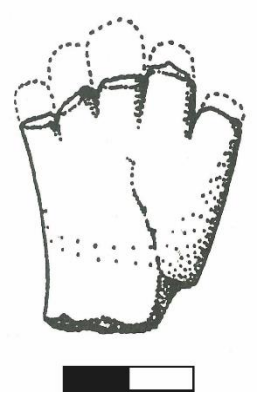

Figure 3.39. Fragment of clay hand, LN/FN House B, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.91)

The other structure, House A, was a complex building with several rooms (Fig. 3.40) in which a high number of artefacts were found, contradicting the suggestion by John Evans that all houses were cleaned before abandonment. In the entrance of Room 4 towards the North-West corner of House A, another fragmented clay figurine (unknown inv.no., Fig. 3.41) was found in the same deposit as a miniature clay bowl. In a different context, Evans also reports (1921: 37) the finding of figurine 2715 (Fig. 3.42) with small miniature cups, a small cylindrical vase, miniature shallow clay bowls, one of them had two holes for suspension, and *pectunculus* shells, an association that appears later in Minoan times in the 'Temple Repositories' at Knossos considered ritual contexts (Evans 1921: 517-519).

The construction in later Minoan times of the pavement of the Central Court caused the disturbance of the later Neolithic and EM levels, particularly the removal of stones from the LN walls of House A and B (Mackenzie 1924, I: 1). Ucko (1968) suggested that the disturbance caused by the levelling of the palace's ground surface may have caused the introduction of later Minoan materials into Neolithic levels. J. Evans (1964: 184-188) assigned the houses excavated by Sir Arthur Evans in 1923 to a stratigraphical position in a level corresponding to his Stratum I (FN in Tomkins' chronology).

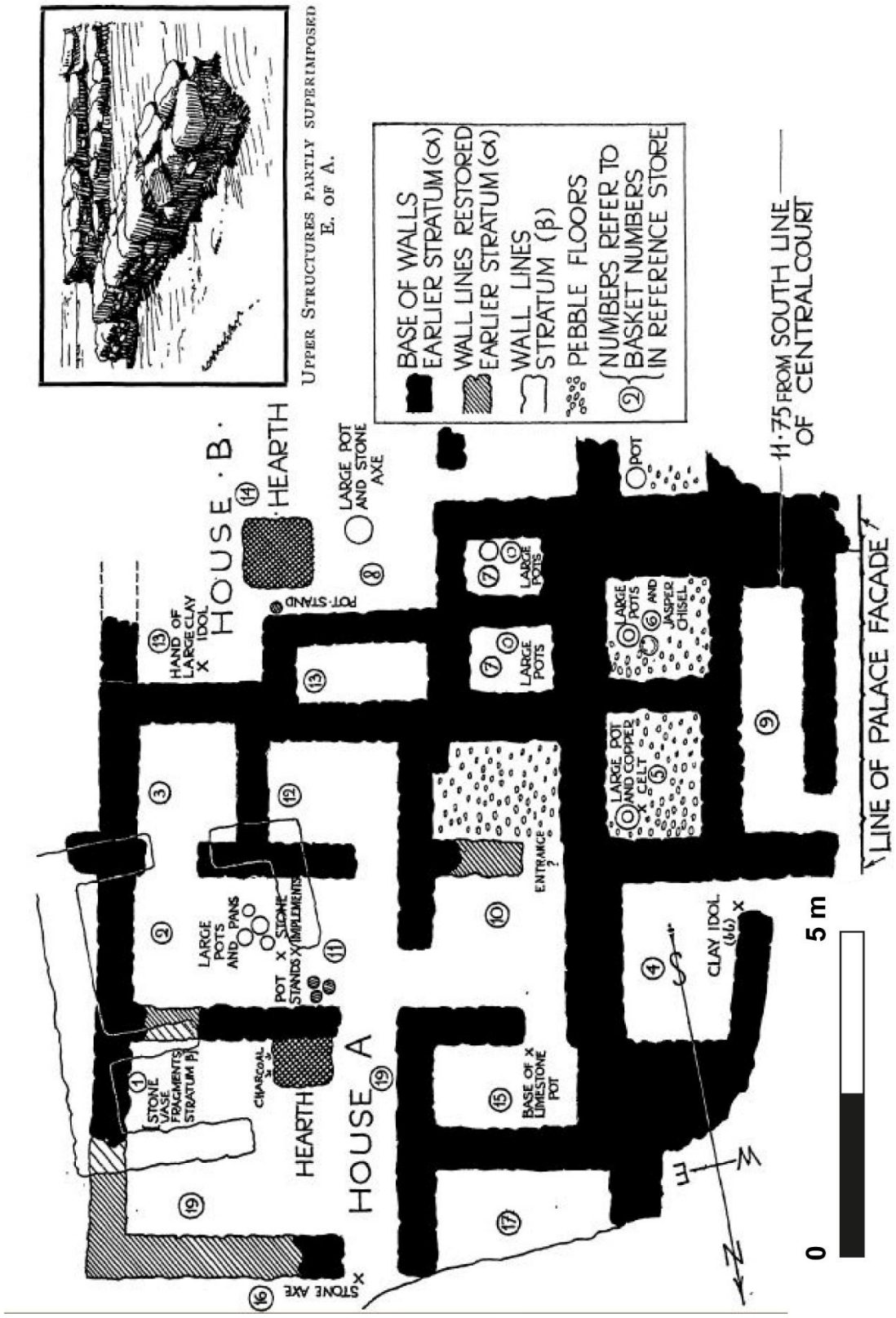

Figure 3.40. Plan of LN houses A and B excavated by Sir Arthur Evans under the Central Court of the Palace at Knossos (after Evans 1928, II: fig.8A)



Figure 3.41. Clay figurine, LN/FN House A, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.70)



Figure 3.42. Figurine 2715, Neolithic Knossos
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurine,_pottery,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144515.jpg; 27/05/2020).

3.4.1.2. Phaistos

The first excavations directed by Pernier (1935) at Neolithic Phaistos yielded two anthropomorphic figurines in a fragmentary state. The two Neolithic occupational phases belong to the FN, slightly later than Stratum I at Knossos (Vagnetti 1973: 118–128; Vagnetti and Belli 1978). Figurine 115 (Appendix 1; Fig. 3.43) was uncovered in a FN level in Room 28. Near the figurine in Room 28 were found several miniature vessels of which Mosso illustrates two examples (Mosso 1908: figs. 9A-B), one with two pierced holes perhaps for suspension, together with a small bowl, a piece of magnetic iron and a *pectunculus* shell (Mosso 1907: 376; 1908: 154-155), in what

suggests a structured deposit. Possibly, this figurine was deliberately fragmented in half as Mosso (1907: 377) states that signs of blows and knife cuts are visible in the broken area. Mosso suggested that the blows were intended to insert the head into the figurine's body when the clay was dry, resulting in an accidental breakage. Miniature vessels and special symbolic stones or minerals have also been found at Knossos in deposits associated with figurines (see Section 3.4.1.1). Iron ore has also been found at Knossos in a context with probable ritual function in the lower levels of the LN/FN House B. A deposit in a pit found in Phaistos Room 28 overlying the deposit containing the figurine has evidence of a burnt layer and under it pottery handles, sheep bones, *pectunculus* shells, bone tools, an elephant tooth, pottery including a whole vase, seven knucklebones from ox and four smaller from sheep (Mosso 1907). Todaro and Di Tonto (2008: 186-187) mention the finding of other materials in the lower levels of Room 28, such as vessels in black burnished and red encrusted ware, related to pouring/drinking activities, triton shells, and knucklebones (Mosso 1908: 149-150).

The other figurine found during the early excavations (Pernier 1935: fig. 48; Mosso 1907: fig.1, pl.1) is a human head that was part of a clay vessel. However, this piece was in a mixed stratum with Neolithic and MM material which included fragments of pottery (some of the Kamares style), sheep bones and *pectunculus* shells (Mosso 1907: 376). In Levi's excavations during 1956-7 (1958), two figurines were found. Figurine F1864 (Fig. 3.44) was found in the Central Court in the Neolithic stratum II, trench II, at *c*.1-1.50m depth. In this stratum, paved floors and small wall remains have been found. Three miniature vases and other vessels with ochre surfaces were found with the fragment of figurine. The stratum also yielded 39 spindle whorls, numerous pottery vessels, obsidian tools, bone points, and a copper fragment. Finally, figurine F6331 II/16 (Fig. 3.45) was found in the deepest stratum III, trench II, at *c*. 1.50-1.60m depth. This stratum had remains of a wall made of small stones and clay with traces of a floor made of beaten earth and three pits excavated into the bedrock. However, it is uncertain which objects were found in contextual association with the figurine. Vagnetti (1975: 20-21) mentions that in the same stratum were found numerous vessels, including miniaturistic vases, a loom weight, 18 spindle whorls, a green stone

axe, numerous obsidian stone tools, stone and bone pendants and a triton shell. The figurine is a schematic representation similar to a marble figurine found by Pernier (1935: 132, fig. 55) without stratigraphical context and attributed to the FN/EM transition.

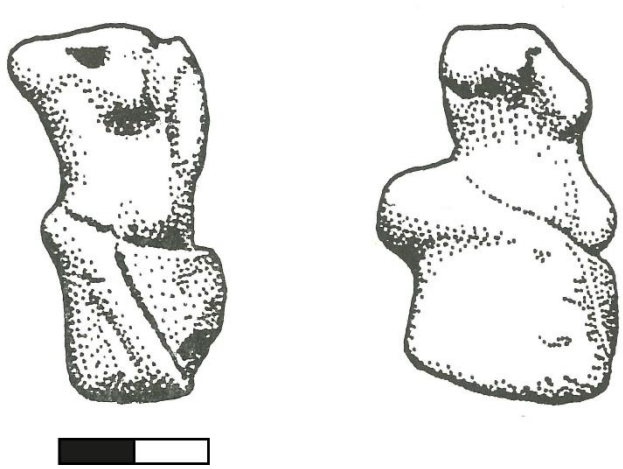

Figure 3.43. Female figurine, FN Room 28, Phaistos (unknown inv.no.) (after Ucko 1968: fig.101)



Figure 3.44. Clay figurine F1864, FN Phaistos (Photograph https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurine,_fragment_pottery,_4400%E2%80%933000_BC,_AMH,_144513.jpg; 27/05/2020) (Drawing after Vagnetti 1973: fig.78,24)

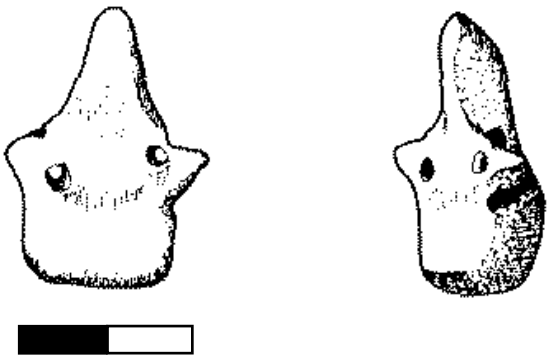

Figure 3.45. Marble figurine F6331, FN Phaistos (after Vagnetti 1973: fig.78,25)

3.4.1.3. Gerani Cave

The contextual information for the figurines found at Gerani cave is scarce, considering that the excavations have been published in two brief reports. All four figurines found at Gerani cave (L276, R1556, L19, L62/L722, Figs. 3.46-3.49) were unearthed from the levels excavated in the corridor area (Tzedakis 1970: 475). The corridor area showed 'displacement' of soil and relative stratigraphic disorder, while the rest of the space was undisturbed (Tzedakis 1970: 475). According to the excavator, the figurines come from a MN level where abundant pottery, stone and bone tools and obsidian blades were found. However, it is uncertain if the materials were found together, as the excavator does not provide this information. In the lowest level of the corridor, a bone deposit was found that Tzedakis (1970: 475) interprets as the raw material to produce bone tools. However, the inclusion of dwarf deer horns and crania suggests that all the deposit was not used for bone tool production (see below).

A recent typological study situates the figurines in the transition period from FN-EM (Gavrilaki 2017), while the context is disregarded in favour of the typological parallels with other Cycladic figurines. The excavation in a recess next to the corridor also yielded similar tools to those in the corridor but of LN phase. In the cave hall a series of small shallow hearths and polished stone tools were found in the MN phase. Tzedakis (1970: 475; 1996: 94) suggests that the entrance to the cave collapsed in the FN/EM period following a possible earthquake which may suddenly have terminated the use of the cave. He found the remains of three humans in the deepest level, perhaps trapped after the collapse of the entrance, although initially it was considered a burial. However, it is not known whether the human skeletons were articulated or disarticulated, so we cannot reassess whether they were earthquake victims or burials. The total absence of Minoan and later occupation levels also suggest that the cave was not inhabited after the Neolithic (Tzedakis 1996: 94), rendering the interpretation of the figurines as FN/EM transition or early EM unlikely unless new excavations find more recent remains in the future that suggest otherwise.

Gerani cave has been interpreted as documenting only periodic and seasonal use for specific purposes. A seasonal use may explain the scattered and thin layers of remains from the EN-LN. Other than the accumulation of bones, we do not know the economic

activity of the communities that used Gerani cave through time. The mixed farming mode of subsistence proposed for most Neolithic open-air sites seems to apply to caves in continental Greece (Halstead and Jones 1987: 144-145; Halstead 2008: 241-243; Halstead and Isaakidou 2013). Animals seem to have been used for their meat rather than dairy products (Halstead 2008: 241-244). Micromorphological analysis has only yielded evidence for the stabling of animals in the Neolithic Kouveleiki caves, although the analysis has raised criticism (Karkanas 2002). It is difficult to interpret the data at Gerani given the limited information published. The bone deposit with raw materials and tools may represent a workshop. However, bone tools could also be part of ritual depositions as we have seen at Knossos (section 3.4.1.1) and other sites (e.g., Dimini, section 3.4.2.5), especially those illustrated by Tzedakis (1970: fig. 416c-e) which include bone points with very sharp ends, and obsidian blades, suitable for use in body modification practices (scarification, tattooing, or shaving, see Chapter 6.4.4). The deposition of dwarf deer horns and crania further suggests an interpretation of a ritual deposit, as they were not part of a bone tool workshop. The recent isotope analysis of the bone collagen of two humans found in the LN levels of Gerani cave suggests that they had a diet rich in animal protein and insignificant marine protein (Richards and Hedges 2008: 224). The organic residue analysis of sherds from the site has found the presence of lipids, perhaps ruminant milk products (Craig 2008: 124). These results may suggest a specialisation at Gerani cave in animal husbandry, although it is rather speculative given the scarcity of data.

The deposit of figurines, bone tools, pottery, and stone tools may have had ritual purposes, but we cannot know with certainty with the available contextual information. Of significance, however, are the large number of unbroken obsidian blades that were a scarce and appreciated material from the islands of Melos and Yiali. By the end of the Neolithic, there was a disparity in the access to obsidian and its distribution was controlled by coastal communities (Tomkins 2012: 69). Also noteworthy are the complete or almost complete MN-FN vessels found in the cave (Godart and Tzedakis 1992: pl. XCVII-XCIX; CIII-IV). These forms otherwise appear in deposits at Knossos but are much more fragmented. The high number of complete vessels in the Neolithic deposits also suggests structured deposition. Most forms

represent bowls and a few closed-jar forms (Godart and Tzedakis 1992). As with the depositions of bowls and figurines in Knossos, the focus on whole deposited bowls suggests a special practice of consumption and deposition. Perhaps, like other Greek Neolithic caves such as Franchthi and Alepotrypa in the Peloponnese or Theopetra in Thessaly, Gerani was used seasonally for animal stabling or habitation and occasionally for ritual purposes.

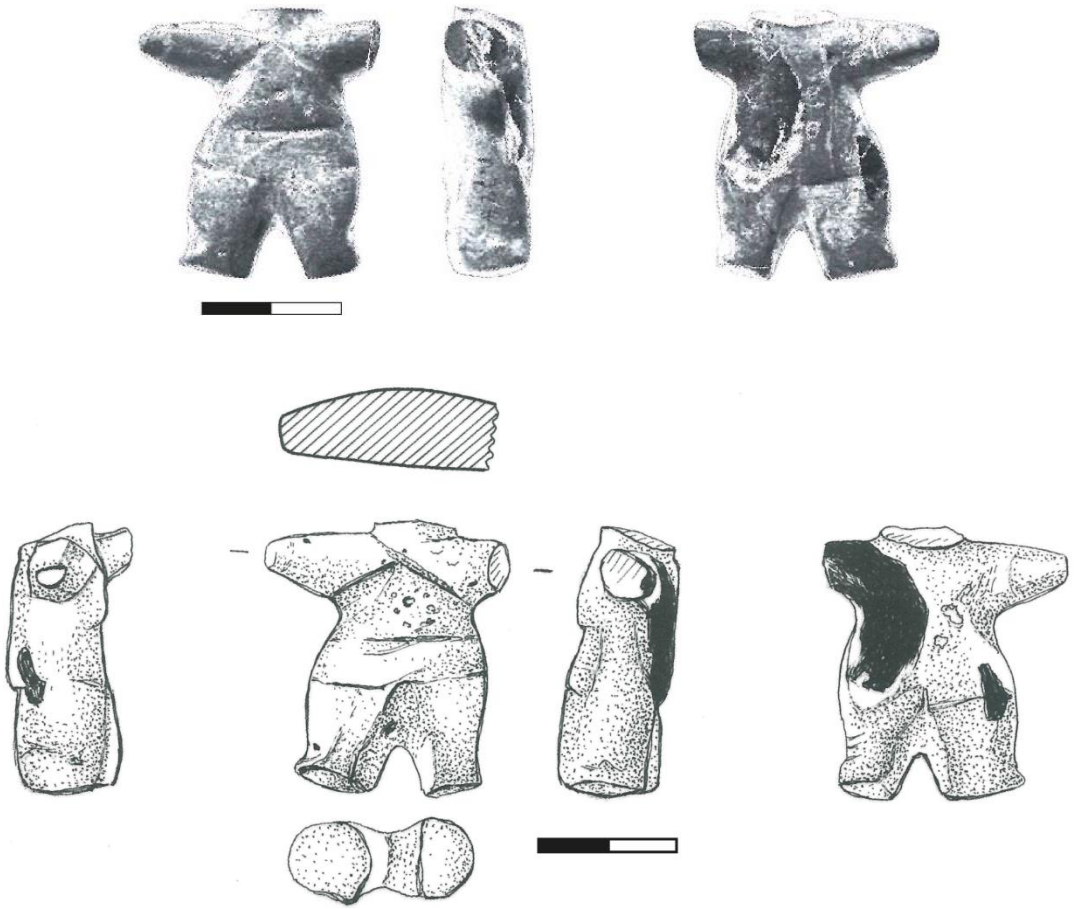

Figure 3.46. Stone Asexual figurine L276, Gerani cave (after Gavrilaki 2017: fig.7)



Figure 3.47. Clay Probably Male figurine R1556, Gerani cave (after Gavrilaki 2017: fig.9)

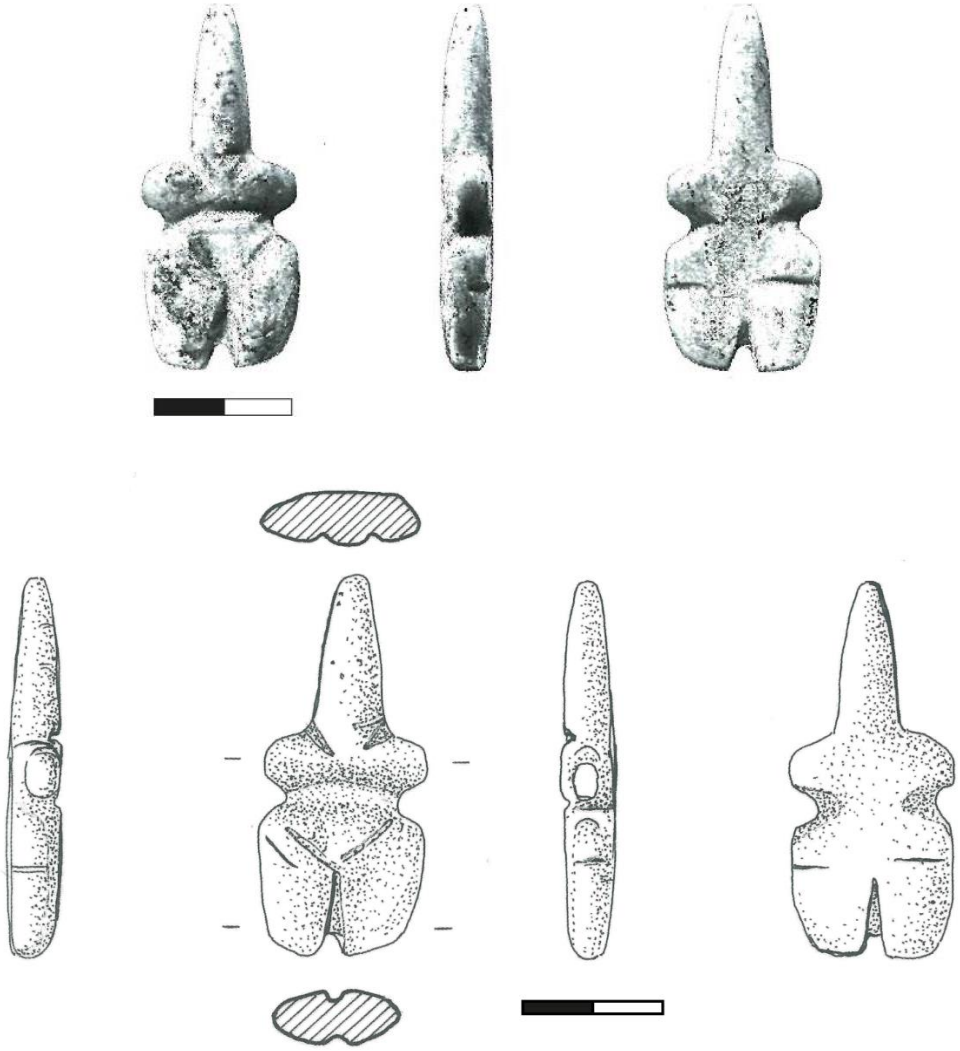

Figure 3.48. Stone figurine L19, Gerani cave (after Gavrilaki 2017: fig.6)

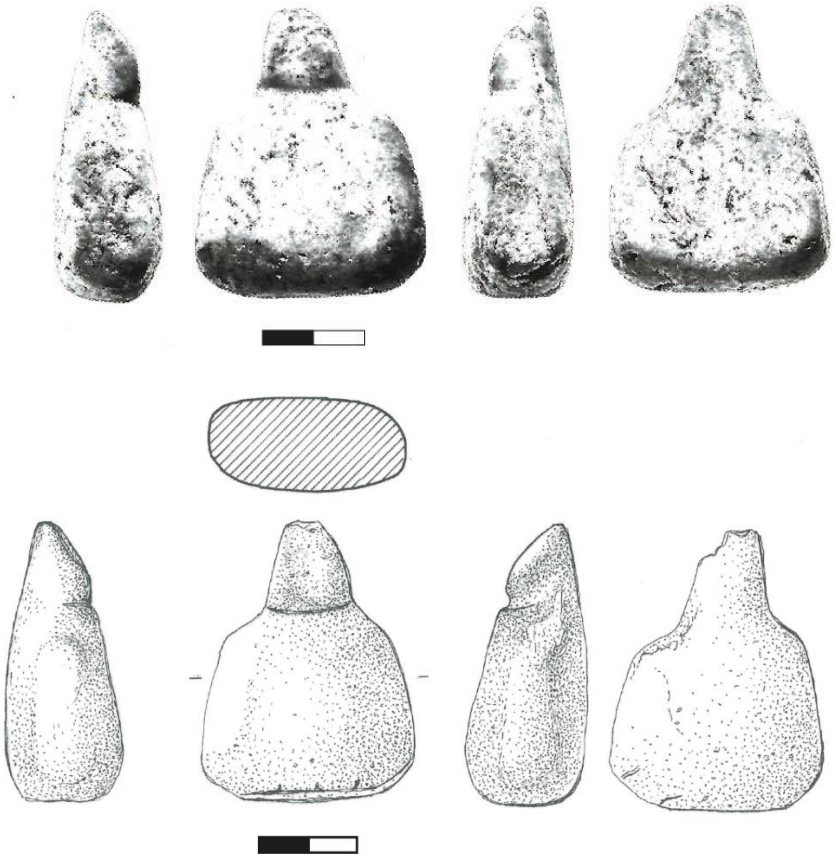

Figure 3.49. Pebble Asexual figurine L62/L722, Gerani cave (after Gavrilaki 2017: fig.8)

3.4.1.4. Spelaio Pelekiton

The excavation of the large cave of Spelaio Pelekiton (310m in length) was limited to some trenches in a small area of the first chamber of the cave (Fig. 3.50). The study of the pottery has shown a range from EN-FN, although the majority probably date to the LN (Bonga 2019: 10). The finds from the 1979 excavations include numerous bone tools of various types and sizes, most with sharp ends, a few spindle-whorls, bone 'needles', a possible bone hook, obsidian and flint blades, various animal bones, including the jaw of a very large animal, seashells, hundreds of limpets, and an oyster shell with a suspension hole. Numerous traces of fire were found at various points and levels of the excavation. In this cave, a phallic figurine made of limestone (No.7730) was also found (30cm height, 13.5cm round and 4cm thick). This possibly LN phallus-shaped figurine is not cylindrical but flat with rounded corners, which recalls an ambiguous anthropomorphic figurine with an amorphous trunk and head that are only separated by a shallow notch indicating the neck (Davaras 1979: 404), or perhaps it is

simply an abstract representation of a phallus (Fig. 3.51). This phallic figurine is the only one of this type found in Neolithic Crete. Outside Crete, Neolithic stone phallic figurines have also been found in cave contexts in Theopetra (Thessaly) and Kitsos (Attica) (Kyparissi-Apostolika 2001: 51). However, the stone phallus found in Theopetra cave is less ambiguous than the figurine from Pelekiton. It presents a perforation that may indicate its possible use as a pendant or other sort of hanging (Fig. 3.52). The Neolithic phallic figurine from Kitsos cave is even smaller than that from Theopetra and was probably worn as a pendant (Fig. 3.53) (Kyparissi-Apostolika 2001; Marangou 1991: 17, fig. 5). However, the presence of these figurines in cave contexts might be symbolically meaningful. Neolithic caves in the Aegean are traditionally interpreted as domestic spaces for seasonal habitation by farmers or pastoralists. Pelekiton, however, is situated on a steep rocky slope with difficult access and its lack of light and dampness suggests it was unsuitable for domestic purposes (Tomkins 2012: 62).

Caves in mainland Greece and the islands were inhabited seasonally, transiently, or permanently. The use of caves has long been debated by scholars supporting a domestic use involving seasonal habitation for farmers or transhumant pastoralists (e.g., Dickinson 1994: 37; Davaras 1996: 93; Papathanassopoulos 1996b; Tzedakis 1996) or ritual (e.g., Nakou 1995: 21-22; Tomkins 2009; 2012; Katsarou 2021; Moyes 2012). There is evidence in these caves for storage and food consumption, craft production (lithic or bone tools, or shell ornament production), and mortuary and ceremonial acts associated with feasts (Katsarou 2021: 33-34). The archaeological assemblages include everyday coarse-ware vessels for food processing and storage, fine-ware ceramics, clay objects, stone and bone tools, figurines, burials, and associated objects (Katsarou 2021: 34; Tomkins 2012: 59). In Theopetra cave in Thessaly, ritual and domestic functions are attested. The occupation of the cave had tell-like characteristics showing continuous deposition with the usual tell-site material culture: everyday remains and structured deposits (Katsarou 2021: 35). Alepotrypa cave in Diros, in the Peloponnese, shows evidence of Neolithic ritual practices with spatially-patterned depositions in the chambers and niches of the cave. Natural cave niches were also used at Gerani for depositions of archaeological materials (Tzedakis 1970). At Alepotrypa, the burials and the domestic space occupy different spaces.

Other ritualised activities are evidenced in the innermost part of the cave with acts of deliberate fragmentation of vessels and the dispersal and burning of fragmented sherds (Katsarou 2021: 37). The object depositions in burials and other ritual practices include fine wares, stone and bone tools, precious stones, ornaments, and metal objects. Other caves that show funerary rituals, although in less quantity, are Skoini and Franchthi caves. The Cyclops cave in the island of Yioura, northern Sporades, has evidence of MN deliberate fragmentation of bowls and jars and the deposition of the fragments at the foot of the larger stalagmite column.

Therefore, the other Greek caves used in the Neolithic show a dual functionality; most were probably used for both domestic/pastoral and ritual purposes. At Gerani and Pelekiton caves in Crete, too little is known of the context to draw any meaningful conclusions. However, considering the rich finds, which include the presence of high quantities of animal and malacological resources, the large quantities of obsidian blades together with the presence of the figurines and other symbolic objects such as the shell pendant and deposits of complete vessels, Spelaio Pelekiton and Gerani may have served as a place for occasional rituals that included feasting and food consumption but at the same time, for temporarily stalling animals or even for habitation. The presence of *fumiers*, characteristic deposits in rock shelters and caves related to animal husbandry, particularly stabling and stock-keeping, and made up of burnt herbivore dung (Angelucci *et al.* 2009: 191-192) has not been mentioned at Gerani or Pelekiton. Micromorphological analyses, which help identify *fumiers*, are not available for Gerani or Pelekiton and would be key to understanding if these caves were used for stalling animals in the Neolithic.

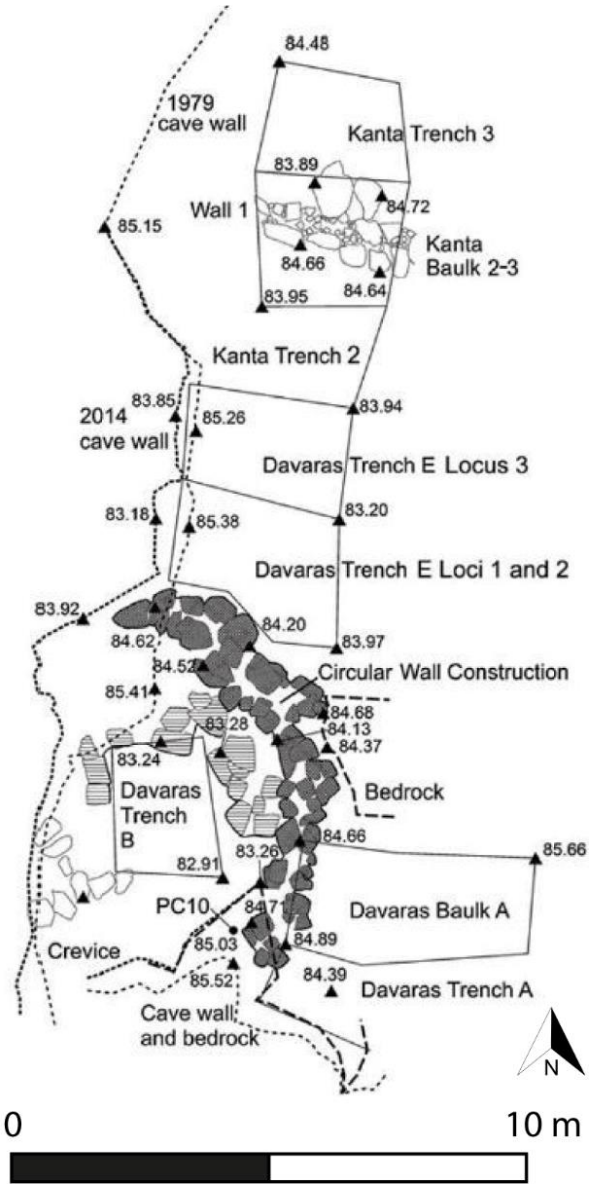

Figure 3.50. Excavation trenches in Spelaio Pelekiton (after Bonga 2019: fig.6).



Figure 3.51. Phallic-shaped figurine 7730, Spelaio Pelekiton (after Davaras 1979: fig.215c)



Figure 3.52. Stone phallus, Theopetra cave (after Kyparissi-Apostolika 2001: pl.33,24)



Figure 3.53. Phallic figurine, Kitsos cave (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_findings_from_the_Kitsos_cave,_AM_Lavrion,_190055.jpg; 27/05/2020).

3.4.2. Thessaly

3.4.2.1. Sesklo

Unfortunately, most of the publications, either of the first excavations by Tsountas (1908) carried out in 1901-1903 or the later ones by Theocharis (1957-1977) in 1956-1977, rarely mention the exact place where the figurines were found. As such, information from Sesklo is very scarce regarding the contextual data of the figurines other than their chronology. The final publication of Theocharis' excavations has not been accomplished yet, given the premature death of the excavator. The numerous published reports are preliminary and cover only part of the evidence.

Theocharis' excavations focused on 'Preceramic' (early EN), EN and MN levels and tried to define the extent of the settlement. The evidence revealed by the excavations is divided into two main areas: the tell, also known as the 'acropolis' or Sesklo A; a more extended settlement spread at the slopes of the surrounding hills, mostly concentrated in Sesklo B, and more scanty remains are also present in Sections C and D (Fig. 3.54).

'Preceramic' levels

The 'Preceramic' levels identified by Theocharis are still controversial (see Chapter 1.3.2), considering they contained sherds visible in the 1958 profile (Reingruber 2005: 166). Those levels had scanty architectural remains, which led Theocharis (1973a: 35) to hypothesise that the five pits he found in the acropolis were pit-dwellings cut into the virgin soil (Fig. 3.55). The building constructions in 'Preceramic' levels are more difficult to detect due to the lack of stone walls. However, remains of clay walls and stone foundations have been found, which may suggest that the pits were not the habitation areas (Fig. 3.56). The evidence for pit-dwellings or wattle-and-daub houses in the 'Preceramic' period at Sesklo is rather ambiguous (Perlès 2001: 69-70, 73, 76-7). A summary of the arguments against the interpretation of Neolithic pits as dwellings has been published by Chapman (2000a: 86-87). Pearce (2008: 19-20) also comments that the idea of prehistoric people living in holes has roots in the nineteenth-century ideology of progress which considered ancient people as 'primitive'. Similar ideas have surely permeated the interpretation of Neolithic caves in Crete as habitational areas. Five of these large pits were found in the earliest Neolithic levels of Sesklo A (Wijnen 1981: 11). Remains of holes were found in the pits, considered post-holes (Wijnen 1981: 11) but without traces of any wood remains. However, even if these holes were indeed post-holes, it does not imply that they are definite remains of dwelling structures (Pearce 2008: 21). The 'Pre-pottery' levels yielded a large number of bone implements (ca. 35), flint and obsidian tools (ca. 90, the total quantity for each is not reported), fragments of stone tools and a few fragments of clay figurines (the total quantity is not reported). Other finds include animal bones (sheep/goat, cattle and pig) and carbonised seeds (Theocharis 1963: 43). However, Theocharis does not indicate where these materials were found, possibly, I consider, inside the pits. Hypothetically, if, as I argue, the materials were found inside the pits, it could help better understand their nature and function. In this case, however, given the lack of contextual information, it is difficult to suppose the function of these pits. Following previous discussions of structured deposition (section 3.3), the presence of animal bones together with carbonised seeds may indicate the practice of feasting and ritual food consumption, while the deposition of stone and bone tools and figurines perhaps

suggest ritual contexts. However, the presence of carbonised seeds, animal bones and other material in a fragmentary state may also suggest a refuse pit and given the lack of contextual data, any interpretation remains hypothetical.

Theocharis' interpretations of these pits as dwellings were influenced by the earlier view of Milojčić on the six 'Preceramic' pits found in Argissa Magoula (1959b: 6; 1960a: 328). They contained a lot of ashes, burnt clay and stones, which Milojčić interpreted as the remains of a hearth. Other materials found were animal bones, flint and obsidian stone tools, and fragments of stone axes. These materials are similar to those found on Preceramic Sesklo, perhaps deposited in similar pits. Likewise, 16 'postholes' were identified inside the pits at Argissa Magoula (Milojčić 1960a: 323).

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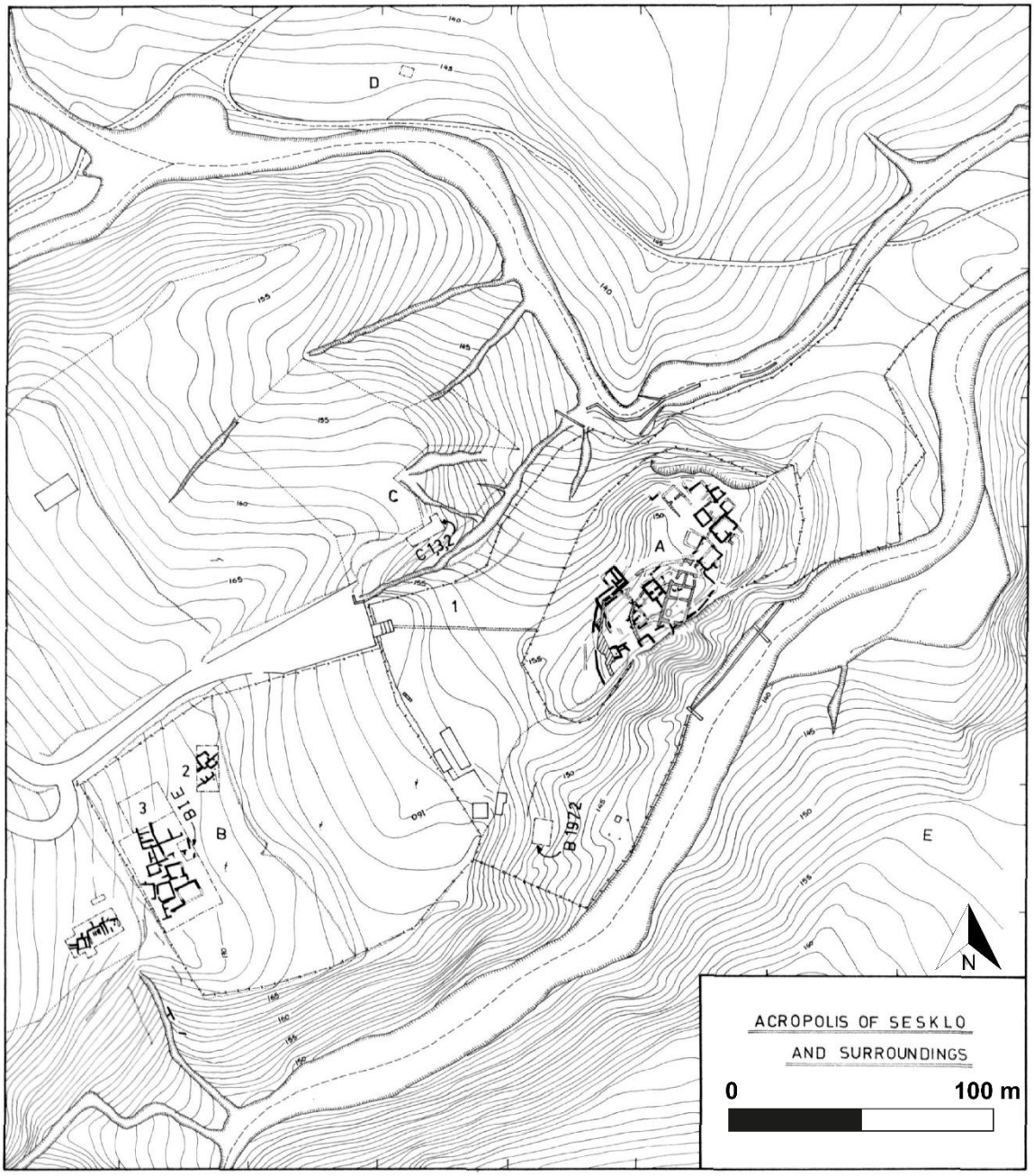

Figure 3.54. Plan and topography of the excavations at Sesklo, including the different sections and trenches (after Wijnen 1981: fig.3)

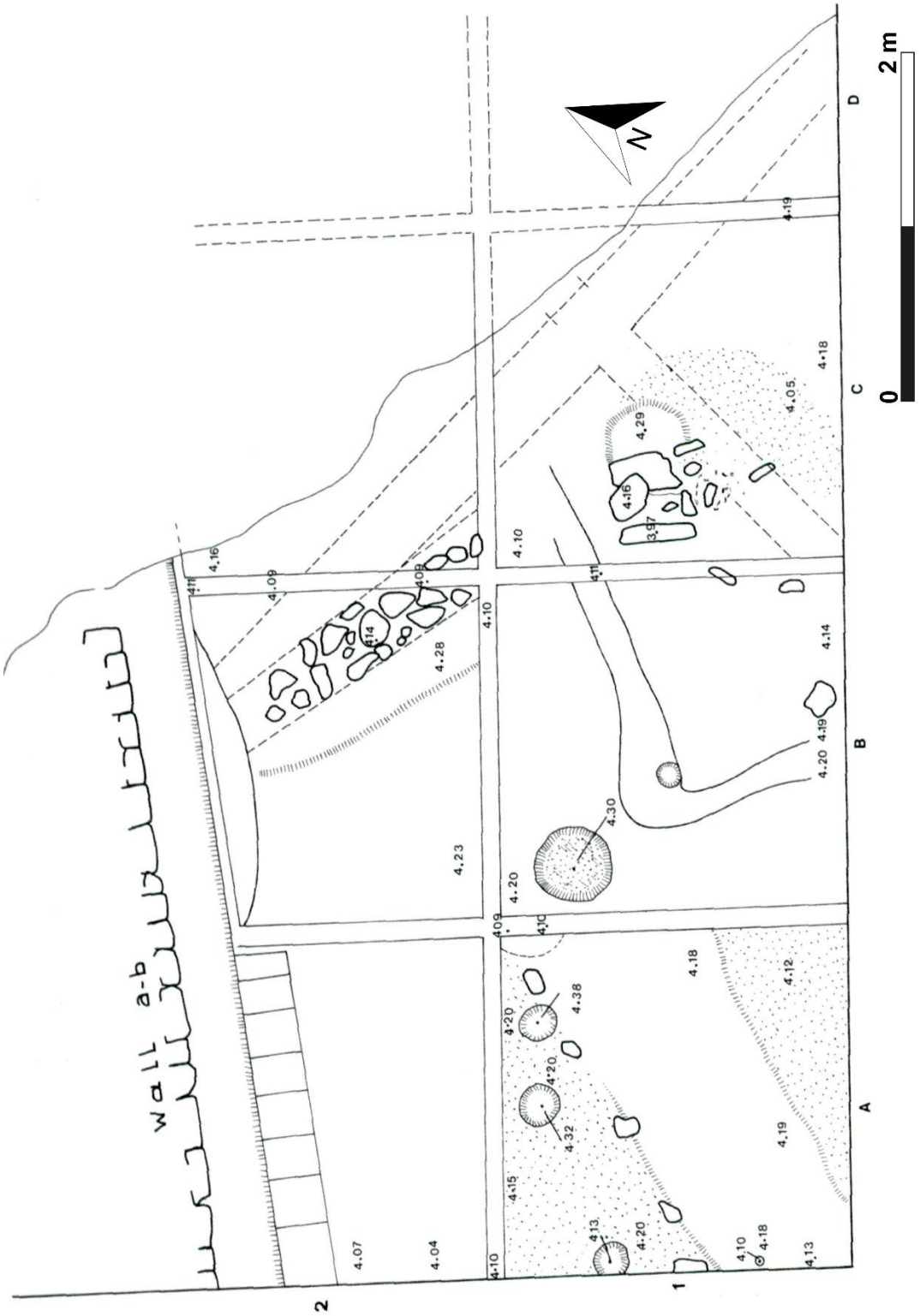

Figure 3.55. Plan of the 'Preceramic' Stratum in Sesklo A, indicating the pits (after Wijnen 1981: fig.6)



Figure 3.56. Sesklo: excavation of the 'Pre-ceramic' level (after Theocharis 1963: fig.32)

In sector C (Fig. 3.54), outside the acropolis and towards the North-West, an ashy deposit without pottery was interpreted as a 'Pre-pottery' Stratum D. This level had a pit and next to it an 'amorphous mass of sterile yellow clay' which seemed to have been worked somehow and has been interpreted together as another habitation pit (Wijnen 1981: 17). However, the yellow layer may be the result of dissolved mud bricks

or *pisé* and, therefore, they may belong to a construction. For instance, similar yellow layers have been interpreted as such at Knossos (3.4.1.1). The archaeological finds in the shallow pit (30-45cm thin) include bones from domesticated animals, shells, a shell pendant, and 'some indeterminate house rubble' with other objects (Table 3.8) (Theocharis 1965: 9; Schwartz 1981: 112, Table 30-31). Wijnen (1992: 57) later reinterpreted this pit as used for storage or clay extraction and questioned whether it belonged to a Preceramic level based only on its lack of pottery remains. It was the only layer found without pottery in one of the three trenches opened in sector C (Reingruber 2005: 166). This pit may be a structured deposit, although no further contextual data is available to better support this interpretation.

Stratum	Figurines	Bone tools	Flint tools	Obsidian tools	Polished stone tools	Grinding pounding tools	Ear studs	Beads
Str. D	1	8	10	28	-	Not specified	8	4
Str. C	8	21	5	47	5	12	8	2
Str. B	7	21	18	44	8	19	5	-
Str. A	3	6	15	13	-	-	1	-

Table 3.8. Finds from Strata D-A in Sector C, 'Preceramic'-EN Sesklo

EN levels

Between 1971-1977, another series of excavations focused on finding the extension of the settlement outside the acropolis (Theocharis 1971; 1972; 1973a; 1976; 1977). Another section (B1972, Fig. 3.54) in Sector A but outside the acropolis towards the Southwest was opened in 1972. Most of the deposit dates to the EN III phase (Theocharis 1972: 9) with few architectural remains that consisted of traces of *pisé*

wall. The deposit contained a 'large amount of burnt house rubble' with a 'tremendous amount' of materials, including pottery, figurines, bone and stone tools (Wijnen 1981: 15). A total of 18 figurines were found in an EN level from this sector, including an animal figurine (Theocharis 1973a: 23). Unfortunately, no further contextual information is available for this area.

In Sector C (West of the acropolis), EN I-III architectural remains continue to be scarce (Wijnen 1981: 11, fig. 9). In Stratum C (EN I), clumsy stone rows appeared, possibly foundation walls and remains of burnt clay mixed with straw and reed, branches and twig impressions which were probably part of the houses and the roof. This stratum contained pottery, eight figurines and other artefacts (Table 3.8). A burial was also discovered in a crouched position in this level, probably of an adult, but no indication of sex has been reported. Three figurines were found in the same area but not associated with the burial, two made in clay and one in marble (Fig. 3.57a-c). All three figurines were fragmented; only the heads and part of the necks remained which could suggest intentional fragmentation and deposition of the same parts of the figurines. The successive Stratum B (EN I) contained seven figurines and a 'larger number of artefacts' than the previous layer (Table 3.8), but there is no record of their findspot within the trenches. Stratum A (EN I) yielded three figurines, a 'fairly large quantity of sherds' and 'smaller quantities of materials' compared to Strata B and C (Table 3.8). It seems clear that in this area of Sector C, all mentioned EN Strata contained similar material culture including figurines, 'ear studs', stone tools, bone tools and pottery. However, the illustrations of the figurines found in the 'Preceramic' and EN Sector C (Wijnen 1981: fig. 14) are not described with their corresponding strata and, therefore, we cannot associate the particular figurines with the layers in which they were found. The only figurines associated with a stratum are three stone figurines found in the EN I Stratum C of Sector C (only two are illustrated, see Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 29, 26). Two figurines were found together: a pebble figurine (Fig. 3.58) was found in the same layer and approximately the same place as another pebble with similar shape and size. The pebble is polished and has traces of colour remaining (Theocharis 1976: 161). Unfortunately, this pebble is not illustrated by Theocharis, who considered both represented a 'couple' ('ζευγάρι'; Theocharis 1976: 161). However, this interpretation

is rather speculative since their sex is not indicated. The secure pebble figurine finds no parallels elsewhere in Greece and the suggested parallels are in Pre-Ceramic Mursybet III, Syria (Mellaart 1975: 47, fig.16) and Neolithic Yarmoukian, Israel (Perlès 2010: fig.7). The other stone figurine found in Stratum C is a fragment of a head carved in white marble (Fig. 3.57c). In the last phase of EN (III), there are remains of houses built with mudbrick and *pisé*, evidenced by the destruction caused by a fire at the end of the period, which left traces of a level with burnt walls and roof debris.

In summary, there is a scarcity of contextual data for the EN and the placement of figurines inside or outside houses cannot be verified. However, unlike at Knossos, Theocharis (1962: 25) states that the destruction layer at the end of the EN consisted of hearths and habitation refuse rich in finds. For instance, an EN house with a hearth yielded a 'large amount of ash, food waste and pottery accumulated' (Theocharis 1962: 29). Noteworthy, most houses destroyed by fire at the end of the EN phase had a high quantity of remains inside. The distribution of the fire at the end of the EN occupied a large area of the settlement.



Figure 3.57a-b. Clay head fragments from EN I Sesklo. c. Marble head of figurine found together with the other head fragments (after Theocharis 1977: figs.100a-c)

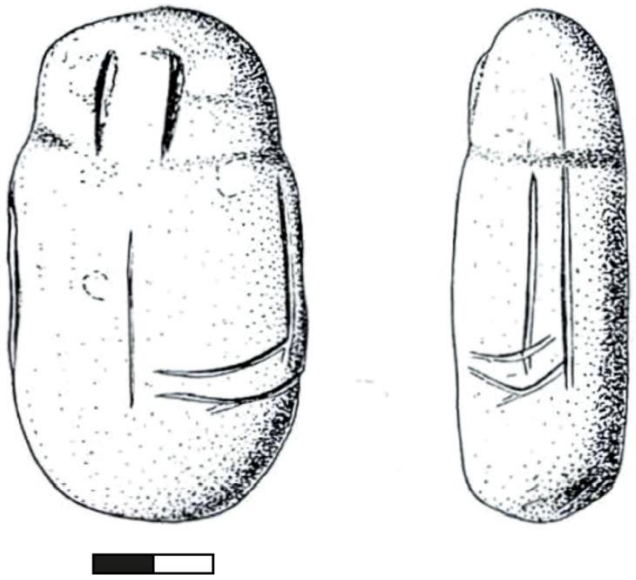

Figure 3.58. Cobble stone figurine from EN Sesklo (after Theocharis 1976: fig.4)

MN levels

The MN settlement comprised the tell area (Sesklo A) and extended to Sesklo B to the West. In contrast with the EN, the MN phases (I, II, IIIA, IIIB) had solid architectural remains consisting of houses that were continuously modified and rebuilt with traces of several floors. A higher number of materials are found at the destruction level. However, there is a relative absence of refuse, especially food remains, which perhaps obeys social conceptions of cleanliness or the removal of foodstuffs prior to the destruction at the end of the MN (Souvatzi 2008: 84). This is probably due to the continuous habitation of the site before its abandonment and destruction in the MN (Kotsakis 1981: 88). This may suggest intentionality and planning of the abandonment and destruction. According to Souvatzi (2008: 86), in the MN levels, the houses at Sesklo had a structured spatial arrangement of their different features. For instance, the centre of the house was the focus of production, consumption and socialising and is where most material culture is found in the last house floors: pottery, tools, or figurines. Rather than a place for production, the deposition of figurines, tools and pottery in the centre of the houses (presumably near the hearths like at Dimini, see Section 3.4.2.5) suggests structured deposition. However, the scarcity of figurines documented inside houses continues. An exception, according to Hourmouziadis

(1973: 277), is figurine M4302 found in House 7,8,9 but without further contextual information. Another exception regards the figurines found in House 14 at Sesklo B, which were found associated with flat stone slabs that appeared next to each other. Other artefacts associated with the slabs were five storage jars, three bowls, large parts of other vessels, a clay table, spindle whorls, polished and chipped stone tools, and clay 'sling-bullets' (Souvatzi 2008: table 4.3). House 14 was divided into sections, the southwestern part was possibly a storage area, the northeast corner showed a concentration of multifunctional activities, the north-western part was probably a work area or an empty space, and the southeast corner contained a stone platform used probably for sleeping (Souvatzi 2008: 90).

Figurines were also found within MN House A: it had four building phases and corresponding floors. Each of the four floors contained a wide range of materials, including figurines, an abundance of painted pottery, clay and stone seals, spindle whorls, two painted basins, a painted clay table, and various tools in different materials. Materials found in floors are good indicators of primary deposition, which increases when the floor is 'sealed', and the vessels are found with their contents (Souvatzi 2008: 114). Generally, MN houses at Sesklo have only a single door, however, House A at Sesklo B and House 37 in the acropolis are exceptions as they have three doors to access the building (Nanoglou 2001: 308-309; Kotsakis 2003). The presence of numerous doors together with a large hearth and the interior findings has been interpreted as possible 'community buildings' perhaps with a ritual use, as 'storage areas' or for other shared social activities (Nanoglou 2008: 144-145). Kotsakis (2003: 158) suggests that these buildings were probably not a house or a warehouse considering the presence of a hearth. Also, the building models from Neolithic Thessaly, especially M170 found in Krannon, show similarities with these houses. The similar houses 14 and A were built in areas with previous EN deposits that were abandoned (Theocharis 1977; Kotsakis 1981). The houses show successive building phases and architectural episodes, perhaps suggesting an emphasis on continuity and descent (Souvatzi 2008: 103-104).

Two destruction levels were detected in the excavations, followed by periods of abandonment, first at the end of the EN and then at the end of the MN. The end of the

MN was marked by an extensive fire that extended to Sesklo A and B, destroying the settlement or parts of it. The MN fire destruction was more intense in Sesklo A, especially in the West area, which carbonised all the organic materials and distorted clay artefacts (Souvatzi 2008: 104). The fire was less intense and partial at Sesklo B. Considering the distance between both areas, it is significant that the fire reached Sesklo B, which may indicate that the fire destruction was intentional. The fire extended throughout both areas, perhaps pointing to a hostile destruction that was not equally destructive across the site.

LN levels

The site was abandoned in the MN. Sesklo A was briefly reoccupied ca. 500 years later during a phase of the LN (Kotsakis 1988: 267). The information regarding the later LN settlement is scarce in Theocharis excavations since the uppermost part of the tell had already been removed in the earlier excavations by Tsountas (1908). Theocharis found no further LN levels outside the tell. However, he mentions (1963: 40-41) the discovery in a house at the East of the acropolis of a LN level with pits where they found remains of remarkable ceramic pottery, including a whole painted bowl (Theocharis 1963: fig.30a), a quantity of carbonised wheat and other cereals, stone axes and chisels, abundant obsidian and flint blades, clay figurines and seals, which suggests structured deposits.

3.4.2.2. Tsangli

The excavations directed by Wace and Thompson (1912) at the site of Tsangli divided the deposit into eight strata corresponding to successive occupations from the MN to the LN period. All the architectural features belong to the later part of the MN (Gallis 1996: 63). A total of four houses were found, three of them superimposed in successive layers, lying one on top of the other in the same place, which were named by the excavators Houses P, Q and R, while House T stands alone not far away. The stratified figurines found at Tsangli are shown in Table 3.9. Two figurines in the Almiros Museum (Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 74a-b) are from unknown strata. Regarding the context of stratified figurines, Wace and Thompson (1912: 122-125) only ascribe

six figurines to a structure: House T. No other figurine has been reported inside a house or associated with a structure, but the excavators do not provide more precise information. The best-preserved of the structures is the late MN 'House T', which measures 7.75x6.75m. Internal buttresses were built attached to the walls with two on each side. Four posts in a straight line run across the middle of the house, from which carbonised remains were still preserved in the floor holes at the time of the excavation. At the end of the line of posts in the west side of the wall and attached to one of the buttresses was found a raised platform of clay supported by a structure made with small poles. The two buttresses in the southeast corner were connected by a row of small stones, creating a small close space of unknown function, perhaps for storage, but no material remains were found inside. Houses with internal buttresses such as House T have been considered to have two-storeys. Possibility that is supported by building models with two-storeys found in Thessaly (Toufexis 1996: 161), e.g., a MN/LN model from Nikaia 12 (ML.XO.438).

Strata	Chronology	N. of Figurines	Accession Number or Reference
Str. I	MN	1	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 71a
Str. II	MN	2	Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 77h-g
Str. III	MN	24	M2430, M2751, M2765, M2759c, M2776a, M2757, M41; Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 75a, c-e; 76a-d, j-k
Str. IV	MN	13	EAM.6069; Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 69h, j-k, 72, 77a, c-e, 71c
Str. V	LN	8	M2767, M26, M2770, M2771; Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 75b, f, 76e-g, l
Str. VI	LN	3	M2755; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 76h
Str. VII	LN	2	No. 10.673; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77f
Str. VIII	LN	3	Wace and Thompson 1912: 124

Table 3.9. Number of figurines found per stratum at Tsangli

An extensive fire destroyed House T since remains of the sun-dried bricks used for the walls were found in many fragments and baked hard. Other traces of burnt material and fire were noticeable, for instance, the clay platform whose preservation was also due to the fire, which had carbonised the woodwork and turned the clay into brick (Wace and Thompson 1912: 116). Such clay platforms are generally interpreted as beds. For instance, a clay platform probably used as a bed may be seen in the house model from Platia Magoula Zarkou, where the older female figurine lies (Fig. 3.62). However, in the case of Tsangli, the platform is too small to have worked as a bed. Interestingly, House T contained a vast amount of material culture: polished stone tools (at least 5), grinding tools and a pestle, 62 bone tools including points of diverse size, some of them with very sharp end, bone chisels, spindle whorls, and complete pottery vessels including at least five vases, five large monochrome red jars, a tall

narrow-necked jug decorated in red-on-white, a bell-shaped mug decorated in white-on-red, a large open bowl with white slip, two large fragments of open bowls with a narrowed neck, and five open dishes, one of which contained a quantity of red ochre (Wace and Thompson 1912: figs. 41c, f; 42e; 41h; 44a-b; 45; 41d)

Six figurines were found in House T, two present bird-like faces (Fig. 3.59), possibly holding a rounded object in front of them, which might represent an offering, and a third figure is of a similar type but smaller. Another three figurines were found together with the assemblage, including a large head painted in the red-on-white style wearing a turban or headdress, while the other two figurines are unpublished leg fragments. The figurines together with the other material remains are possibly part of a structured deposit, which was probably placed inside a pit. The material deposited in House T may be contemporaneous with the burning of the house. Wace and Thompson (1912: 122-125) mention that at least one of the vases was burnt and changed colour as a result, but there is no mention that the figurines from this deposit show traces of burning. In contrast to Sesklo, at Tsangli, the destruction levels at the end of the MN in the settlement were immediately reinhabited with no period of abandonment. The fire destruction at Tsangli was localised, perhaps suggesting its intentionality. Unfortunately, the association of figurines with other material culture in the rest of the contexts has not been published in detail.



Figure 3.59. Two figurines from the group found in House T, MN Tsangli (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Archaeological_Museum_Volos_Neolithic_clay_figurines_02.jpg; 13/08/2020)

3.4.2.3. Tsani Magoula

The excavators (Wace and Thompson 1912) divided the deposit at Tsani Magoula into eight successive strata. Figurines were unearthed from Stratum I, II and IV, all dating to the MN. The first stratum contained three figurines. In level 1B, there were two figurine heads: one with long hair rendered plastically, coloured with a white slip, coffee bean eyes, and a prominent nose (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.91d); the other head has an elongated neck and two diagonal incisions on the cheeks at each side of the face (Fig. 6.11). Unlike at Sesklo, there is no further contextual information to assess if the two broken heads are a deliberate act of fragmentation and deposition. In level 1C of the same Stratum, a flat figurine of Probably Female sex was found, decorated in white-on-red style with a white stripe on the back (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.91c). The white-on-red decoration is common in Stratum IB and IC pottery. In the same deposit, there were complete bell-shaped mugs decorated in the same style (Wace and Thompson 1912: 86a-b), possibly a structured deposit. The rest of the figurines found in the stratum consist of four legs, a head of an animal figurine and a rough lump of terracotta. It should be noted that the deposition of legs is also attested at MN Tsangli (House T) and MN Platia Magoula Zarkou (Alram-Stern in press), which could again suggest a fragmentation pattern and deposition of specific fragments. A

hollow female figurine with only the right leg missing that was probably used as an anthropomorphic vase was found in Stratum II (Fig. 3.60). Anthropomorphic vases were possibly used for drinking or libation purposes and suggest a ritual context. The anthropomorphic vase has details of the ankle and knee bones, prominent nose and depiction of eyes and mouth. In the same stratum was found a possible part of another anthropomorphic vessel of which only a hollow foot remains, and a small fragment of a figurine leg. Another figurine fragment was found in Stratum IV, and on the surface appeared the lower part of a standing figurine of unknown date. According to Wace and Thompson (1912: 135), each successive layer of the excavation was marked by burning, possibly destroying the wattle-and-daub huts of the deposit.



Figure 3.60. Female anthropomorphic vase M.2763, MN Tsangli (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Archaeological_Museum_Volos_Neolithic_female_clay_figurine_A01.jpg; 30/07/2020)

3.4.2.4. Platia Magoula Zarkou

A house model (ML.PMZ.619; Figs. 3.61-3.62) with nine figurines was unearthed in the excavations carried out in 1983 by Kostas Gallis at Platia Magoula Zarkou. It was found

in a 25cm deep pit dug into a burnt layer corresponding to the destruction level of the previous habitation phase at the end of the MN (Gallis 1985: 20). The model was also situated under the floor of an early LN house next to the hearth and below the lowest clear floor of phase VIII, deposited into the debris of the previous habitation level, phase VII (Gallis 1985: 20). Therefore, the house model was probably deposited prior to the construction of the house since the floor over the pit was levelled. According to the excavator, the pit was only visible once the lowest floor of the house was removed (Gallis 1985: 20). More importantly, the layer into which the pit with the house model was dug was the destruction level of the end of MN. This layer, which extended throughout a large area of the trench, contained dark soil with burnt fragments of wall plaster, some pebbles and small stones, pottery sherds, and remains of charcoal. The house model and its contents show no signs of burning and are almost intact, which suggests that it was deposited after the fire destruction. Nanoglou (2005: 149) challenges the model's dating, arguing that Gallis associates the model with the building floor of early LN date and, instead, proposes to date the find between the end of the MN and the beginning of the LN. Thus, the model was deposited after the MN destruction level and before the construction of the floor from the early LN house linking the destruction of a house with the building of a new one.

Most building models have been found in Thessaly and date to the MN on stylistic and contextual grounds. For instance, the building models with roofs representing the entire house from MN Myrina Karditsa (BE.13921), from MN Sitochoro, Larissa (ML.XO.102), or MN Chaironeia (CM.24). House models are frequently found near the household hearth, around the central post of the roof, under floors or corners (Toufexis 1996). Unlike the one from Platia Magoula Zarkou, MN models do not show the interior (Toufexis 1996: 161; Toufexis and Skafida 1998). However, house models without a roof are characteristic of the LN when interest shifts to the interior (Toufexis 1996: 161). The most similar house model was found in LN Sitagroi, in Macedonia, and is the only other unroofed example known with an interior oven and side platform (Theocharis 1973b: figs.250, 290). Changes in the architecture of LN settlements are also in accordance with changes observed in house models, which do not focus anymore on the exterior of the buildings (Toufexis 1996: 161; Nanoglou 2001: 309;

Nanoglou 2008: 151). Remarkable is the finding of a two-room house model at the Bulgarian/Greek site of Promachon-Topolnica in the lower floor levels of a circular semi-subterranean structure (Koukouli-Chryssanthaki *et al.* 2007). Another similar fragment of a model was found on the same site but outside the structure in Phase II (end of the MN). These building models differ from the one from Platia Magoula in the compartmentation of rooms with arched doors, possibly showing a pitched roof that is not preserved or perhaps was inexistent. The rooms are rectangular and apsidal, and its exterior is decorated with incised and painted motifs.

The group of figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou probably represents an extended family with three or perhaps four generations (see Chapter 4.6.1). The representation of the house with its material contents (the entrance, the raised platform, the domed oven, a piece of clay perhaps representing a *pinakote* [a wooden paddle to place the bread dough inside the oven], a partition screen wall or a grinding stone) may represent actual architectural features and objects belonging to the house where the model was found. Likewise, the figurines might represent their real inhabitants. Unfortunately, the excavation trench did not cover the full extent of the house. Gallis (1985: 23) suggested that the model was possibly intended as a foundation offering and is a structured deposit. However, the model was found in the MN destruction layer, and it should be interpreted as part of the destruction events rather than the foundation of the LN house.

Another example is the Cucuteni culture large vessel containing four female figurines from Ghelăești dating to *c*. 3800–3500 BC, covered with a lid and a large globular bowl placed on top of it in what may represent a foundation offering (Makkay 1983: 159). Two unroofed models may also be compared. One was found at Ovcarovo (Karanovo VI culture, *c*. 4450/4400-4200/4150 BC) with a door opening, an oven and a platform on the back wall. The other comes from Popudnia in Ukraine (late Cucuteni period, 4th millennium BC) and shows an entrance with a threshold, benches on the right side and a rectangular oven on a raised platform with a female figurine sitting to the right and another figurine near the outer wall grinding grain, three large jars stand next to it, and a raised, cross-shaped platform in the centre of the house similar to actual platforms found in some excavated Cucuteni houses (AMW.2002; Gimbutas 1980: 46). Other

house models in the Balkans or Central Europe have been found under the corners of the house, under the doorway of the house, or in postholes (Gimbutas 1974: 67; Elia 1982: 242; Makkay 1983: 164); these are structured deposits and may also have a similar symbolism as foundation offerings. These house models have been interpreted by Gimbutas (1980: 41-50) as representing shrines or temples, but some of the houses, such as the Platia Magoula Zarkou example, may represent models of real MN/LN houses. The most plausible explanation is that after the destruction level at the end of the MN, a ritual act involved the deposition of the house model with the figurines, perhaps as a memoir of the destroyed house and its inhabitants. A late Early Helladic house at the same site presented a similar oven and platform, further supporting the interpretation that a real house is depicted. The house model with the representation of a family in the figurines might also represent a connection between the family and the ancestors who previously inhabited the house.

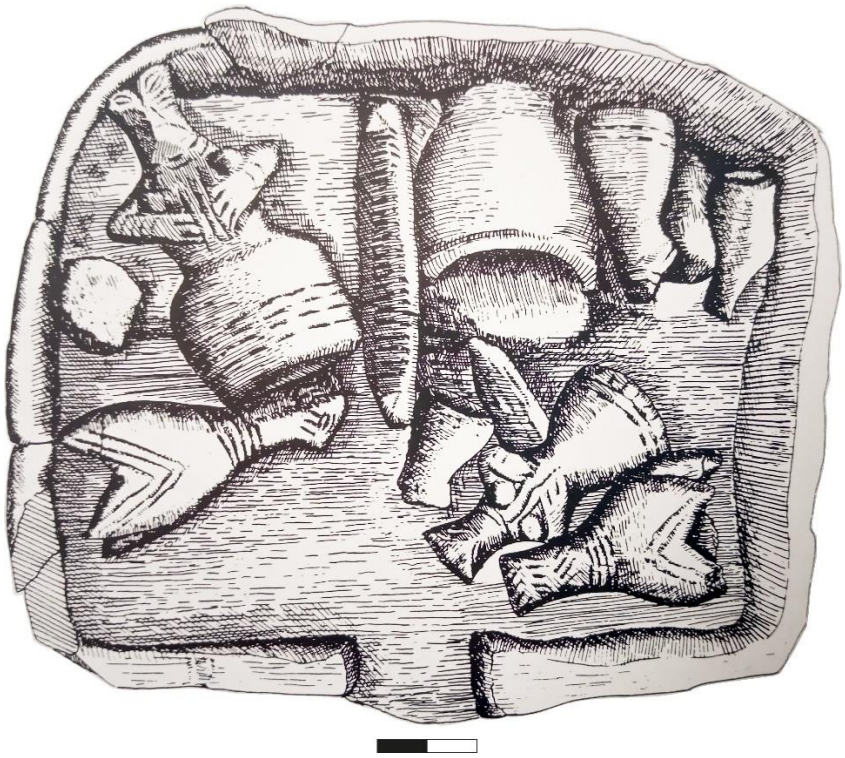

Figure 3.61. Drawing of Platia Magoula Zarkou house model with its contents and the arrangement in which the figurines were found (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.43)



Figure 3.62. Platia Magoula Zarkou house model with its contents and the arrangement in which the figurines were found (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.266)

In Platia Magoula cemetery, in the cremation burials of the beginning of LN, a small figurine was found, similar to the smallest found in the house model. This figurine was found together with a piece of white flint and above a group of three pots (Gallis 1979: 71-2, 75, 114) (Fig. 3.63). The appearance of figurines in burial contexts is rare and, in Thessaly, has so far only been attested at Platia Magoula. However, figurines are also attested near the FN inhumation burials (of children and adults) at Kephala on the Cycladic island of Kea (Caskey 1964: 316-317). The figurines are not associated with a skeleton in a particular grave but were placed after the graves were closed next to them (Coleman 1977: 8). The use of figurines in burial contexts suggests a ritual use of Neolithic figurines in rites of passage, perhaps representing ancestors accompanying the dead.

The most recent findings at MN Platia Magoula Zarkou (Alram-Stern 2017; Alram-Stern in press) include fragments of figurines seated on the ground, two fragments of legs, a fragment of a head, a head of an animal figurine, a head of an anthropomorphic vessel

and the upper body of a figurine from the lowermost layers. In subsequent MN layers, an unspecified number of legs was found without matching bodies. The appearance of only legs or feet is not exclusive to these levels from Platia Magoula Zarkou but has been attested at other Neolithic sites in Thessaly, as mentioned in section 3.4.2.3, and perhaps reflects a fragmentation pattern. Four figurines from subsequent MN to late MN layers presented heads to be inserted in the upper part of their bodies and show increasing schematisation. Furthermore, the upper MN layers produced a miniature bowl and two rod head figurines (Alram-Stern 2017), but there is no report of the objects being found in association. Figurines and miniature vases are also found in other Neolithic contexts in structured deposits from Knossos or Phaistos. However, Alram-Stern's recent excavations are still unpublished, and information on the context of these figurines is not available yet.

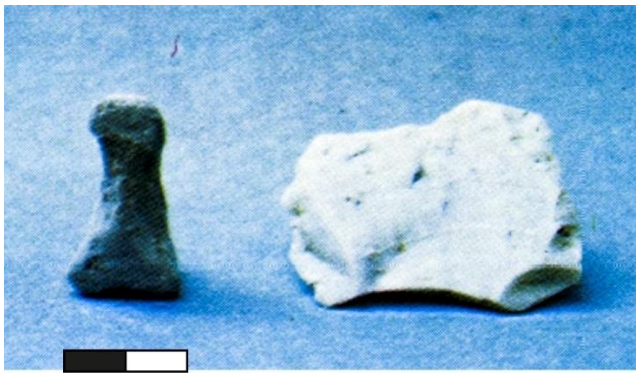

Figure 3.63. Figurine and white flint found above three pots at Platia Magoula cremation burials (after Gallis 1979: fig.16)

3.4.2.5. Dimini

To date, the site is still not properly published. Tsountas' (1908) first publication provides useful information but without contextual evidence. Hourmouziadis (1979) directed the latest excavation in 1974-76 but only partially published the evidence, focusing especially on the architectural remains but not the material culture. This is problematic given the large number of figurines found: Skafida (1992) provides the data for the findspot of 106 figurines in Hourmouziadis' excavation, including animal

figurines (Fig. 3.64). My contextual analysis is based on the data partially published by Skafida (1992) of the distribution of figurines and Souvatzi (2008), especially regarding the identification of houses, structures, and material remains. Both works derive from Hourmouziadis' excavations, especially from the unpublished Dimini archive. However, Souvatzi's data (2008) of the contexts with figurines (see Tables 3.10-3.11) presents an inferior number of figurines than Skafida (1992) (see Fig. 3.64). As such, the data in this section is presented according to each author. There is also a lack of information on the stratigraphical sequence since no such study has been undertaken to date.

The figurines recovered belong to the LN period. Their distribution in the settlement area is largely homogeneous. Like other material culture, figurines were found connected to houses, structures, and enclosures. At Dimini, figurines are mainly found in internal rather than external spaces. However, they significantly appear in high concentrations outside the third and fourth enclosures with clusters in the west and east part of the site) (Fig. 3.64). The figurines found near the enclosures are mostly concentrated near the walls, especially near the entrances to the inner spaces of the mound. This means figurines were either discarded near the enclosures or represent structured deposits, perhaps as foundation offerings since some are found along the base of the enclosures (Souvatzi and Skafida 2003). It should be noted that the innermost enclosure, which encompasses the centre of the mound with the so-called 'megaron' (Tsountas 1908), is an area where only a small number of figurines has been found. In this area, only five figurines were unearthed, including a group of three near the western entrance. The location of the figurines found in Tsountas' early excavations is unknown, but his research focused mainly on identifying the three tripartite or 'megaron' structures in the inner enclosures (Tsountas 1908: 52, 59-60, 63).

Halstead's (1995: 19) interpretation of the 'megaron' in the Central Courtyard as the place where the 'elite' resided, who derived their power from agricultural production and exchange, controlling the agricultural surplus and privatising production, and probably had preferential access to socio-ritual knowledge, goes against the evidence of the structures, houses and material remains found at Dimini. In the first place, very few figurines have been found within the inner enclosure and none within the

'megaron' structure. If we consider that figurines may have played a role in ritual activities, then no evidence suggests that this area possessed control over ritual and ceremonial activities. Furthermore, no other material remains support this special character of the megaron-like structure. There is a similar lack of evidence for the hypothesis that an elite living in the inner enclosure controlled agricultural production and accumulation. Unfortunately, the area of the first enclosure (or 'Central Courtyard') was extensively modified in the BA when, according to Hourmouziadis (1979: 96), the final configuration of the 'megaron' building took place. However, Halstead (1995) dismissed Hourmouziadis' BA dating of the 'megaron' structure and suggested that the building existed as such in the LN. Halstead's (1995) study on the faunal data did not reveal any significant socioeconomic differences within the settlement. Therefore, his theory of a hierarchical society with its head in the 'megaron' cannot be proven. Instead, the distribution of material remains and, particularly, of figurines suggest quite the opposite, the existence of communal spaces and complementarity.

Continuing with the distribution of figurines, it should be noted that the eastern side, especially the south-eastern part of the settlement, outside the innermost enclosure, shows a low concentration of figurines, probably due to this area being largely unexcavated (Souvatzi 2008: fig.5.1). Here I use the useful categorisation made by Souvatzi (2008: 135) of the spatial contexts at Dimini, divided into three types: Houses, Structures and Buildings. The Houses are domestic buildings that show a range of activities and are equivalent to a dwelling. Structures are nondomestic buildings, generally open spaces, working areas with a more specialised or limited function. Buildings share characteristics with both Houses and Structures. However, it is important to state that the division of functions is not always clear-cut since some activities are evidenced in both contexts, and some contexts cannot be classified in either of both categories. I will concentrate here on those spaces that yielded figurines and other spaces associated with figurines, such as the enclosures. There is a broad uniform distribution of the archaeological material in the different spaces of the settlement that suggest their multifunctionality and relative self-sufficiency (Souvatzi 2008: 134). However, we may identify specific locations with more intense deposition

of figurines and other materials. Their deposition in specific areas may suggest the focus of certain activities in particular settlement spaces.

Significantly, two of the Houses identified in the inner enclosure had no figurines: H4 and H1. In the second enclosure towards the north and northwest area, H6 also lacked figurines. In the third enclosure towards the west, H10 had no figurines. Structures without figurines include S5 inside the first enclosure and S2 in the northwest of the second enclosure. Buildings without figurines on the west side are B7 and B10. Noteworthy, the Houses without figurines are associated with contiguous Structures or Buildings also without figurines, that is the case of H10-B10 and H6-S2, and are mostly concentrated on the west and north-western side of the settlement. The reason for the lack of figurines in these spatial areas is unknown; the preservation of some of these spatial segments might also be important. Indeed, the lack of figurines and other objects may be due to an earlier abandonment of these houses or a different form of abandonment. However, the lack of figurines in these areas may also obey a different spatial organisation and differences in the types of activities that occurred within the households.

In houses, activities and deposition of materials focus around the hearth, whose position varies and tends to be mostly located at the centre, corner or along the walls. Storage, cooking and elaborate vessels, 'pit-stands', spindle-whorls, polished and chipped stone tools, bone tools, clay tables, querns, grinding stones (Souvatzi 2008: 140), and figurines clustered near the hearths. Figurines appeared near a hearth in B2, S1, H23, H15, B13 and H11. Child burials also tend to be found near hearths (e.g., in H9, B7, H10, H15, H23) and other materials such as stone and shell ornaments. For instance, 48 stone beads, probably one whole necklace, were placed next to the hearth in H23 (Souvatzi 2008: 140). Figurines also tend to cluster along the walls, perhaps suggesting that they were originally placed on shelves or benches. For instance, in H23 (on the floor H17), a fallen stone shelf may have contained figurines given the high number of them found spread along the walls of this house. This hypothesis may help understand the placement of those figurines with a flat base, such as the acroliths and some clay figurines. Instead, the anchor or cross-shape figurines, which do not have a flat base, some with a pointed end, may have been

affixed to the floor or another clay feature or perhaps laid horizontally. The features found in the Houses and other structures include hearths, shelves, storage facilities, pottery-firing facilities, stone platforms or benches. Most hearths are found inside the Houses, although they also occur in open-air Structures (e.g., S1 and S2). The features mostly associated with figurines are hearths, although they also appear on a possible shelf (Table 3.10). At the site of Achilleion, figurines were also found near hearths, inside and outside houses, near ovens or work areas, on built platforms or in pits (Gimbutas *et al.* 1989; Perlès 2001: 262-263). Spinning and weaving implements are also associated with Houses and, particularly, the hearth. Pottery, lithics, shell, bone antler, hide, polished stone manufacture and working areas are mainly associated with outside Structures rather than Houses. Souvatzi (2008: 141) identifies craft-specialised activities inside Houses in H23 because of the shell bracelets attested and the presence of obsidian debitage. However, in H23, the whole deposit from Phase H18 includes a *pithos* full of carbonized seeds, two complete clay vessels and parts of others, a figurine, 48 stone beads, polished stone tools, bone tools, and Spondylus shell bracelets (Tables 3.6-3.7). This deposit rather suggests structured deposition, including a deliberate act of fragmentation in the smashed incised pots. The abundant shell ornaments (nine) should not be taken as proof for their production place. Spondylus artefacts from Dimini were mainly deposited in two spaces: H23 and the open-air S8. Most Spondylus artefacts were burnt and found in contexts with other unburnt material suggesting deliberate burning (Halstead 1993: 606-608). Almost all were also broken, perhaps intentionally.

A deposit near the hearth in B13 had remains of large storage vessels, whole vessels, two figurines, and animal bones, which suggest an act of conspicuous consumption and a structured deposit (see more details in Tables 3.6-3.7; Souvatzi 2008). Akin to this deposit, similar findings were unearthed in B2 inside the inner enclosure (Table 3.7). As is shown in Table 3.7, figurines associated with features appear together with spindle-whorls, stone beads, polished and chipped stone tools, bone tools, *Spondylus* shell objects (especially bracelets), whole pottery vessels including Dimini Bowls and miniature Dimini Bowls, and on seven occasions remains of ashes, charred food or animal bone remains or a combination of the three. This is especially the case with the

deposits near hearths, suggesting a ritualised content associated with feasting and ritualised consumption with the deposition of food and material offerings. In the contexts better preserved with complete decorated vessels, remains of their food contents were often still traceable (charred cereals, pulses, and fruits), which were either inside them or scattered near them (Souvatzi 2008: 144-145). For instance, in H22, S1, and H23 (Phase H18), in deposits near the hearth where figurines were also found (Table 3.7). 'Pit-Stands' also appear in these deposits, traditionally interpreted as ritual objects (Tsountas 1908) for the ritual cooking of the meat on the spit. These objects present elaborate polychrome decoration and have a fire-blackened hollow interior with a series of knobs on the upper edges of their sides. The presence of a 'pit-stand' in the deposit in H23 may indeed serve a possible function in a ritualised cooking practice. Hourmouziadis' excavation revealed 13 complete examples, and all appeared in association with hearths, ashy deposits and high concentrations of food remains (Souvatzi 2008: 146).

Figurines not associated with features tend to cluster along the long walls of the houses in H11 and H23 and in the corners of the house in H11, B13, H20. Finally, some groups are found in the courtyard area, sometimes near the entrances of Houses or Buildings in H11, B2 and B13. Significantly, figurines of the acrolith type and those with anatomical shape (types T1a-b; for the typologies, see Skafida 1992) appear on most occasions associated with the deposits near the hearths. Deposits along the walls of houses may mix different figurines, including acroliths, anatomically-shaped figurines, schematic and, less frequently, anchored or cross-shaped figurines and more naturalistic examples (especially female figurines) and, more rarely, animal figurines (Fig. 3.64). Similarly, the deposits next to the enclosures represent an eclectic variety, including all the previously mentioned Dimini figurine types.

It should be noted that the open Structure S8 where Hourmouziadis (1979) identified the presence of a potter's kiln and Souvatzi (2008: 142) also of a stone platform possibly used for vessel forming and drying, only yielded just one animal figurine. The excavator (Hourmouziadis 1978b) states that in the potter's kiln a 'high number' of potsherds, balls and lumps of clay, fired clay forms, deposits of ash and clay were found but no anthropomorphic figurines suggesting that perhaps figurines were not

found in the place of their production. S8 also served as a place to produce *Spondylus* shell buttons and beads (Tsuneki 1989: 10, 12) and possibly chipped stone production since it is the only space where the whole *chaîne opèratoire* is evidenced. S8 may have a communal character, given that several specialised activities occur there (Souvatzi 2008: 154). S1 had similar remains as S8; therefore, Souvatzi (2008: 144) interpreted it as a production area for pottery with a 'hearth firing'. The general layout of the site and the spatial distribution of findings suggest that the activities took place cross-cutting social units and compartmented spaces.

All in all, the material remains at Dimini show a wide spatial distribution which can be interpreted as evidence for the lack of social differences. For instance, the use of ceramics is quite homogeneous, and food consumption does not show important variations within the settlement. Also, the distribution of figurines within the site and the associated rituals point to generalised household rituals and social display rather than preferential access to social and ritual knowledge. The presence of numerous objects in some Houses has been interpreted as evidence for social inequality. For instance, Halstead (1993: 608) argued that the concentrations of *Spondylus* shell objects in H23 that were frequently broken or burnt suggest deliberate competitive destruction of valuable craft goods by the 'elite' of Dimini. However, if that is the case, the 'elite' that Halstead proposed as occupying the innermost enclosure would then be spread in the other enclosures since House 23 is located in the second or third enclosure. Also, shell objects have been found elsewhere in the settlement, especially in S8. At Dimini, the production of *Spondylus* objects was certainly not rare and scarce given the proximity with the sea as a source. The presence of shell bracelets in H23 is rather part of the structured deposit with other materials, including figurines, and associated with ritualised food consumption. The high number of materials deposited in H23 can also be compared with the quantities found in other Houses and Structures summarised in Tables 3.6-3.7. Also, the burnt nature of the rings found in H23 is not an isolated phenomenon (Souvatzi 2008: 151). The entire house was destroyed by fire, and a wide amount of organic material was also burnt. Indeed, Chapman and Gaydarska's (2007: 163, 167-168; Chapman *et al.* 2011) analysis of the shell rings

concludes that 64% were burnt, and their presence in burnt spaces has no correlation with the proportion of burnt rings.

À propos the burning of structures, according to Souvatzi (2008: 145), a 'large number' of structures show evidence of extensive burning (at least in H23, B13, S2). This includes burnt superstructure debris and much of their material contents. There is no evidence for the sudden abandonment of these houses, and the fires that destroyed them seem to have been isolated episodes that rules out a general violent destruction of the site. The idea of deliberate burning, which is known in contexts from south-eastern Europe (Tringham and Krstic 1990), may be considered, although the evidence is less conclusive in Dimini.

Context	Figurines	Pottery	Spindle-whorls	Chipped stone tools	Polished stone tools	Bone tools	Shell objects	Stone beads
B2	1	444	6	20	5	5	4	-
H23	10	1124	14	31	26	30	54	54
Phase H18	6	559	8	11	14	10	20	50
Phase H17	4	354	6	20	12	20	34	4
S1	9	188	4	11	5	11	5	-
H20	1	128	-	1	-	-	6 (1)	-
H9	2?	157	5	8	2	8	5	19
H8	1	51	-	2	-	1	-	-
H11	12 (13)	280	15 (19)	20 (64)	9	6	16	3
S8	1	1086	20	90	43 (+8 sling bullets)	30	167	29
B13	4	336	6	50	4 (+1 sling bullet)	16	13	1
H15	2	135	3	16	15	13	19	-
H22	1	243	5	7	-	2	5	-

Table 3.10. Contexts of figurines and other finds from Dimini (based on data by Souvatzi 2008: table 5.2)

Context	Feature	Hourmouziadis (1979)	Souvatzi (2008)	Associated finds
B2	Square; flat stone with clay bottom	Food-Processing	Hearth	Ash, potsherds, 1 figurine, 4 spindle-whorls, 4 ground and polished stone tools, 15 chipped stone tools; 4 bone tools, 4 *Spondylus* shell bracelets, animal bones
H23 *Phase H18*	Square, clay with clay rim	-	Hearth	Large storage vessel (pithos) full of carbonized barley seeds, 2 complete but crushed incised clay vessels, parts of monochrome and painted vessels, 1 figurine 48 stone beads (1 necklace), 3 polished stone tools, 3 bone tools, 9 *Spondylus* shell bracelets
	Ashy patch encircled by rubble stone	-	Hearth?	Carbonised grain, 1 'spit-stand', 1 complete Dimini Bowl, 1 complete monochrome rounded bowl, 5 figurines, 5 spindle whorls, 10 ground and polished stone tools, 7 bone tools, 6 *Spondylus* shell bracelets.
Phase H17	Irregular, clay surface on flat stone substructure	Food-Processing	Hearth	Fire traces, 1 pithos, 1 monochrome clay table, 1 complete painted clay 'basket', 1 'pit-stand', 1 figurine, 3 spindle-whorls, 14 bone tools, 11 ground and polished stone tools, 3 *Spondylus* shell bracelets.
	Flat stone slab	-	Shelf	1 painted neck jar, 1 monochrome pedestalled bowl, 1 'spit-stand', 1 figurine, 3 *Spondylus* shell bracelets, stag horns
S1	Square, rubble stone and clay	-	Hearth	Fire traces, ash, burnt clay chunks, large parts of coarse vessels, Dimini Bowl fixed on the ground, 8 figurines, 2 spindle-whorls, 2 polished stone tools, 4 bone tools, 2 shell bracelets and buttons
	Round stone platform	-	Other	1 Complete miniature Dimini Bowl, 1 complete handless cup, 1 figurine, 2 spindle-whorls, 5 bone objects, 3 polished stone tools, 4 chipped stone tools, 7 bone tools.
H11	Square, flat stone with clay bottom	Food-Processing	Hearth	2 'pit-stands', 6 figurines, 15 spindle-whorls, and 9 polished and ground tools
B13	Square, clay surface on flat stone substructure	Food-Processing	Hearth	Ash, carbonized grain, 2 monochrome bowls, one with a pedestal base, 4 figurines, 4 spindle-whorls, 5 ground stone tools, 15 bone tools, 30 chipped stone tools and debitage, 10 *Spondylus* shell objects
H15	Square, flat stone with clay bottom	Food-Processing	Hearth	Impressions of 2 large storage vessels, 1 monochrome bowl, 1 coarse closed vessel, 2 figurines, 2 spindle-whorls, 7 polished stone tools, 10 bone tools, a large assemblage of animal bones
H22	Square, flat stone with clay bottom	-	Hearth	Dimini Bowl full of grain and placed inside a larger monochrome bowl, 1 figurine, 5 spindle-whorls, 2 bone tools

Table 3.11. Features identifiable in Houses, Structures and Buildings and associated finds from Dimini (after Souvatzi 2008: table 5.3)



Figure 3.64. Map of Dimini with the distribution of figurines according to Skafida (1992: fig.1), following her typologies. Data for children burials and structures from Souvatzi (2008: fig.5.31)

3.4.2.6. Rachmani

Wace and Thompson (1912) divided the excavation of Rachmani into four different strata. Two left leg figurine fragments were found in MN Stratum I, one painted red-on-white (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.26m). At least seven figurines appeared in Stratum III, specifically in House Q (those illustrated by Wace and Thompson 1912 are: MB.2748a, ML.KR.10, Figs. 3.65; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.25c, 28t). Four complete terracotta bodies and two body fragments are part of acroliths, completely shapeless and made of coarse clay mixed with straw. The acrolith bodies were found with five stone heads, three unpainted and two painted. The painting of the heads consisted of red and black colour in one example and brown in the other, in the same decoration style as the pottery vessels found in the house. Another figurine found in the same deposit of House Q is of a different type; it has two split heads in a 'V' shape, perhaps depicting a double-figure.

House Q presents features such as a raised platform of beaten earth, which appeared along the corner between the curved end and the west wall; near it, a burnt patch possibly denotes the hearth (Wace and Thompson 1912: 39). It should be noted that the whole house was destroyed by fire. According to the excavators, the findings from House Q included a group of vases, the remains of at least seven figurines, millstones, stone tools including at least two stone axes, a mace, two possible mortars or grinding tools, nine pebbles that may be polishers, two saddle querns and two flint knives, three antler hammers two of which were bored, two bone points, two bone scrapers and a fragment of worked antler, an ox horn, 19 spindle whorls, three 'odd' lumps of terracotta, and three larger lumps of terracotta possibly used as 'pit-stands'. The contents found inside the vases are food remains, including a number of figs, peas, lentils, a little of wheat, one oyster shell, and a lump of red ochre (Wace and Thompson 1912: 41-53, figs. 19, 25a-c, 28). This deposit was found in the north end of the house while the other end appeared empty of finds. These finds were possibly deposited in a pit dug in House Q prior to the destruction by fire. The pottery found in the deposit included three vases decorated in the red-on-white, another fragmented vase, the rim of a decorated *pithos*, three miniature cups and another cup of coarse clay (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 28, pl. IV.4, V, VI). This group of objects represents

a structured deposit akin to the deposits in Dimini, which combine the deposition of figurines, a variety of stone tools including polished and chipped stone tools, spindle-whorls, 'pit-stands' and food remains, suggesting a context of ritualised consumption and offering of food.

Outside House Q, only one other figurine made of clay and decorated in white slip was found in the same stratum, but there is not further contextual information. In the latest stratum (IV), four or perhaps five figurines were unearthed (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 26n, 25d, 27h). Unfortunately, Wace and Thompson did not provide information about the exact location of the finds or houses, or structures associated with them. Two of the figurines are clay bodies of acroliths; another two are clay figurines similar to the schematic examples from Dimini, while the possible fifth is perhaps a schematic stone figurine. Lastly, a clay foot that belonged to a figurine decorated in red-on-white was found in the surface layer.



Figure 3.65. Painted acrolith heads ML.KR.10 and MB.2748a, FN Rachmani (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: figs.216-217)

3.5. Conclusions

The contexts with figurines from Neolithic Knossos may be interpreted as structured deposits given the wide range of associated archaeological materials, the spatial patterning of the depositions, and the presence of highly symbolic objects. In the early MN, two figurines were found in Pit A together with a bowl and signs of burning and associated with another Pit B next to it, which had the remains of animal bones and a whole bowl, suggesting an event of ritual consumption and feasting. The subsequent layers of the pits evidence events of burning and deposition of bowls with the base missing. These are the only two figurines identified as deposited inside pits. The following MN to early LN deposit includes figurines similarly associated with bowls and cups, perhaps suggesting a similar use in feasting and drinking. Other deposits of figurines in the following periods suggest either deposition in pits or spatial patterning in successive events, especially the groups of figurines found in the same area from Stratum V and IV. The figurines from LN strata are now associated with polished and chipped stone tools, different clay objects, including spindle whorls, clay shuttles and animal figurines. These deposits perhaps resulted from ritualisation events related to rites of passage (see chapter 7.3.1). The practice of deliberate fragmentation is also evidenced in figurines: possibly in pits A-B and in the LN II context A14, contexts where also the bowls are missing their base. The evidence for the FN is scanty regarding figurines, and some are only dubious fragments. However, they are still associated with miniature pots, stone beads and other materials, suggesting a symbolic meaning. However, none of these deposits seem to be placed inside houses. The exceptions are the figurines found in House A and B from Sir Arthur Evans' excavations, probably dating to the FN.

The findings from Phaistos suggest the association of figurines with structured deposits, and ritual contexts of libation, pouring or drinking, particularly in FN Room 28, where a figurine was found. All the figurines with contextual information are associated with miniature vessels, perhaps reinforcing the drinking activities or as ritual offerings. The Neolithic caves of Gerani and Spelaio Pelekiton, traditionally interpreted as habitation sites, have been reassessed as perhaps documenting a

duality of uses: the stabling of animals and occasional use for ritual purposes. The use of caves for animal stabling needs to be supported with more data, e.g., micromorphological analysis. At Gerani cave, the presence of figurines, whole pottery vessels, bone tools, antlers and deer crania and other materials points to possible ritual deposits. Similarly, at Spelaio Pelekiton, the number of food remains (animal bones and malacological resources), a phallic figurine and other symbolic materials suggest ritual behaviour perhaps associated with feasting and food consumption. This interpretation of the Cretan caves would fit the evidence available for Neolithic cave uses in the Greek Mainland that document structured ritual deposits, burials, habitation and pastoral uses.

In Neolithic Thessaly, at Sesklo, detailed contextual information regarding figurines is scarce. In 'Preceramic' levels, a figurine may have been found inside a pit. In EN, the architectural remains continue to be scarce, and figurines do not appear to be associated with any structures. EN figurines were found in successive layers together with the same materials: 'ear studs', beads, stone and bone tools, and pottery which may suggest a repetitive and formalised behaviour indicative of ritual. In the MN, figurines are associated with three houses: House A, Houses 7, 8, 9 and House 14. In House 14, the figurines were associated with stone slabs, storage jars, bowls, large pottery fragments, weaving equipment and stone tools. This context suggests a structured deposit, perhaps with associated ritual consumption. House 14 has been interpreted as a space for communal use, considering the open access to the building with three entrances and the documented activities beyond the household level. The end of the EN and MN phases was marked by fire destruction that affected most of the settlement (Sesklo A and B). In the abandonment phases of the houses, a high number of artefacts are found, which may be part of the rituals of abandonment before the destruction. However, the extension of the fires at Sesklo perhaps suggests a hostile rather than accidental destruction.

At Tsangli, the better-known context is the MN House T, which included a structured deposit of a high number of complete vessels, tools and figurines. House T was destroyed by fire, and the deposit with figurines seems to be made before the abandonment. The evidence for MN/LN Platia Magoula Zarkou suggests that the house

model was a structured deposit, placed after the fire destruction of the MN house and before the construction of the early LN house, symbolically linking the ancestors with the new inhabitants. The presence of a figurine in the cremation burials at Platia Magoula Zarkou cemetery also suggests the use of figurines in rites of passage and a connection with the ancestors. The contextual information is scarcer at Tsani Magoula. However, the presence of anthropomorphic vessels further associates human images with activities of drinking or libation. A structured deposit is evidenced in the deposition of a figurine with two whole mugs in Str. I, 1C (MN).

The contextual information available for Dimini is exceptional, and a high quantity of figurines has been found in primary depositions next to hearths with an enormous quantity of other materials, including bone tools, chipped and polished stone tools, spindle-whorls, shell ornaments, beads, and complete pottery vessels, at times, with remains of charred food. These contexts possibly represent ritual food consumption and offering events and are always found inside the houses. However, figurines found outside the Houses at Dimini are mainly concentrated next to the enclosures, especially the third and fourth enclosures, perhaps as foundation offerings. Finally, at FN Rachmani, a similar deposit to those from Dimini was found in House Q, with acrolith figurines, remains of food still inside the ceramic vessels and other materials such as bone tools, stone tools, ochre, spindle whorls and whole vessels. House Q was also destroyed by fire, suggesting that some of these depositions may have followed rituals before the deliberate destruction of the house.

In summary, the contextual analysis of the sites from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly reveals the importance of identifying the loci in which figurines were deposited and the associated materials. This analysis has allowed for an identification of structured deposits in the mentioned sites and the association of figurines with ritualised practices of deliberate fragmentation, food consumption, feasting, offerings including foundation offerings, their possible use in rites of passage and the ritual abandonment of the houses, in some cases with fire destructions, and perhaps a link with the realm of the ancestors.

CHAPTER IV. LIFECYCLES IN MINIATURE. IDENTIFYING AGE IN NEOLITHIC FIGURINES FROM CRETE AND THESSALY

4.1. Introduction

Age in Neolithic Greece has not been a widely studied subject. This chapter seeks to identify age identities and age differences in Neolithic Crete and Thessaly, focusing on anthropomorphic figurines. My methodology will look at differences in size, sex (or absence of), gestures and postures that may be gendered, anatomical details, especially differences in the development of sexual traits or body hair growth, and decoration. On this basis, I will attempt to classify the different age-stages represented in the figurines (see Table 1.2) as:

1) Children or juveniles/subadults: individuals that have not reached their adult form, sexual maturity, or size. When possible, I will differentiate between infants, prepubescents and adolescents (Table 1.2); 2) adult individuals who have reached physical maturity; 3) elderly or individuals who show signs of ageing. However, this classification will not always be possible given the schematic, simplified and abstract forms of numerous Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly. This identification is also challenging considering the standardised and conventional depiction of physical attributes in figurines.

The category of infants, children and early prepubescents are identified following the combination of parameters such as small size (relative to other Male or Female sexed figurines in the same assemblage representing adults, but generally up to 4cm) and lack of sexual traits (Asexual figurines) or ambiguity in their representation (Probably Male or Probably Female figurines). Older subadults (from prepubescent to adolescent stages) are understood as small to medium size figurines (from 4-6cm approximately). They also have ambiguous representations of sexual traits like unclear Male or Female genitalia that may be accompanied by small breasts compared to definitely sexed adult figurines. Modelling gestures that make certain sexual traits more ambiguous (e.g., figurines with arms to the chest probably covering their breasts) may be a sign of the

subadult category. Adults are identified in figurines represented with overtly shown sexual traits that tend to be larger (either breasts or genitalia). Adult figurines are broader and larger (from approx. 6cm whole). Specific decorations (see Chapter 6.4.4) and particular gestures like 'arms to the chest under the breasts' in Female figurines or postures like 'sitting on a stool' in Male figurines are also indicative of adults (see Chapter 4.5-4.6). Finally, I identify those figurines with signs of old age as elderly: paunches, hunch-backs, wrinkles and the presence of other ageing traits such as a sagging chest or sagging breasts. I will finally compare the evidence of age-stages in Neolithic figurines to Neolithic burials in Greece, particularly in Crete and the selected sites from Thessaly. Differential burial treatment may help us find corroboration of the differences in age identities of Neolithic Greece.

However, the study of age in Neolithic Crete and Thessaly has some limitations: 1) There is a scarcity of burials that prevent us from corroborating other identities and differences (if any) within Neolithic populations. The elderly are generally underrepresented in the archaeological record of the Neolithic Aegean. Most burials are infant intramural burials, at least regarding the sites discussed in my thesis (e.g., EN infant burials from Knossos or LN Dimini). Cremation burials and the secondary treatment of skeletal remains makes obtaining age data difficult. 2) Anthropomorphic images are not particularly realistic, and some are too schematic to show ageing signs. For example, there are no depictions of facial hair, axillary hair, pubic hair, or any other body hair except on the head in Crete. Conversely, some figurines from Neolithic Thessaly present those characteristics, making them more realistically depicted. Other traits signifying age and gender are culturally constructed. They may include (but are not restricted to) clothing, decoration, colour or headdress and hairstyle, but these are not always present in Neolithic figurines. 3) The frequently fragmented state of figurines also limits the analytical comparison of different ages by size and width.

4.2. Archaeological approaches to age

Anthropologists have studied the different cultural practices surrounding age for over a century. Scholars such as van Gennep (1960) and Turner (1969) have dealt mainly with the 'rites of passage' or rituals that mark the transitions between age-stages and other scholars like Sahlins (1958; 1963) with the social order and age classes in tribal societies. Archaeologists subsequently applied these models to prehistoric societies (e.g., Owens and Hayden 1997).

However, more recently, there is an increasing emphasis on aspects of age derived from theories of gender and the body. The archaeology of children and childhood has become one of the main interests in the study of age (Moore and Scott 1997; Sofaer-Derevenski 2000; 2000b). Earlier works by Gräslund (1973), Lillehammer (1989) and Scott (1992) were among the first to inaugurate the archaeology of childhood. In particular, Grete Lillehammer's ground-breaking paper *A Child is born* (1989) set the baseline for childhood studies in the past. Feminist theory, anthropologies of the body and sociology heavily influenced the subsequent approaches in the 1990s, which explored age as part of an extensive study of social identities including gender, ethnicity, and sexuality (Sofaer-Deverenski 1997; Meskell 1999; Gilchrist 1999; 2000). Those papers' common ground was considering age as a biological factor and a cultural construction similar to gender. Thus, age is a cultural factor also influenced by gender since the changes in the age-stages of a person occur differently for men and women because they have diverse life experiences (Gilchrist 2004: 1). However, in 2005 the general lack of theorisation of childhood studies in the past led Carenza Lewis and Sally Crawford to create the 'Society for the Study of Childhood' (SSCP) and publish the journal *Childhood in the Past* (Crawford 2017: 10-1).

The bioarchaeological study of skeletal remains has been one of the main aspects of the study of Childhood in the past. Initially, bioarchaeology studied bodies focusing on adult categories in order to assign sex and age to human remains. Assigning sex to adult skeletal remains poses its own set of problems, but the difficulties of ascribing sex and age increase for sub-adult and especially for the elderly (Gilchrist 2004: 2),

underrepresented in bioarchaeological studies. The focus on burials and skeletal remains is evident from the data provided in the papers published in the journal *Childhood in the Past,* which account for more than 40% of the archaeological material analysed (Murphy 2017: 4, fig.4). Going beyond the limitations posed by the bias of focusing the research on burials and skeletal remains, several scholars had already addressed aspects of childhood and the childhood experience with other archaeological data: from children's hands and fingerprints, toys and games, images showing children or used in rites of passage, and objects produced by children (Kamp 2001). Therefore, by studying archaeological data, we can approach different age-identities and the crucial roles that different age-stages played in past communities.

From a theoretical perspective, an archaeology of age should be considered an archaeology of identity. That means an understanding that within our life-course, the process of identification and the relations of similarity and difference between age-groups changes (Kamp 2001: 3). Age plays an essential role in the social organisation of any society. In contrast to present-day Western societies, children and elders were an indispensable part of past societies. In opposition to the current view of childhood as a naive and playful age, children would be essential contributors to economic and social subsistence strategies. At the same time, elders are now underrated as unproductive, not contributing to the economy. However, anthropological analogies show that in other cultures, they are viewed with respect due to their perceived wisdom (Appleby 2011: 233; Lillehammer and Murphy 2018a; Maaranen and Buckberry 2018). Following these considerations, some scholars were aware of the necessity to advance in the archaeology of old age (Welinder 2001; Lucy 2005; Appleby 2010; 2011; Lillehammer and Murphy 2018b).

Childhood, adolescence, youth, pre-pubescent, pubescent, and adulthood are some terms used to define age. Biological changes do occur in growing up, but, as with gender, the differences in definitions of life-stages cross-culturally and defined age categories across time and space demonstrate their social and cultural construction (Lamb and Hwang 1996). Western societies tend to consider age as important, especially childhood, which since the 19th century is considered an innocent age and the time for children to become adults is increasing (Kamp 2001: 4). During the 19th

century, children's labour was no longer economically critical, which, together with moral considerations, led to enacting the child labour laws and mandatory schooling. These laws significantly changed children's everyday activities and the general perception of childhood experience over time. However, from Mycenaean Greece (*c*. 1680-1050 BC) up until modern times, children were expected to contribute to the workforce in agricultural or pastoral activities, as textile workers, craft apprenticeship and other economic activities, including domestic labour or as childcarers for their younger siblings (Gallou 2010). The chronology of age that we follow nowadays was probably not the same in the past. According to Fortes (1984), preliterate societies have stages of maturation that consider not only age, but also capacities, skills, and other attributes. Possibly every society had its age categories and its perceptions of childhood.

In the study of age, the transitional periods in a person's life are significant since they connect past, present and future (James and Prout 1990: 220). Ceremonies or rites of passage are the initiatory rituals that mark these transitions and precede significant life-changes such as birth, puberty, marriage, or adulthood transitions (La Fontaine 1985). They involve ritual activities and teachings to introduce the initiate into their new roles. Initiations and transitions are, in general, visually indicated with rituals that include feasts, bodily modifications such as tattooing, scarification or body painting, shaving, washing, isolation of the initiates and their instruction, changing of hairstyles or dress codes. Some of these practices may be recognised archaeologically. Some archaeologists have been able to identify initiation rites studying such practices: Guillén (1993) interpreted female figurines from Chalcatzingo as used in initiation rites and representing stages in a woman's life. Likewise, Serwint (1993) argued that the Heraia festival at Olympia was an initiation rite of girls into womanhood. The *arkteia* was another initiation ritual for young girls and performed at the sanctuary of Brauron, where many statuettes of young children, boys and girls, were dedicated (Guettel-Cole 1984). Representations such as the decorations on Minoan stone vases, e.g., the so-called 'Chieftain Cup' found at Ayia Triada, have been interpreted as scenes of male initiatory rituals at different age-stages (Warren 1969; Koehl 1986). Also, Joyce (2000) explores Aztec initiations as lifecycle rituals starting from infant birth rituals and then

held every fourth year to produce a system of age-grades, which continued until they became adults. The transitions involved status changes that included alterations in figurine hairstyles, dress, jewellery, ear-piercing, body ornamentation and posture (Joyce 2000), showing different age-grades. Lesure (2011: 37-38) also correlates breasts' size, pubis, hair, and arm-position in Valdivia figurines as marking stages in the development of females (from prepuberty to adulthood) that were probably used in age-related rituals.

Burials constitute another rite of passage; in these, infants and children may be buried differently from adults, reflecting local conceptions of age (Kamp 1998; 2001). In the archaeological record, we have several examples of such burial practices that differentiate children from adults. For instance, in the region of Abruzzo, in Neolithic central Italy, children are often buried in caves but adults in settlements (Skeates 1991a). In other instances, children are not buried until a certain age when they are considered full adults and individuals. Both Joyce (1999) for Pre-Classic Mesoamerica and Meskell (1994) for New Kingdom Egypt point out that burials reflect individual and group identities.

4.3. Approaches to the study of age in Aegean archaeology

An adult-centric view still dominates the study of prehistoric Aegean archaeology, often neglecting children and elderly age groups (Gallou 2018: 61). The study of children in Aegean prehistoric archaeology has only recently become more prominent and has focused on a variety of archaeological evidence. The materials analysed for the study of age include burials (Gallou 2004; Triantaphyllou 2008; Georgiadis 2011; Gallou 2015; Triantaphyllou 2016); figurines (Rutter 2003; Papageorgiou 2008; Younger 2009; Budin 2011; 2014); frescoes (Gates 1992; Rehak 1998; Chapin 2005; 2007; Rehak 2007; Papageorgiou 2008; Younger 2009; Pomadère 2012; Günkel-Maschek 2014; Gallou 2018); young people recorded in Linear B tablets (Olsen 1998; Nosch 2001; Gallou 2004; 2010); fingerprints on Linear B tablets; pottery; seals (Rutter 2003; Papageorgiou 2008; Younger 2009; Budin 2011; 2014); and jewellery (Rehak 2007; Younger 2009).

While recent approaches have broadened the age focus beyond adults to include young people and children, there is little study of old age in archaeology. As Gallou (2018: 63) points out, one of the reasons could be the difficulties of identifying the aged bioarchaeologically and their significant absence in Aegean iconography. Important factors for the scarcity of the elderly in the archaeological record are a shorter life expectancy and present-day conceptions of old age. Precisely because of shorter life expectancy, old age probably began at an earlier age than nowadays. However, bioarchaeology follows a conservative approach that identifies old age from 50 years and over (Cave and Oxenham 2014; Triantaphyllou 2016).

However, we can identify individuals of young age in the iconographical record of the Aegean. The depiction of particular hairstyles, costumes, skin colour and physiological characteristics have been used to identify young ages in Minoan frescoes (Davis 1986; Chapin 2005; 2007). For instance, Chapin (2007) has interpreted traits like differences in breast development as signs of age-stages in women's depictions in the frescoes from Xeste 3, at Akrotiri. Other details in female images such as diverse hair lengths and hairstyles, variations in garments and jewellery and the different rendering of the eyes have been interpreted as representations of various age-stages, from prepubescents to old age (Gallou 2018: 66). These interpretations have led some scholars to consider the frescoes and the whole building from Xeste 3, at Akrotiri, as serving for initiation rites for adolescents and prepubescent males and females (e.g., Rehak 2002; Marinatos 2005: 158; Günkel-Maschek 2014; Younger 2016).

4.4. Age and anthropomorphic figurines

Recent archaeological approaches have explored age, and particularly childhood, studying anthropomorphic figurines (Biehl 2015; Hutson 2015; Moses 2015). Scholars have frequently referred to asexual figurines as possibly representing children, pre-pubescents, non-adults or immature age groups (Ucko 1968: 336; Hamilton 2000: 23; Mina 2005: 224; Mina 2007: 278; Marangou 2009: 89), but this hypothesis has only been suggested and not developed in detail. A different perspective has explored

figurines as age-related objects, such as toys (Ucko 1968: 435-436; Talalay 1993: 48-49; Hutson 2015: 61-62) or children as figurine makers (Kamp 1998; Kamp *et al.* 1999; Hutson 2015: 59-61). For instance, Kamp *et al.* (1999) used the measurements of fingerprints (mainly based on ridge breath difference) and quantitative and qualitative measurements on clay animal figurines and miniature and full-size vessels as identifiers of young artisans and different age and sex groups (Kamp 2001: 14). Kamp (2001: 14) argued that children between 11 and 13 years-old, and even as young as two to five years-old, made Sinagua animal figurines in northern Arizona (11th-13th centuries AD). Children made these objects to familiarise themselves with and learn ceramic production and manufacture, which means that children became artisans and entered the economic system very early (Kamp 2001: 14). In another study of figurines made by children, Kamp *et al.* (1999) note that figurines often have lumpy surfaces, little detail, and poor attachments between appendages and torsos, asymmetrical forms, coarse surface finishes and uneven thicknesses. However, adults shaping figurines for the first time might produce similar 'apprentice' results (Hutson 2015: 60). Thus, figurines with such characteristics are not infallible evidence that children and young people made them. Neolithic clay figurines from Crete are mostly burnished, which erases most traces of fingerprints and 'apprentice' mistakes. The only visible fingerprint that remains in one of the figurines from Knossos is in a very doubtful figurine fragment (Evans 1964: fig.60,15).

Finding direct evidence for the archaeology of age in figurines has meant restricting the study to the representation of children in the *kourotrophos* form, a composite figure of a Female bearing or nursing a child and sometimes shown breastfeeding. For instance, Peter Biehl (2015: 189-203) traces figurines representing children from the European and Near Eastern Neolithic dating to the seventh to sixth millennium BC. Biehl (2015: 191) considers that representing children's bodies played a limited role in the Neolithic worldview and belief system and that very few Neolithic sites in Europe and the Near East have produced figurines of children. However, the only figurines he considers as representations of children are the *kourotrophos*. Biehl (2003: figs. 70, 37-38, 96) analyses the *kourotrophos* figurines from Gradac, Rast and Fafos in Serbia, and Sesklo.

Kourotrophoi appeared for the first time in the Neolithic, but not everywhere. For instance, there are no *kourotrophoi* from Neolithic Crete, and it is not present in other corpora of Neolithic figurines from Greece. The first *kourotrophoi* to appear in the Aegean are found in LN Thessaly (2), the Peloponnese (1) and later (mid-third millennium BC) in the Cyclades (4) (Mina 2005: 148). A noteworthy Cycladic example is a small, perhaps female, figurine standing on the head of a larger female, both rendered in the typically folded arm-position. The difference in scale between the two figurines probably reflects the artist's attempt to depict a child. However, the breasts' representation could indicate an older child or an adolescent (Rutter 2003: 34, fig.3). Another *kourotrophos* fragment from the Cyclades consists of a small figurine with no clear sexual representation with, on its belly, the remaining clasped hands of a larger missing figurine. In Minoan Crete, images representing a mother with a child are almost absent (Budin 2011: 284; 2016), but children figurines are clearly recognisable in the Minoan Neopalatial period. For instance, the bronze figurine of a crawling child found in the Psychro Cave: it measures less than 5cm in length, but it is clearly recognisable as a child for its size, its crawling posture, the upward look of the head, and the oversized bald head (Rutter 2003: cat.38). Examples of figurines of young boys have been found in Palaikastro. Three ivory figurines of infant boys are recognisable for their bodily proportions, large head, small size and bald or shaved hair (Rutter 2003: 37-38, fig.8-9). An ivory figurine composition, the so-called 'Female Triad' from Mycenae, shows two adult women with a child or young girl. In this case, the two mature women are larger than the girl; the different body postures and proportions also show their age differences. A series of clay building models with figurines have been found in two Middle Minoan rooms adjacent to the Kamilari tholos. Rutter (2003: 39-40) suggests that representations of children may be recognised in three of these models, consisting of an open building with a composition of terracotta figurines. The so-called 'Group Model of Food Offering' depicts two small standing human figurines bearing a cup or a bowl to serve food or drinks to four seated figurines of larger size. The larger figurines are not gendered, while the smallest of the group is a fully preserved miniature of a nude male. In Minoan art, only male children are represented nude which, together with the small size, may suggest that this particular figurine is a child (Rehak 1999). The second composition is the 'Group Model of Grain Grinding',

showing a woman with a miniature-sized figurine next to her depicted with no genitalia or clothing. The last composition represents four males dancing with linked hands in a circle, who may be identified as young boys if the interpretation of the hairstyle and nudity is correct (Koehl 2001). Lefevre-Novaro (1996) suggests that the three models represent rituals related to rites of passage associated with the dead.

Despite the apparent absence of clear representations of children, young and old individuals in Neolithic times, beyond the few *kourotrophos* examples, I propose that we should still attempt to detect age identities represented in the assemblage of figurines. However, these are probably less evident in comparison to Minoan times. A significant percentage of past societies, possibly around half of the living population, were under the age of 20 and maybe a third of them under 10 (Grimm 2000; Hutson 2015), which suggests that young individuals were actively contributing to forming the archaeological record.

4.4.1. Figurines as toys?

Play may be seen as having a social ritual component (Rogersdotter 2011). Children's playing with objects is one of the many types of play behaviour. Playthings may be considered diverse objects, from things directly given to a child by an adult to play, to adults' items abandoned and retrieved by children, objects made or altered by children, or things present in nature like sticks, stones, or shells (Baxter 2005; Crawford 2009; 2011; Langley and Lister 2018). From this variety, playthings can be almost anything. As Crawford (2009: 57) stated, toys acquire significance and meaning from the children who play with them.

Figurines have also been interpreted as objects of play or toys for children. Ucko (1962; 1968) tried to identify figurines used as toys or dolls in the corpus of figurines from Predynastic Egypt and Neolithic Crete. He argued that if children used them as toys, they would appear in burials, often with a profane or non-religious meaning (Ucko 1968: 434). However, the functions of figurines as toys or as ritual are not mutually exclusive. Although figurines could have been used as toys, we cannot exclude their

later use in rituals. Sillar (1994) suggests that South American Andean figurines were considered even more powerful offerings when children had used them to play. In other cases, such as the Katsina dolls from the Hopi and Zuni cultures, figurines may have played both roles, used in ritual ceremonies as instructional aids and as toys for children (Adams 1991: 6-7; Ladd 1994; Kamp 2001: 20). As Park points out (1998), identifying figurines as playthings is not as easy as it seems since they may have different uses and roles.

Ucko (1968: 433) also argued that figurines used as toys should be of small size. While this may be true for some toys explicitly manufactured for a child to play with, and the small size may be desirable to avoid breakage, a toy may be any object of any size used for play, including children and adult users. Dolls and toys are not necessarily small. Other arguments used to interpret figurines as toys have focused on wear or breakage patterns. For instance, Hutson (2015: 61) considers that figurines used as toys should have considerable wear patterns. Voigt (2000; also, Meskell *et al.* 2008) further argues that the breakage patterns of figurines used as toys are different from the breakage of ritual figurines. She analyses the data for figurines from Çatalhöyük, where damage at points of structural strength indicates intentionality, and she relates this to ritual breakage. Similarly, Meskell *et al.* (2008) argue for the ritual use of the figurines from the pre-pottery Neolithic in Çatalhöyük by analysing the wear patterns and the context of discard.

Analysing the contexts of deposition in Crete, the hypothesis of figurines as dolls is unconvincing. Archaeological studies of dolls' deposition suggest that they were only discarded once broken (Wilkie 2000: 103). The figurines in LN I deposits at Knossos are not broken. This indicates the possibility of intentional deposition rather than mere discard. Other figurines from Knossos, for instance, the pair found in MN I Pit A are broken. However, the fragmentation patterns suggest deliberate breakage, indicating that the figurines were not mere discards (see chapter 3.4.1.1).

4.5. Children, adolescents or adults? The figurines from Knossos and the identification of age-stages

Age and age-related categories have not been explored in the study of Neolithic figurines from Greece, particularly from Knossos, perhaps due to the difficulty of identifying age in the Neolithic. The iconographical variety of the figurine types from Knossos complicates the development of a hypothesis that explains the whole sample and requires their classification into groups, only possible with contextual information. While no universal interpretation can explain such a variety, henceforth, in this section, I will focus on identifying age in the figurines as part of the community's identities at Neolithic Knossos. For this purpose, I follow the methodology explained in the introductory section (4.1) to identify different age-stages through the display of the different features mentioned. However, specifically for Knossos, the interpretation will focus on figurines found contextually together in groups (for more detailed contextual information, see Chapter 3.4.1.1), which allows a more accurate interpretation of differences in size and anatomical and sexual developments. Age may be shown through the vague means of representing sex in some of the figurines from Knossos, and particularly sexless representations may depict children. Age could also explain some of the miniaturist figurines found in Neolithic Knossos, although not in all circumstances.

4.5.1. Figurines from Knossos with contextual information

The analysis of contextual associations of figurines is pertinent and meaningful for our purposes of interpretation. In this sense, there are several associations of Asexual figurines that appear together with sexed figurines whose examination can lead us to meaningful answers on the interpretation of Asexual figurines and the assemblage as a whole.

From the contextualised examples, we can observe specific striking characteristics of the figurines: 1) the miniaturist features of many of them, 2) the scant emphasis on the depiction of sexual attributes: the majority display sexual characteristics ambiguously or vaguely (small or vaguely rendered breasts, and unclear representation of genitalia) or completely lack sex indication. Table 4.1 shows the sex of figurines with known archaeological context. However, the statistical sample for the figurines with context is small, and sex could only be categorised in 50% of the total.

Sex	N. of Figurines
Female	12
Probably Female	2
Asexual	8
Male	2
Probably Male	1
Total	**25**

Table 4.1. Sex of figurines with contextual information from Knossos.

4.5.1.1. Contextual association of Asexual and sexed figurines

The first group of figurines appeared in the early MN Pit A. The deposit contained two marble figurines in its ash fill L2623 and 59/153 (Fig. 3.4a-b). Figurine L2623 (Fig. 3.4a) most probably represents a Male, based on the representation of genitalia. Also, a striking feature of the two marble figurines is the difference in size. While the Male figurine is 9.2cm tall, the Asexual figurine is only 2.54cm. The comparison, in this case, is pertinent as they both have their heads missing. The contrast between both figurines is even more significant as the Male figurine is rendered very naturalistic, with attention paid to the details of legs and back muscles or the spine. However,

figurine 59/153 (Fig. 3.4b) portrays an image barely resembling an anthropomorphic being.

Furthermore, two conspicuous accumulations of figurines, particularly of Asexual and sexed human representations, were unearthed from LN I and LN II deposits. Nine figurines were found in LN I deposits (Str.V) (two of them very doubtful, see Table 3.1). Focusing on the definite figurines, four of them are made of different stones such as slate (L3273, Fig. 3.11), two in steatite (60/183, 60/191; Figs. 3.12, 3.15) and marble (L3271, Fig. 3.16); one figurine is made of shell (O431, Fig. 3.13) and two further ones of clay (59/170, 60/196; Figs. 3.10, 3.14) (see Table 3.3).

All the figurines found in Stratum V were unearthed in a small, restricted area (Evans 1964: 238). Most are whole except for L3271 (Fig. 3.16), which is partially broken at the head, 60/196 (Fig. 3.14) with head and legs broken, and 59/170 (Fig. 3.10) with only the torso remaining. The figurines 60/183 and 60/191 (Figs. 3.12, 3.15) stand out for their miniaturist measurements: both are 2.3cm tall (Table 4.2). The Asexual figurine 60/183 (Fig. 3.12) was contextually associated with L3273 (Fig. 3.11). L3273 is a Female figurine (the vulva represented with incised lines) with a long neck-head and is slightly taller (2.8cm) than the Asexual figurine 60/183. Figurine O431 (Fig. 3.13) lacks sexual attributes and is also represented with an elongated neck-head similar to L3273. This figurine was found in the same context as the clay Female figurine 60/196 (Fig. 3.14), which has a very slight suggestion of the breasts, measuring only 2.8cm height with the head and neck missing. The tallest figurine of the group is the Female L3271 (Fig. 3.16) which is almost whole and measures 5.8cm, with the divided triangle as a possible representation of the genitalia. However, figurine 59/170 (Fig. 3.10) would have been larger as the torso alone measures 3.8cm.

In Stratum IV, additional groups of figurines were deposited together, dating to the LN II period. The highest number of figurines with contextual data from Knossos was unearthed in LN II, possibly coinciding with a prolific period for figurines' production and use. A total of 22 figurines in clay (although 6 of them are doubtful parts) and one in bone were unearthed in Stratum IV (Table 4.3). Significantly, all the 16 definite clay figurines appeared in groupings in a small, restricted area of Stratum IV, but from different levels. The groupings are as follows (see also Table 4.3):

In levels A9 and A9b, J.D. Evans found four definite figurines and another three objects that may be doubtful parts of figurines (Evans 1964: 238). Three Female figurines were found in level A9, while the figurine in level A9b is Asexual. The Female figurines are taller (59/44, 59/45, 59/77 Figs. 3.17-3.19), including the broken examples. Generally, they have wider torsos (width at the waist and hips when preserved) than the Asexual figurine (59/84, Fig. 3.20), which is smaller (for measurements, see Table 4.3). The Female figurines 59/45 and 59/77 (Figs. 3.18-3.19) are represented with small breasts, especially the latter, whose breasts are only slightly suggested. The Female figure 59/44 (Fig. 3.17) is larger and broader than the other Females, with clearly represented breasts and decoration possibly depicting clothing. The Asexual figurine from A9b (59/84, Fig. 3.20) is of a miniaturist type similar in shape to 59/77 but on a smaller scale, measuring only 3.8cm. There is also a difference in the arm-position between the larger and the smaller examples. The larger figurines show the gesture 'arms to the chest under the breasts', while the smaller figurines are rendered with 'arms-stumps'. The differences in the representation of this group in size, gesture and sex could be interpreted as representations of different age-stages. Possibly, the largest figurine represents an adult, the slightly smaller Females are perhaps adolescents or younger girls, and the Asexual one a child.

Figurine	Chr.	Material	Context	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
59/170	LN I	Clay	A14b	-	Torso	3.8	2.4	-
L3273	LN I	Slate	A15a	Female	Complete	2.9	1	0.5
60/183	LN I	Steatite	A15a	Asexual	Complete	2.3	1	0.7
O431	LN I	Shell	AC7	Asexual	Complete	3.3	1.3	0.5
60/196	LN I	Clay	AC7	Female	Torso and base	2.8	2.8	1.3
60/191	LN I	Steatite	A15c	Asexual	Complete	2.3	0.5	0.7
L3271	LN I	Marble	A16	Female	Head broken	5.8	2.5	1.5

Table 4.2. Figurines from Str.V, Knossos: chronology, material, context, sex, condition and measurements.

Figurine	Chr.	Material	Context	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
59/44	LN II	Clay	A9	Female	Torso	6.6	5	3.8
59/45	LN II	Clay	A9	Female	Torso	4.6	4.8	2.5
59/77	LN II	Clay	A9	Female	Lacks head	5.3	3.3	1.8
59/84	LN II	Clay	A9b	Asexual	Complete	3.8	2	1.5
59/102	LN II	Clay	A11	Female	Head and torso	4.3	4.6	2.3
59/111	LN II	Clay	A11	-	Head and torso	3.6	2.8	-
59/121	LN II	Clay	A11	Asexual	Complete	3.8	2.3	1.8
59/122	LN II	Clay	A12	Female	Lacks head	4	3.3	2
59/129	LN II	Clay	A13	Female	Torso	4	4.3	2.3
59/134	LN II	Clay	A14	-	Lower torso	2.3	-	1.5
59/135	LN II	Clay	A14	-	Lower torso	3	-	2.3
59/136	LN II	Clay	A14	-	Lower torso	2.8	-	1.8
59/142	LN II	Clay	A14	-	Lower torso	2.3	-	1.3
59/143	LN II	Clay	A14	Probably Male	Complete	3.3	3	2.5
59/144	LN II	Clay	A14	-	Lower torso	3	-	1.3
59/169	LN II	Clay	A14	Female	Part of torso	3.8	-	-
59/40	LN II	Rib-bone	C16	Asexual	Complete	4	1	0.5

Table 4.3. Figurines from Str.IV, Knossos: chronology, material, context, sex, condition, and measurements.

In level A11, another group of three figurines and two fragments doubtful figurines were found. I will focus on the definite figurines since the doubtful fragments are questionable, and they are probably fragments of pottery or other clay objects that cannot offer us information regarding sex, gesture, or size. As regards the definite figurines, two Females were found together with an Asexual figurine in context A11. Once more, a fragment of a Female figurine 59/102 (Fig. 3.21) is the largest of the group with a preserved height of 4.3cm (for figurine measurements in LN II contexts, see Table 4.3), even though only part of the head and torso remain of this figurine. The figurine bears impressed decoration of dots on both sides of the elbows or shoulders, and the right side of the neck. Figurine 59/111 (Fig. 3.22) is also fragmented and only has part of the head and torso remaining with a central depression that may indicate a mark left by a broken breast. Finally, as we have also seen in the figurines found in context A9, the only whole figure is Asexual and smaller in proportion to the other figurines of the group (59/121, Fig. 3.23).

In contrast, the only figurine in level A12 is 59/122 (Fig. 3.24), partially broken at the neck and of small size (4cm). It represents a Female with small breasts. Akin to the previous figurine, in level A13 was found the small figurine 59/129 (Fig. 3.25), measuring equally 4cm and broken slightly at the back of the base, right arm and head. It presents similarly small breasts as the Female figurine 59/122.

Another considerable accumulation comes from level A14, where seven definite figurines were found. They are chiefly of a very miniaturistic type and quite fragmentary. Five of them only have the lower part of the torso and base remaining, including part of the waist, hips, and buttocks (59/134, 59/135, 59/136, 59/142, 59/144, Figs. 3.26-3.32). None of them shows genitalia or any sexual trait, but their tiny size between 2.3 and 3cm height would make a detailed representation of any features difficult. Together with these five fragments of the lower body, another two sexed figurines were unearthed, a Probably Male and a Female, though only one breast remains. The indication of sex as a slight modelled projection that could schematically represent a penis, and its small dimensions of only 3.3cm in height, suggests that figurine 59/143 (Fig. 3.31) may represent a Male child or prepubescent. Its legs, arms and head are represented by triangular stumps. Finally, figurine 59/169

(Fig. 3.32), although very fragmentary, damaged, and battered, seems to have been the largest when it was whole and has incised and impressed decoration at the front, back and side of the neck.

Therefore, the groupings of figurines from LN I and II represent the same-sex categories, whether in hard materials or clay: predominantly Female and Asexual with only one Probably Male. Additionally, there is a correlation between the figurines' size and sex. This association is especially clear in LN II Stratum IV, where decorated Female figurines are larger and broader with clearly depicted breasts. Female figurines without decoration are slightly smaller and mostly represented with small breasts, which could be a representation of different age categories. Furthermore, Asexual figurines are always of a very miniaturistic size compared to their Female counterparts. I interpret the Asexual figurines in these contexts to represent children or prepubescent individuals, which is also supported by their miniature sizes. The tiny figurines from context A14 seem plausible depictions of children except for the larger Female example (Fig. 3.32) and the two Probably Females. The differences between larger and smaller Female figurines might also be understood as possible age differences. Larger Females, especially those with decoration and with 'arms to the chest' gesture probably represent adult women. On the contrary, smaller Females associated with them may be interpreted as young girls, perhaps adolescents. On other occasions, for instance in the examples from level A12 and A13 (Figs. 3.24-3.25), Female figurines are tiny (4cm) and with small breasts, suggesting perhaps prepubescent girls or children.

At Knossos, the distinctive pattern of mixing larger Female figurines with smaller Female and Asexual examples repeatedly appears in LN I and LN II deposits. In the Final Neolithic deposits (Strata III, II and I), fewer figurines were found. In this phase, only five are securely identified as fragments of figurines. Figurine 60/232 (Fig. 3.35) stands out as a Male, the only one in the assemblage with clearly defined Male genitalia. Although only a fragment from the hips to mid-legs, it preserves a height of 4cm and a width at the waist of 2.8cm. Therefore, its large size perhaps indicates adult age.

4.5.1.2. Figurines from Knossos without contextual information

As stated previously (section 4.5.1.1), the context in which figurines were found is key for interpreting age differences. Due to the schematic and vague rendering of Neolithic figurines, it is only based on proper comparisons in size, gender, breast or genitalia development and gesture within a group of figurines found together, that we can determine possible age differences more accurately. Therefore, the assemblage of figurines from Sir Arthur Evans' excavations lacks most of the information to allow for such comparisons. However, in this section, I will comment on those figurines that may support the existence in the assemblage of different life cycles, but also the exceptions since not all the Asexual figurines per se always represent children or young age.

Three of the figurines from A. Evans' excavations are similar to the group found in Str.IV (LN II) in area A14. Likewise, only part of the lower base remains in these figures: buttocks and hips in figurine F.I.77, and part of the waist in figurines D.IV.1 and 1941.160 (Figs. 4.1-4.3). The anthropomorphic image 1941.160 is a miniaturistic representation in a very fragmented state and measures 2cm height, 0.8cm at the waist and 1.3cm at the hip level. The measurements indicate that, even if the figurine were whole, it would still be of small size (for the known measurements of the figurines from Arthur Evans excavations, see Tables 4.4-4.6).

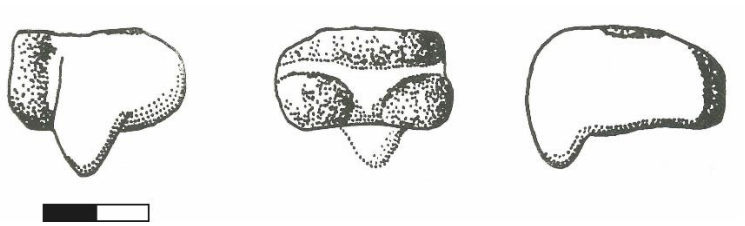

Figure 4.1. Front, back and side of figurine F.I.77, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.38)



Figure 4.2. Front, back and side of figurine D.IV.1, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.37)



Figure 4.3. Front, side and back of figurine 1941.160, Neolithic Knossos (Photograph by the author)

Male figurines also show indications of the representation of different age-stages. The LN Male figurine 1927.3261 (Fig. 4.4) is missing part of the torso and head and is of small dimensions when compared with other LN and FN Male figurines from Knossos such as 60/232 (Fig. 3.35) and 18717 (Fig. 4.5). A Probably Male figure with more vaguely rendered sex 2725 (Fig. 4.6), preserved whole, measuring only 3cm in height and 1.5cm at the waist. This figurine is similar to the Probably Male figurine 59/142 (Fig. 3.29) that appeared in context A14 of LN II Str.IV. However, 2725 is more elongated and thinner at the waist, although they both have similar measurements. Possibly, the vague and ambiguous rendering of the genitalia and the small size in both

examples indicate a young age, perhaps juvenile or pre-pubescent. In contrast, figurine 1927.3261 has a clear depiction of genitalia and possibly represents an older individual, maybe an adolescent or young boy, but still not a full adult. Conversely, figurine 18717, depicted as a larger and broad individual, most probably represents an adult. An interpretation also suggested by the different arm-position with the arms extended outwards and posture 'sitting on a stool'.



Figure 4.4. Front, back and side of the Male figurine 1927.3261, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.39)



Figure 4.5. Male figurine 18717, LN Knossos (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_male_figurine,_pottery,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144521.jpg; 27/05/2020)

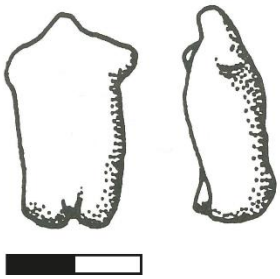

Figure 4.6. Front and side of Probably Male figurine 2725, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.42)

On the other hand, three Probably Female figurines are represented with a rather ambiguous gesture. The gesture probably represents their arms on their chest covering their breasts. However, it is unclear where the hands end and the breasts begin in this gesture. This arm-position is only present in figurines 2715, 1927-3260, and AE.731 (Figs. 3.42, 4.7-4.8). It is interesting to note the ambiguity of this gesture: while it could simply be a schematic representation, figurine makers use arm-stumps quantitatively more (with 39 arm-stumps examples and five 'arms to the chest touching/covering breasts') for a schematic rendering of the arm-position in figurines from Knossos. In contrast, in these three figurines, the stumps are modelled but the arms are shown in relief on the breasts.

Similarly, two Female figurines (1938.662 and unknown inv.no., Figs. 4.13, 5.18) have a similar gesture, but the breasts are explicitly shown in this case. The gesture of 'arms on the chest below the breasts' is shown as a comparison in figurine 1938.660 (Fig. 4.9). Is this vague rendering of the gesture a possible representation of age? It is unclear whether age is a factor in depicting distinct gestures since we do not know if showing breasts was only allowed for adult women. In Minoan Crete, only boys were represented naked, while girls were always dressed independently of their age. However, adult women wear costumes that leave the part of the breasts exposed. A similar attire could apply to Neolithic Knossos.



Figure 4.7. Figurine 1927-3260 with arms covering the breasts, Knossos (Photograph by the author)

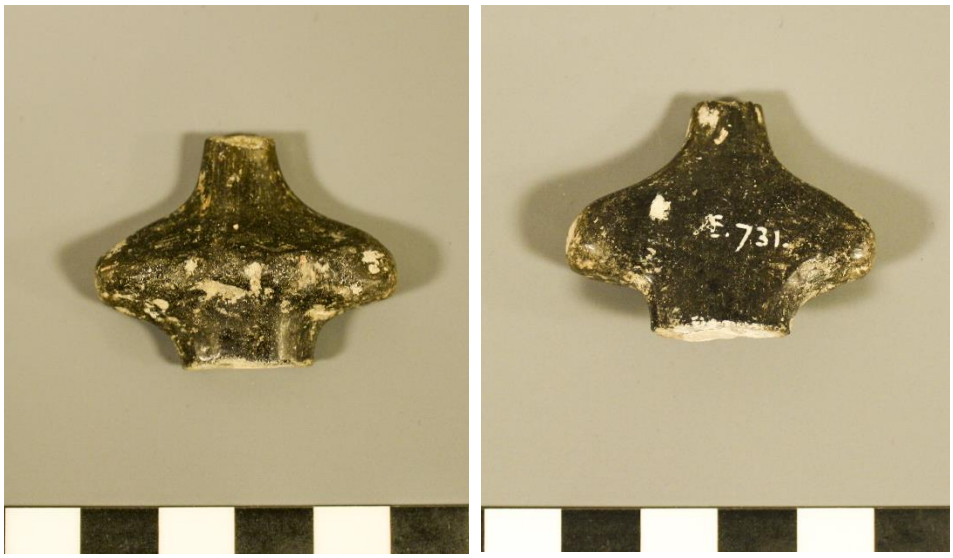

Figure 4.8. Figurine AE.731 with arms over the breasts, Knossos (Photograph by the author)



Figure 4.9. Figurine 1938.660 with arms under the breasts, Knossos (Photograph by the author)



Figure 4.10. Front, back and side of figurine 2722, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.44)

The sexless figurine 2722 (Fig. 4.10) is depicted in a similar shape to 2715 (Fig. 3.42). However, 2722 has smaller measurements, with no breasts or other sexual attributes depicted, possibly representing a younger individual than 2715. This anthropomorphic image may show a prepubescent or juvenile individual. Figurine 1938.661 (Fig. 4.11) is another example of the representation of very small breasts in some figurines from Neolithic Knossos. Likewise, other Female images have small breasts and proportionately small sizes, such as 2723 and 1938.662 (Figs. 4.12-4.13). In contrast, figurine 1938.660 (Fig. 4.9) may be interpreted as an adult Female: it measures 6.9cm in height, although only the torso remains. Figurines 1938.661, 2723, and 1938.662 (Figs. 4.11-4.13) may be interpreted as young or adolescent girls, possibly similar ages to figurines 2715, 1927-3260 and AE.731 (Figs. 3.42, 4.7-4.8). The interpretation of the three figurines as young girls is based on their small breasts and small size compared to Female adult figurines (for measurements, see Tables 4.4-4.6). Conversely, figurine 1938.660 (Fig. 4.9) is a more plausible representation of an adult woman.

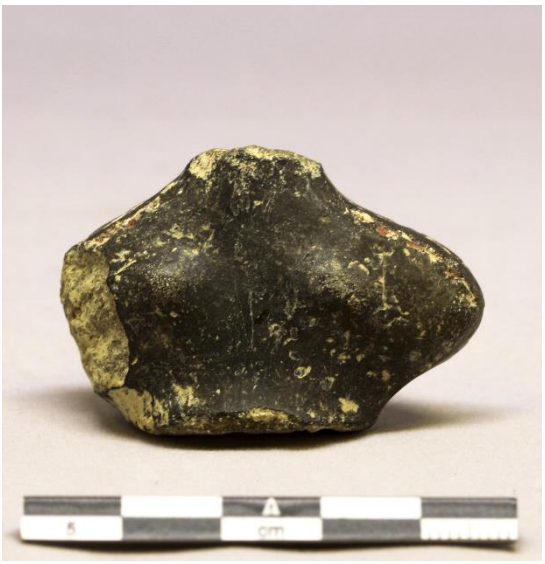

Figure 4.11. Female figurine 1938.661, LN Knossos (Photograph by the author)

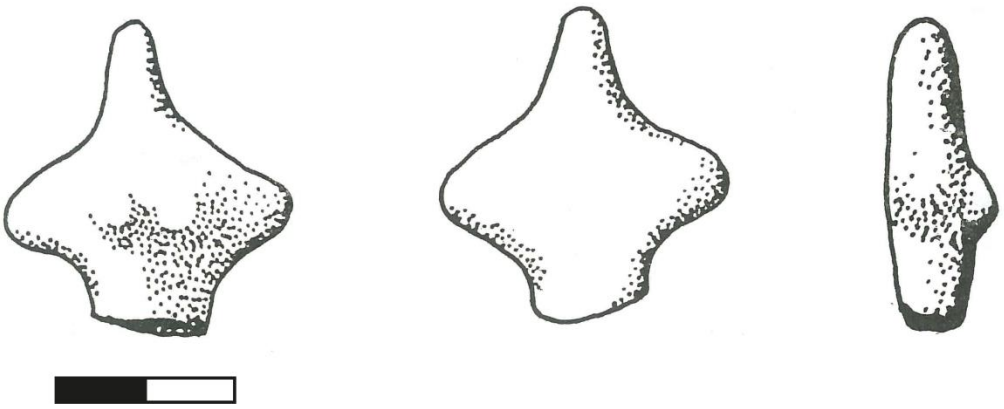

Figure 4.12. Front, back and side of figurine 2723, Neolithic Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.43)



Figure 4.13. Female figurine 1938.662, LN Knossos (Photograph by the author)

In contrast with small measurements of the figurines mentioned previously, it is striking that the head alone of figurine 2726 (Fig. 6.35) measures 6.4cm. It is larger than some whole or almost whole figurines in the assemblage, e.g., the Asexual figurine 2722 (Fig. 4.10) or the Probably Male figurine 2725 (Fig. 4.6). An exception to the generally tiny Asexual figurine sizes is 2716 (Fig. 4.14), which lacks the representation of sexual attributes and constitutes one of the larger figurines of the assemblage from Neolithic Knossos with a height of 9.5cm. However, this figurine is very schematic and seems to imitate the shape of figurines in stone (akin to the so-called violin shape), which may be why the indication of sex is lacking (for the Asexual figurines in hard materials, see Chapter 5.2.2). Another exception may be the figurines in green steatite 1938.666 and 1938.665 (Figs. 4.15-4.16), which may be considered Female given the exaggerated buttocks even if they are miniaturistic. For this reason, it is not possible to view all Asexual figurines as children or individuals of young age, nor it is possible always to assert that all miniaturistic figurines should be similarly considered children.



Figure 4.14. Clay Asexual figurine 2716, LN Knossos (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Female_figurine_very_schematically,_Knossos,_5300%E2%80%934000_BC,_AMH_2716,_144517.jpg; 27/05/2020) (Drawing after Ucko 1968: fig.50).



Figure 4.15. Female figurine 1938.666, LN Knossos (Photographs by the author)

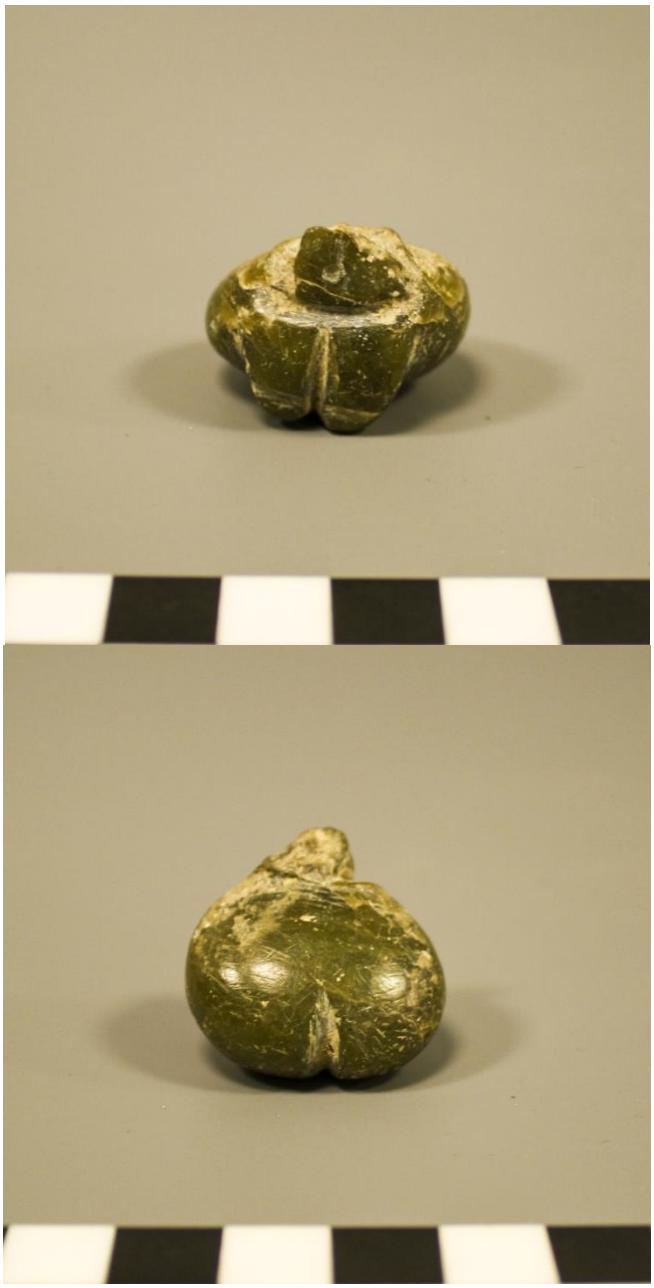



Figure 4.16. Figurine 1938.665, LN Knossos (Photographs by the author)

Figurine	Chr.	Material	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
D.IV.1	Neolithic	Clay	-	Part of base	2.5	-	2.5
F.I.77	Neolithic	Clay	-	Part of base	2.5	-	-
1927-3261	LN	Clay	Male	Part of torso and base	3.8	-	1.5
1927-3260	LN	Clay	Probably Female	Lacks head	5	3.6	1.3
2726	Neolithic	Clay	-	Head only	6.4	-	-
2725	Neolithic	Clay	Probably Male	Complete	3	1.8	1.5
2723	Neolithic	Clay	Female	Head and torso	3.3	3.3	1.8?
2722	Neolithic	Clay	Asexual	Head broken	3.8	2.3	1.3
2721	Neolithic	Clay	Asexual	Torso	4.8	3.8	1.8
2720	Neolithic	Clay	-	Part of torso	4.6	4.8	2.3
2719	Neolithic	Clay	Female	Part of torso	4.8	5.8	3
2718	Neolithic	Clay	Female	Lacks head	4.3	3.8	1.8
2717	Neolithic	Clay	Female	Lacks head	4.3	4.8	2.8
2716	LN	Clay	Asexual	Complete	9.5	7.1	2.8
2715	Neolithic	Clay	Probably Female	Lacks head	5.6	4.8	2
AE.731	LN	Clay	Probably Female	Part of torso and neck	3	3.8	1.5

Table 4.4. Measurements of figurines from A. Evans' excavations at Knossos (I)

Figurine	Chr.	Material	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
AE.730	MN	Clay	-	Base and lower part of torso	3.8	-	2.5
AE.729	MN	Clay	Female	Base and lower part of torso	3.6	-	1.5
1938.666	LN	Steatite	Female	Lacks head	2.5	2	1.2
1938.665	LN	Steatite	Female	Base of figurine	2.5	-	1.5?
1938.664	LN	Marble	Female	Lacks head	3	2.4	1.9
1938.662	LN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	2.8	3.8	1.8
1938.661	LN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	2.8	4.6	-
1938.660	LN	Clay	Female	Torso	6.9	6.1	3.3
1938.659	Neolithic	Clay	-	Lacks head and part of torso	5	3.6	2.8
1938.658	Neolithic	Clay	Asexual	Complete	5.6	3.6	1.3
09.408	LN	Marble	Female	Lacks head	5.6	5.6	4
1941.200	Neolithic	Marble	Asexual	Complete	3	0.5	0.5
1941.160	Neolithic	Clay	-	Base of figurine	2	-	0.8
G100	LN	Marble	Probably Female	Lacks head	4.3	2	1.3
2724	Neolithic	Clay	Asexual	Torso and part of base	3.6	2	1

Table 4.5. Measurements of figurines from Sir Arthur Evans' excavations at Knossos (II)

Figurine	Chr.	Material	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
105	Neolithic	Marble	-	Legs only	5.3	-	-
102	Neolithic	Clay	-	Torso	2.8	4.6	1.5
1934,0115.3	LN	Clay	-	Part of torso and base	4	-	4
N.83 (Appendix 1)	FN	Clay		Torso	4?	2.3?	2?
N. 96 (Appendix 1)	FN	Clay	-	Part of torso and base	4	-	2.5
G408	LN	Marble	Asexual	Complete	3	-	-
1934,0115.2	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks head	3	2.5	-
N. 101 (Appendix 1)	FN	Clay	-	Part of hand	4.6	-	-
N. 102 (Appendix 1)	-	Clay	-	Head and part of torso	2.8	1.8	-
G104	Neolithic	Marble	Asexual	Complete	5	-	-
G103	Neolithic	Marble	Female	Complete	5.7	-	-
G101	Neolithic	Marble	Asexual	Lacks head	4.1	-	-
G99	Neolithic	Marble	Female	Lacks head	6.3	-	-
6704	Neolithic	Clay	Female	Lacks head	3	2.5	1.3
3275	Neolithic	Marble	Asexual	Complete	3.1	-	-
18717	LN	Clay	Male	Complete	5.2	-	-
N. 111 (Appendix 1)	LN	Marble	Asexual	Lacks head	4	-	-

Table 4.6. Measurements of figurines from A. Evans' excavations at Knossos (III)

Figurine 1938.659 (Fig. 4.17) was burnished with red slip. Ucko (1968: 443) claimed that this figurine shows a deformity, a 'hunch-back'. The figurine depicted with a protruding belly and a paunch below could represent an individual of old age. If that is the case, this would be the only elderly individual so far identified in the assemblage of Neolithic figurines from Crete. The earliest portrayals of elderly individuals may date to the Neolithic since certain images without firm bodies and faces marked by signs that may indicate advanced age have been interpreted in this way (Hitchcock and Nikolaidou 2013: 505; Gallou 2018: 63). In later Minoan iconography, scholars have argued that several images could represent old age. For instance, Evans identified elderly men in the 'old sistrum-player' and the bronze Male figurine from Tylissos House A, both wearing loose belts (Evans 1930: 449-450; Rehak 2009: 15; Gallou 2018: 63). Gallou (2018: 63) mentions another two examples: one, a seated mature man with a slight paunch from Xeste 3 on Thera (cf. Rehak 2002: 43, fig.2.5), and another Male represented on the 'Harvester Vase' because of its resemblance with the old bearded priests of the Minoan seals (cf. Forsdyke 1954, pl.2a). Hunch-backs, wide bodies and thick waists with sagging breasts, double chins or hair bound in snoods are also recognised in Aegean iconography as denoting women of old age (Gallou 2018: 64, 69); for example, the so-called 'Five Mature Ladies' fresco of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, Thera (Younger 2016: 586; 2009: 210) or the images of hunch-back elderly women on the terracotta sarcophagus from Tanagra (Gallou 2015: 62, fig.2). Figurine 1938.659, therefore, may be considered an elderly individual who is represented sitting perhaps on a stool.



Figure 4.17. Front, side and back of figurine 1938.659, Knossos (Photographs by the author)

The decoration on figurines from Neolithic Knossos (see chapter 6.4.4) is mostly represented on women's bodies, the only exception being the Asexual figurine 2716. The depiction of attire has been another parameter to identify age in the Prehistoric Aegean, for instance, in Minoan frescoes (Gallou 2018: 62; Rehak 2007: 206-207). In our assemblage of figurines from Knossos, only Females are interpreted as wearing clothes (see Chapter 6.4.4), except for figurine 2716. A large Female torso possibly depicts an adult woman (59/44, Fig. 3.17) represented with clothes that consist of diagonal lines at the back while at the front, the chest seems to be nude showing the

breasts. In Minoan iconography, adult women wear a robe that reaches to the ankles and a bodice open at the front to expose the torso from the base of the throat to the waist; for instance, analysing the frescoes from Xeste 3 at Akrotiri (Thera), Rehak (2004; 2007: 209) suggests that the exposure of the chest was a way for the frescoes' viewers to understand the age of women by showing the stages of breast development as they matured. If my interpretation is correct and clothing decoration is mostly associated to adolescent and adult figurines, then age-stages possibly had differing associated attires, as changes in age-stages are generally marked by changes and modifications in hairstyles, clothing, jewellery, and bodily decorations (Kamp 2001: 5; Rehak 2004; 2007). The smaller Female figurines with decoration found at LN Knossos tend to be represented by impressions, e.g., dots in figurines 1938.662, 2715, 59/169, 59/102, and 59/170 (Figs. 4.13, 3.42, 3.32, 3.21, 3.10), perhaps a depiction of beads sewn to the dress or jewellery (see Chapter 6.4.4); and impressed triangles in 1938.661 (Fig. 4.11). Impressed decoration may be interpreted as indicating a dress characteristic of young girls, perhaps adolescents, while other Female figurines have paint traces, such as 1927-3260 or AE.731 (Figs. 4.7-4.8), which may show similar or younger girls. The bodily decorations on the Knossos figurines may, therefore, depict a change in the age status of the Females, perhaps entering the adolescence and adult life-stages. Figurines without decoration but small breasts may be interpreted as pubescent girls possibly younger than the ones with decoration: e.g., 59/122, 59/129, 59/45, 59/77 and 60/196 (Figs. 3.24-3.25, 3.18-3.19, 3.14). Some figurines without breasts and sex indication may represent either pre-pubescents or juveniles. The smallest Asexual figurines and fragmented figurines of tiny size from LN I-II contexts may be interpreted as possible children and infants.

Although no clear boundaries based on years can be established to define age identities, the figurines from Knossos, especially the decorated ones, and those from LN I-II periods, may depict stages of the life cycle: children and pre-pubescent, pubescent, adolescents, young, adult, and at least one elderly individual. This interpretation, however, is not meant to be universal. The figurines probably had different uses and meanings. Still, the depiction of different age-stages of the life cycle is clear in the examples shown, although with a few specific exceptions.

4.6. Familiar beginnings: identifying age in figurines from Neolithic Thessaly.

The archaeological data from the region of Thessaly for the selected case studies is scantier than the evidence available at Knossos. However, the same parameters of size, gesture, decoration, development of breasts, sex and anatomical details will be assessed in this section to identify possible age-stages in Thessalian figurines. Here, I only present the data from those sites where the evidence shows possible age differences: Platia Magoula Zarkou, Sesklo, Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Zappeio 2, Sitochoro 1 and Chara 1. Specific sites such as Dimini or Rachmani also within our Thessalian case studies have yielded mostly acroliths and very schematic figurines. Therefore, it is not possible to assess age differences in those sites, where perhaps representing age-stages in figurines was unimportant.

4.6.1. Platia Magoula Zarkou

One of the most evident examples of the representation of age-stages in Greek Neolithic figurines comes from Platia Magoula Zarkou. During Kostas Gallis' excavations in 1983 at this site in north-eastern Thessaly, a clay house model with figurines was found (Figs. 3.61-3.62). It consisted of a house model with no roof with nine figurines in its interior. The context of this finding is explained in Chapter 3.4.2.4. The group of nine anthropomorphic figurines display different sizes, shapes, decorations, gestures, postures, and sex. The figurines occupy different places within the model. On the raised platform, a Female figurine was lying diagonally. This figurine is the largest and measures 7cm high (Fig. 4.18). This figurine is represented with the 'arms to the chest below the breasts' gesture. The lower part or base of the figurine ends in a broad cylindrical shape that may represent a dress's skirt while the back side is flat. The figure is decorated with incisions (see Chapter 6.4.4). Next to this figurine, lay a Probably Male figurine depicted with four legs, which can be referred to as the 'four-legged' or 'seated on a stool' type characteristic of the EN-MN, which tends to be Male (Gallis 1985: 21). The two figurines possibly represent a couple and are the

largest compared to the other groups. In the opposite corner and next to the entrance opening, another Female and a Probably Male couple were rendered in a slightly smaller size. Both the Female and the Probably Male figurines were depicted in the same way as the first couple: with the same gesture, posture, and decorations. Adjacent to this pair, and next to the Female figurine's head, lay two smaller and schematic figurines, which lack any indication of sex. One is decorated with dot impressions (Fig. 4.18) and the other with incised lines. These figurines measure only 2.5cm and could represent children or infants.

In the corner side, close to the oven, lay three small figurines (smaller in size than the two couples) but each of a different size. The larger of those is a Female figurine modelled with breasts and incised decoration, possibly representing a young girl or adolescent. The slightly smaller figurine to the right corner shows a similar posture than the other adult Probably Males and is perhaps an adolescent or prepubescent individual. The middle figurine of the three was even smaller, measuring 2.6cm in height (Gallis 1985: 22), possibly representing a child or infant. This house model has been interpreted as representing a family house and its members (Gallis 1985; Halstead 1999b; Rutter 2003). Although the excavator interpreted the house model as a nuclear family, the presence of four adults, even if these are couples of the same descent, instead suggests an extended one (Souvatzi 2008: 98, Pasternak *et al.* 1976; Segalen 1986: 18). The larger couple may represent the oldest members of the family, perhaps the grandparents. The three figurines in the corner next to the oven either represent a very young adolescent couple with their child in the middle or, more probably, the young children of one of the couples, possibly the smaller couple next to them. The figurines in the house model were perhaps conceived to be lying on the surface. This arrangement explains why the back side of the larger figurine is flat, the size of the figurines fits perfectly in the areas of the model, and the clay of the house model itself presents soft depressions where the figurines were found. The Probably Male figurines 'sitting on a stool' were also lying on the surface, perhaps indicating that the stool symbolises of their gender and their authority, status or power relations. All the figurines, except for the small Asexual ones, have bird-like heads. The interpretation as family members of the same household derives from the differences

in size and gender and from the fact that they share the same style and decoration, which may indicate their belonging to the same social group.

A tiny figurine measuring 3cm (Fig. 3.63), similar to one of the smaller found in the house model, was recovered from the cremation burials of the same period, beginning of LN, at the Platia Magoula Zarkou cemetery. This figurine may represent a child, like the small figurines of the house model.



Figure 4.18. Photograph showing the comparison in size between the largest Female figurine (7cm) and one of the smaller Asexual figurines (2.5cm) of the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model (after Gallis 1985: pl.XVIa)



Figure 4.19. Side view of the figurines showing the Female' bird-like head profile from the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model (after Gallis 1985: pl.XVIb)

Comparable Neolithic figurines representing age-stages are found in nearby regions, such as vase-models from the Balkans; for instance, a vase-model of a house with figurines from Gheläieşti-Nedeia (FN Cucuteni culture, Romania), whose figurines possibly represent different age-stages. Four figurines were found grouped together inside the model. The figurines were arranged in a pair of Male and Female of the same size, a larger seated and decorated Female figurine (18cm high) and a small figurine of a similar type but without representation of sex (9cm high) (Fig. 4.20a). Another vase model from Gheläieşti comprised seven figurines: a large Female, three smaller Females, a smaller Male and the smallest an Asexual figurine (Fig. 4.20b). These models may represent different age categories where the Asexual figurines always tend to be the smallest, suggesting a younger age. Similar age differences may be represented in the groups of figurines from Cucuteni culture. A set of twenty-one figurines and thirteen chairs was found in Poduri-Dealul Ghindaru, 4900–4750 BC (Pre-Cucuteni II) (CMJMPN, Fig. 4.21). The group comprises 15 large Female figurines and six smaller. The larger figures have both painted and incised decoration. The smaller figurines have little, if any, surface decoration and incisions are restricted to facial and

anatomical details (Bailey 2010: 113). All the chairs were intended for the larger Females as their sizes adjust perfectly to the chairs. Likewise, another set of twenty-one figurines (twelve large, eight small, and one tiny), thirteen chairs, and forty-two cylindrical and round clay beads was found in Isaiia-Balta Popii, 4700–4500 BC (Pre-Cucuteni III) (UAIC, Fig. 4.22) (Bailey 2010: 114). This set also depicts a group of larger Female figurines and smaller figurines of the same sex, probably representing different ages.



Figure 4.20a. (Top) Vase model from Ghelăieşti-Nedeia with four figurines inside (after https://myspacedsg.wordpress.com/2015/01/01/cultura-cucuteni/16-complex-de-cult-ghelaiesti-cucuteni-b/; 22/07/2020). b. (Bottom) Vase model from Ghelăieşti with seven figurines (after Bailey 2010: fig.5-5)

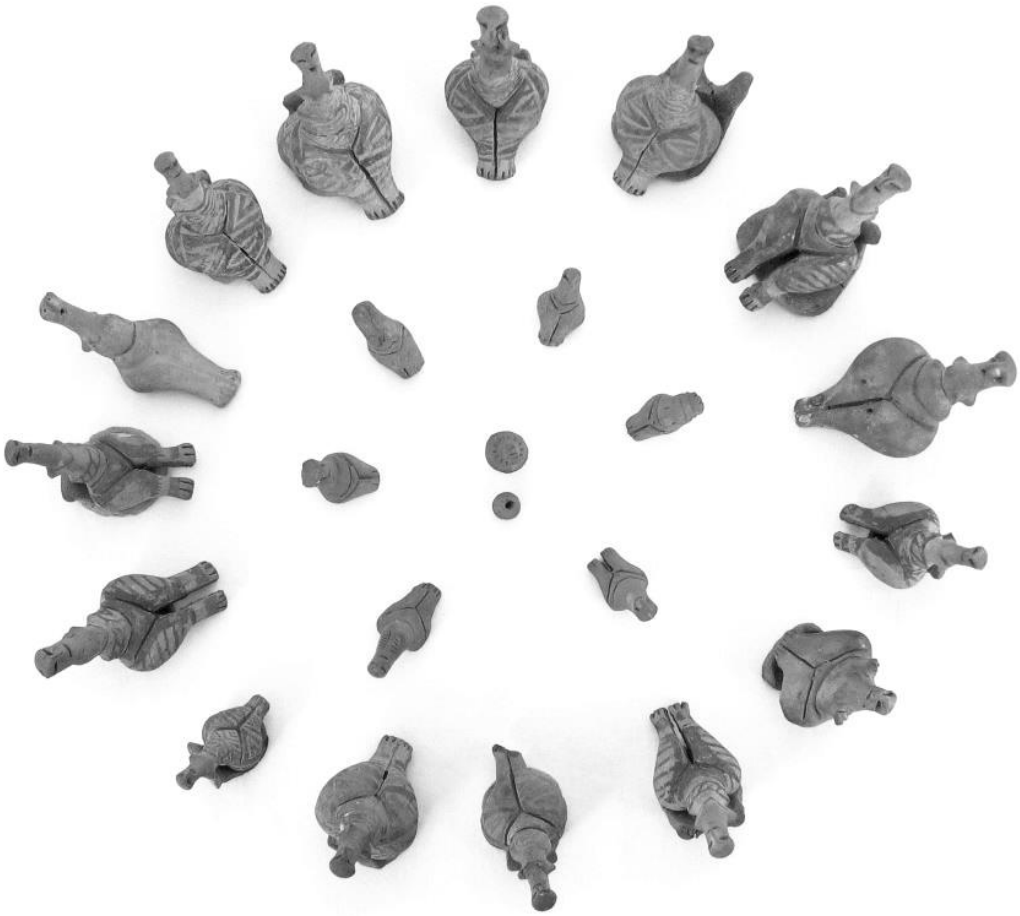

Figure 4.21. Group of figurines found in Poduri-Dealul Ghindaru, 4900–4750 BC (Pre-Cucuteni II), CMJMPN (after Bailey 2010: fig.5-1)



Figure 4.22. Group of figurines, chairs, and askos from Isaiia-Balta Popii, 4700–4500 BC (Pre-Cucuteni III), UAIC (after Bailey 2010: fig.5-2)

4.6.2. Sesklo

At Sesklo, age differences are more difficult to assess mainly due to the scarce information concerning associated figurines found together. The excavators rarely reported finding figurines grouped together in the same context. Therefore, for this analysis, we mostly need to rely on the interpretation of single figurines. Even so, possible age representations may be suggested for specific EN figurines excavated by Tsountas (1908). In this phase, Female figurines are conventionally depicted with voluptuous bodies: slightly protruding bellies, sometimes a fat bulge below the belly area, wide buttocks and calf muscles. The gesture commonly depicted in these figurines is 'arms to the chest touching/covering the breasts' and standing posture. Examples of these figurines are EAM.5940 (Fig. 4.23) with a height of 6.8cm, EAM.5942 (Fig. 4.24) or Figs. 4.25-4.26 (unknown inv.no.) (for measurements, see Table 4.7). All the figurines are clear depictions of Females since breasts, and sometimes genitalia, are represented. They probably depict women who have reached sexual maturity since

these attributes are emphasised. The standardised way of depicting Female bodies suggests that this was probably understood conventionally as depictions of young or adult women.

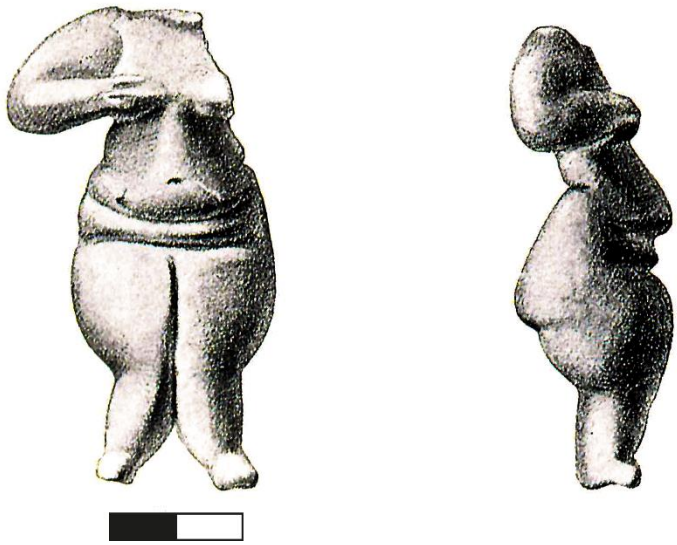

Figure 4.23. Clay Female figurine EAM.5940, EN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.32,3)



Figure 4.24. Clay Female figurine EAM.5942, EN Sesklo (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/4/4c/Neolithic_clay_figurines%2C_NAMA%2C_191103.jpg; 20/08/2020)

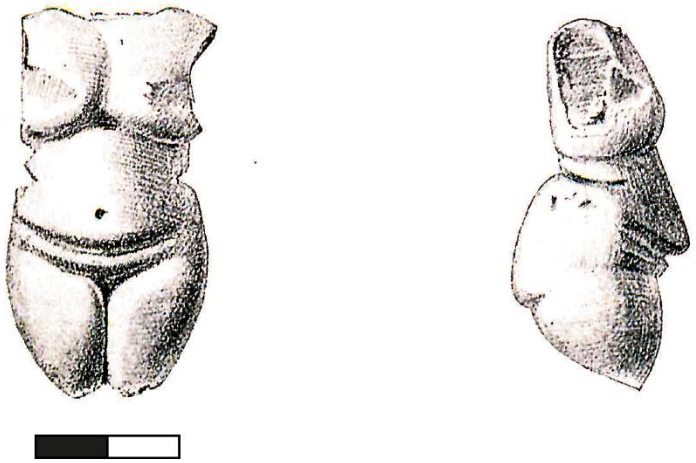

Figure 4.25. Clay Female figurine with unknown inv.no., EN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.32,2).

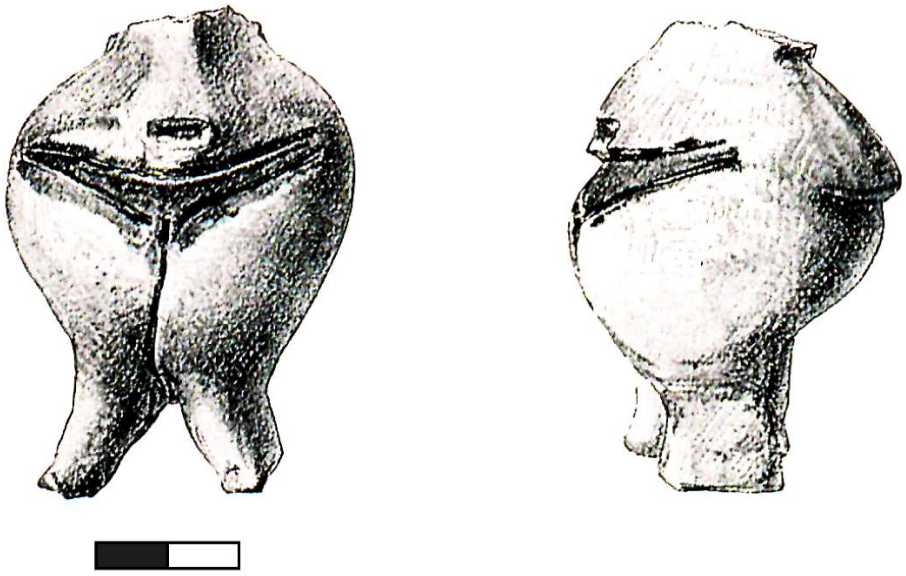

Figure 4.26. Clay Female figurine with unknown inv.no., EN/MN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.32,6).

The EN I figurines from Theocharis' excavations (1973a) are considerably different from those excavated by Tsountas in 1908. These figurines, excavated in the area of Sesklo C, are fairly schematic, for instance, a stone figurine with cobble shape and incised details (Fig. 3.58). In this area, a small sitting Asexual figurine with a conically

shaped head and protruding nose in a bird-like profile (Fig. 4.27) was found. The figurine, which measures only 2.5cm in height with a maximum width of 1.5cm, may be a schematic representation of a child if we compare this image to a similar contemporaneous Female seated figurine found in the same area (Wijnen 1981: fig.14,12), which measures 4cm in height but is missing its head, neck, and legs.



Figure 4.27. Very small clay Asexual sitting figurine, EN I Sesklo (after Theocharis 1973b: fig.206)

Reference	Chr.	Material	Sex	Condition	Max. Height	Max. Width	Width at the Waist
Tsountas 1908: fig.33,3	EN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	-	9.4	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,1	EN	Clay	Female	Part of torso and head	4.5	-	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,2	EN	Clay	Female	Torso to knees	5.3	-	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,3	EN	Clay	Female	Whole but head	6.8	-	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,4	EN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	3	-	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,5	EN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	4.5	-	-
Tsountas 1908: fig.32,6	EN	Clay	Female	Waist and legs	6.8	-	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,15	EN	Clay	Asexual	Whole	2.5	1.5	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,12	EN	Clay	Female	Part of torso and base	4	3	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,11	EN	Clay	-	Whole but head	3.8	2.7	1.4
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,17	EN	Clay	-	Head	3	2	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,16	EN	Clay	-	Head	2	-	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,29	EN	Stone	Asexual	Whole	8.4	4.4	-
Wijnen 1981: fig.14,26	EN	Marble	-	Head and neck	4.9	3.3	-

Table 4.7. EN figurines from Sesklo and their measurements

In EN-MN Sesklo phases, four figurines of the 'sitting on a stool' type were found. Three of the figurines are Male considering the depiction of male genitalia, and one is Probably Male with no genitalia, but the posture is generally associated with male gender (Chapter 5.3.3). All four figurines depict Males with physical attributes indicating age differences. Figurine EAM.5947 (Fig. 4.28) presents a slight paunch, which is more pronounced in figurines BE.4667, MB.M.5109 and MB.M.4340; these latter examples also include sagging chests (Figs. 4.29-4.31). A bulging waistline and a protruding belly are often the first signs of ageing appearing from middle age to old age. A sagging male chest is a normal part of the ageing process that indicates muscles are losing their elasticity and tends to be a sign of older age. Therefore, figurine EAM.5947 (Fig. 4.28) perhaps represents a middle-aged adult man, while the other three (BE.4667, MB.M.5109 and MB.M.4340; Figs. 4.29-4.31) are probably in older stages of maturity, perhaps older males or elderly. These characteristics are not only present in the figurines from Sesklo seated on a stool, but they also appear in figurines of the same type at other sites from Thessaly such as Chara-Mourlar (Hourmouziadis 1973: fig.6), Pyrassos (Hourmouziadis 1973: fig.8), Ambelonas 3 (ML.GRA.88, Magoula Karaghioz, Fig. 4.32), or ML.GRA.1 from Melia 2 (Magoula St' Ambelia, Fig. 4.33). Figurine ML.THE.1074 from Agios Georgios (Magoula Dragatsi) of the same 'sitting on a stool' type also presents a hunchback, which may be a sign of old age (Fig. 4.34). Figurine ML.THE.644 of the same type found at Zappeio 2 also show signs of ageing since three parallel wrinkles appear in its belly, and the representation of breasts modelled with small pellets of clay may also indicate a sagging chest rather than a Double-sex figurine (Fig. 4.35).

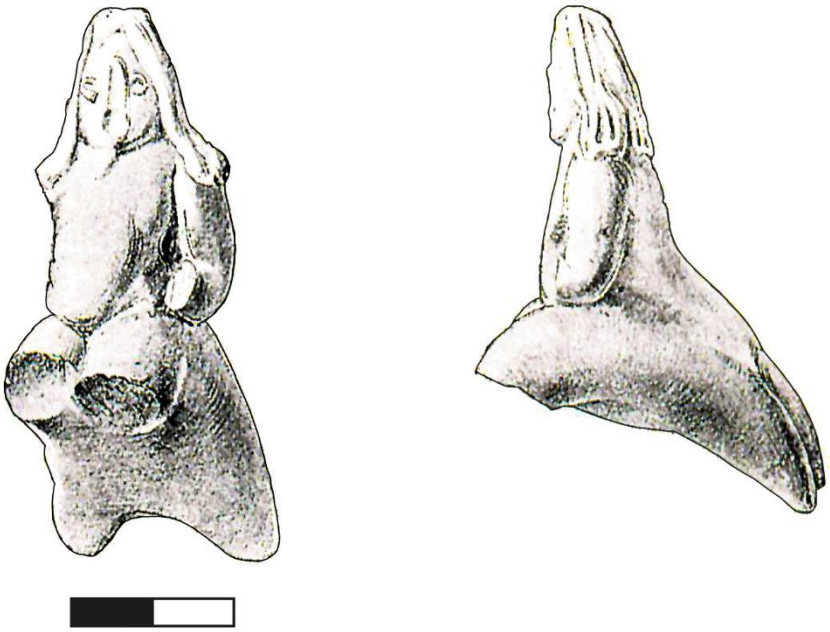

Figure 4.28. Probably Male figurine EAM.5947, EN/MN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.33,4).



Figure 4.29. Male figurine BE.4667, EN Sesklo (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.203).



Figure 4.30. Male figurine MB.M.5109, MN Sesklo (after Theocharis 1973b: fig.37).



Figure 4.31. Male figurine MB.M.4340, MN Sesklo (after Hourmouziadis 1973: fig.7)



Figure 4.32. Male figurine ML.GRA.88 from Ambelonas 3, Magoula Karaghioz (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.482)



Figure 4.33. Male figurine ML.GRA.1 from Melia 2, Magoula St' Ambelia (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.484)

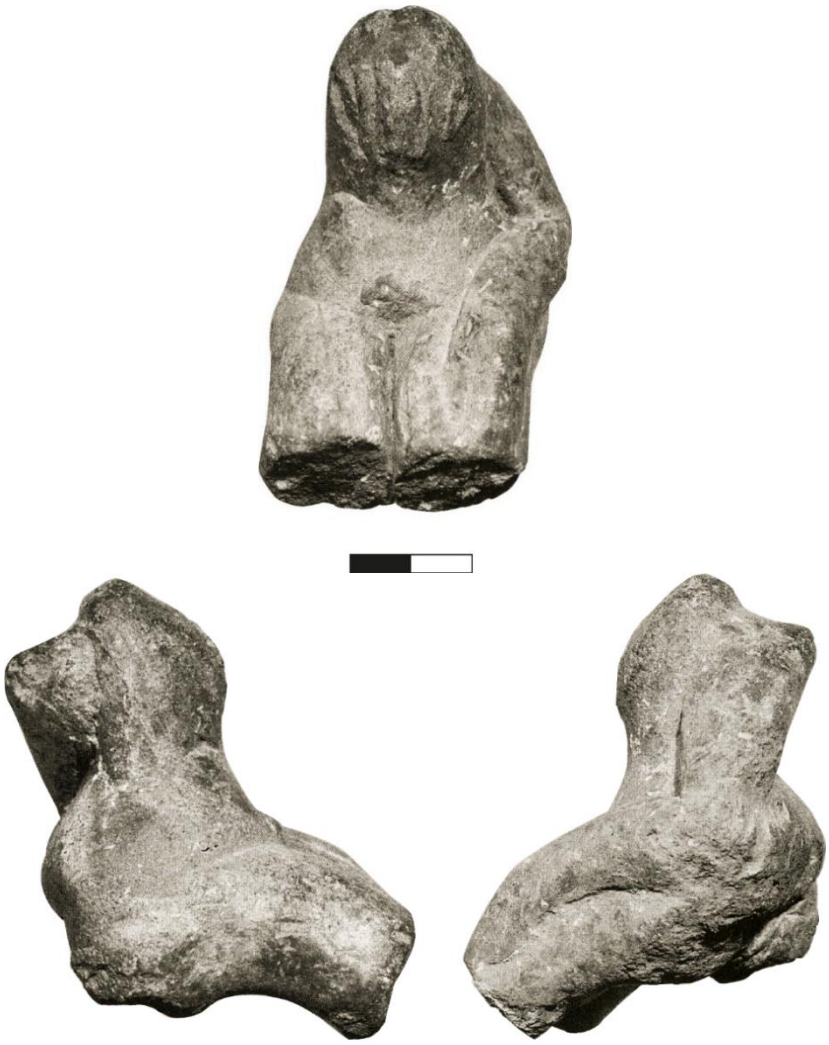

Figure 4.34. Figurine ML.THE.1074 from Agios Georgios with a hunchback (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.225)



Figure 4.35. Figurine ML.THE.644 from Zappeio 2 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.125)

In LN levels at Sesklo, there is further evidence of different age representations. The *kourotrophos* figurine EAM.P5937 is a clear depiction of age-stages, representing a mother with a child (Fig. 4.36). The figurine is seated on a stool and decorated with painted motifs covering her body, including that of the child she is holding with her hands. As mentioned earlier (Section 4.4), this is the only clear example of *kourotrophos* figure attested in Neolithic Greece. The facial features of the child are not depicted, while the head of the adult was worked separately in clay and is missing (Tsountas 1908: 201). Skafida and Toufexis (1994: 18) suggest that other figurines represented holding a baby were found at Agios Georgios I and Zappeio. However, the figurine they reproduce (Skafida and Toufexis 1994: fig.I/8) as a *kourotrophos* is a composite figurine with two heads, one of which (the left head) is smaller than the other. The smaller head is represented as protruding from the left arm of the figurine, and it may perhaps be a schematic depiction of an individual holding a child. The figurine's chronology is uncertain since it was a surface find, but Skafida and Toufexis (1994: 18) attribute it to the LN based on typological characteristics. Although rare, other composite figurines with two or multiple heads have been found in Neolithic

Thessaly. For instance, figurines with cylindrical bodies and with elongated heads which meet in a V shape have been found in House Q at FN Rachmani (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.28g), at Pefkakia in Rachmani II phase (Weißhaar 1989: fig.66:14) and Dimini (Skafida 1986: fig.6:13, 19). Composite figurines with the upper part of their body with three prominences or possibly heads, of which the middle one is higher, were found at Pefkakia (Weißhaar 1989: figs.66:18), at Dimini (Skafida 1986: fig.14), and Sesklo (Tsountas 1908: fig.229). Also at Pefkakia, other figurines with three heads are more similar to the possible *kourotrophos* from Agios Georgios since the head in the middle is higher than the other two, and they seem to protrude from the arms. However, it is rather speculative to attribute this figurine to the *kourotrophos* type. The figurine from Zappeio is not illustrated by Skafida and Toufexis (1994) and, therefore, its attribution to the *kourotrophos* type remains uncertain. However, none of these uncertain *kourotrophos* figurines represents a decorated figure sitting on a stool, perhaps a sign of the status of the woman/mother. Most figurines sitting on a stool are Male and, less frequently, Probably Male or Double-sex (see Chapter 5.3.3). Additionally, child figurines are rarely decorated except the small figurine with impressed dot decoration from the Platia Magoula house model (Figs. 4.18-4.19) but never painted. Perhaps the high quality of this figure and the posture sitting on a stool suggests a depiction of high-status individuals. Interestingly, a Vinča *kourotrophos* figure from Drenovac site, near Paraćin, in central Serbia (*c*. 4500 BC), appears to have been seated on a stool that is now missing (inv.no.5670 National Museum in Smederevska Palanka, Serbia).



Figure 4.36. *Kourotrophos* figure EAM.P5937, LN Sesklo (after https://www.namuseum.gr/monthly_artefact/kalligrammi-neari-quot-kyria-quot-tis-neolithikis-epochis/; 13/08/2020)

Other LN clay figurines from Sesklo show less detailed bodies than the *kourotrophos* figurine. An Asexual figurine smaller than the others (EAM.5962, Fig. 4.37), measuring only 4cm in height, stands out. This anthropomorphic image is the smallest of the assemblage from Tsountas' (1908) excavations, perhaps suggesting the depiction of a child. Eight figurines in total are denoted as Female by representing their breasts or genitalia, while one of them may be considered Probably Female given the exaggerated buttocks, but otherwise has a very flat front profile. For instance, EAM.5952 represents a Female figurine with an exaggerated protruding belly, a possible sign of pregnancy. The genitalia are represented in this figurine with an incision and the depiction of pubic hair with punctured dots (Fig. 4.38). Similarly, three figurines from Sitochoro 1 are depicted with pubic hair ML.THE.1267, ML.THE.1305, ML.THE.1146. They, therefore, show women who have entered sexual maturity, possibly adults.

Reference	Chronology	Material	Sex	Condition	Height
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,1	LN	Clay	Female	Part of torso	5.5
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,2	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks head	4.5
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,3	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks head	5.2
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,4	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks head	5.7
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,5	LN	Clay	-	Part of torso and head	7
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,6	LN	Clay	Probably Female	Lacks head	6
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,7	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks part of head	7
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,8	LN	Clay	-	Lacks part of neck	4
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,9	LN	Clay	Female	Torso	6.8
Tsountas 1908: fig.34,12	LN	Clay	Asexual	Complete	4
Tsountas 1908: fig.35,1	LN	Clay	Female	Torso	6
Tsountas 1908: fig.35,2	LN	Clay	Asexual	Lacks part of head?	6.5
Tsountas 1908: fig.35,3	LN	Clay	-	Torso	6
Tsountas 1908: fig.35,4	LN	Clay	-	Head and neck	4
Tsountas 1908: fig.35,5	LN	Clay	-	Part of torso and legs	5.3
Tsountas 1908: fig.31,2	LN	Clay	Female	Lacks head	16

Table 4.8. LN figurines from Tsountas excavations at Sesklo and their measurements



Figure 4.37. Clay Asexual figurine EAM.5962, measuring 4cm height, LN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.34,12).



Figure 4.38. Clay Female figurine EAM.5952, LN Sesklo (after Ucko 1968: pl.LXVI).

Towards the end of the Neolithic, Sesklo figurines are rather schematic with flat profiles and a more widespread use of stone for their manufacture. Stone figurines, both at Sesklo and in Dimini, present different sizes. However, the general characteristic is the small size of the bodies and the larger size of the head in comparison, sometimes of equal and even larger size than their bodies. These types of stone images probably did not focus on depicting age or other details such as sex and gender.

4.6.3. Tsangli

The figurines found at Tsangli are quite varied. Interestingly, a group of figures appeared in a structured deposit in Stratum IV, House T (MN) (for the figurines' context, see Chapter 3.4.2.2). Three of the figurines in the deposit seem to belong to the same type. Two of them are holding a rounded object, one is holding it with its hands, and the other has the arms missing. Hourmouziadis (1973) interpreted this group of figurines as a 'dough-making scene' considering that two of the figurines are holding an object; he believed that it might depict bread preparation (Fig. 3.59). Although the figurines are possibly part of the same group, it is somewhat speculative to interpret them as a dough-making scene. Considering their context, a structured deposit with numerous finds that were part of ritual offerings, it is more reasonable to interpret the objects held by the figurines as representing votive offerings from House T. The third figure of the group is of a similar type but smaller (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.69k); unfortunately, the figurines' dimensions are so far unpublished. The figurines are badly fired and represent the human body with a strange shape as a conical mass with no differentiation of the legs. Their body shape ends in a wide base and a beak-like head; the arms were applied and only remained in one figurine. The third small figure of the composition is also modelled with a conical body-shape without the arms and lacks most details, including sexual attributes. The group may be interpreted as a composition of figurines, perhaps representing two adult figurines and a possible child or prepubescent, indicated by the smallest Asexual figure. However, the schematic rendering of the group makes it difficult to reach a more precise conclusion.

Also from Tsangli, there is other evidence of figurines representing age-stages. The Female figurine M41 with a wide base appeared in MN Stratum III (Fig. 4.39). In this case, the wide-body with protruding belly and two incised lines indicating fat folds and similarly protruding buttocks, shows an adult woman, perhaps of old age. Nakamura and Meskell (2009: 217) also argue for Çatalhöyük figurines that the indented navel and belly swelling are signs of abundance in old age. I have previously hypothesised that the gesture with hands below the breasts is used in Knossos to indicate adult

women. Likewise, in this anthropomorphic image from Tsangli, the gesture together with other features may indicate an older adult, perhaps an elderly woman.



Figure 4.39. Clay Female figurine M41, MN Tsangli (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.211)

Finally, a head fragment with three rows of parallel lines incised along the neck was found in MN Str.IV (6069, Fig. 4.40). The incisions may perhaps depict facial hair, probably a man's beard. However, the figurine's fragmentary state with only the head remaining prevents us from verifying if it represents a Male. If that was the case, the sculptors modelled this figurine to show a Male adult individual.



Figure 4.40. Clay figurine fragment 6069, perhaps representing a bearded Male, MN Tsangli (after Ucko 1968: pl.LXXI)

4.6.4. Tsani Magoula

In MN Tsani Magoula (Str.II), a hollow figurine was found, probably an anthropomorphic vase in the shape of a woman. This figure presents exaggerated details of the ankle and knee bones, a prominent nose, and a depiction of eyes and mouth (Fig. 3.60). The sexual traits are overtly depicted with an incision to indicate the vulva, dot impressions for the pubic hair, and protruding buttocks. Therefore, this image represents an adult woman who has reached sexual maturity.

Also found at MN Tsani, was a Male figurine of the 'sitting on a stool' type (M.5108, Fig. 4.41). However, in contrast with the figurines from Sesklo, this image has only a slightly protruding belly, which may represent a middle-aged adult man, but perhaps not an elderly individual as some of the Male figurines from Sesklo analysed in section 4.6.2.



Figure 4.41. Male figurine M.5108 'sitting on a stool', MN Tsani Magoula (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b7/Archaeological_Museum_Volos_Neolithic_male_clay_figurines_B13%2B14.jpg; 27/02/2021).

4.6.5. Chara 1

At Chara 1, figurines ML.THE.1125 and ML.THE.726 (Fig. 4.42) represent seated women with wide bases and protruding bellies or paunches. These images resemble those from Knossos (1938.659, Fig. 4.17), the large, seated figurine from the Vase model from Ghelăieşti-Nedeia with hands to the belly also showing a paunch (Fig. 4.20a) or the figurine from Tsangli with a wide base and protruding belly (M41, Fig. 4.39). These figurines were previously interpreted as older Females, except for 1938.659 from Knossos, where sexual attributes may be absent or broken but probably representing an individual of old age. Similarly, the figurines from Chara 1 may represent old adult women or perhaps approaching an elderly stage. Similar paunch and sagging breasts as ML.THE.1125 and M41 have been interpreted as signs of old age in figurine 12401.X7 from Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Fig. 4.43). In this example, however, the signs of old age are

more evident as it shows a fleshed front and skeletal back. Combining the analysis of figurines with stable isotopes and the bioarchaeological study of the burials, Meskell (2017: 25-26) argues that Çatalhöyük figurines were concerned with maturity, flesh and the ageing body.

Also from Chara 1, three figurines classified as Probably Females: ML.THE.1128, ML.THE.1100, ML.THE.1215 (Figs. 4.44-4.46) are represented with 'arms to chest touching/covering their breasts'. However, in these examples, the representation of breasts is rather ambiguous and in ML.THE.1215 are absent. The ambiguity in the depiction of sexual attributes may indicate the representation of younger girls, perhaps prepubescents or adolescents.

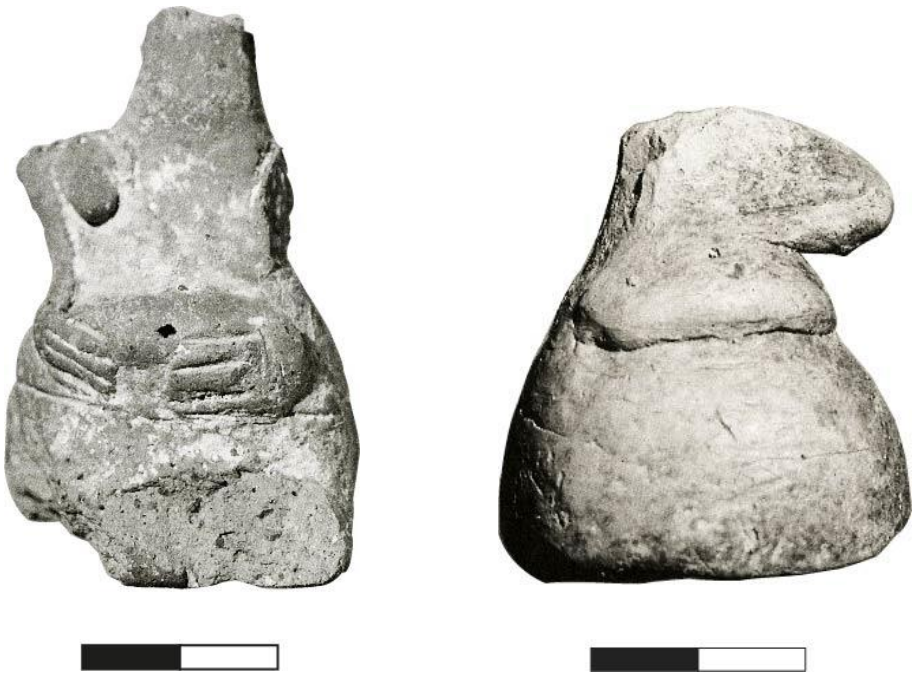

Figure 4.42. Female figurines ML.THE.1125 and ML.THE.726, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: figs.206, 241)

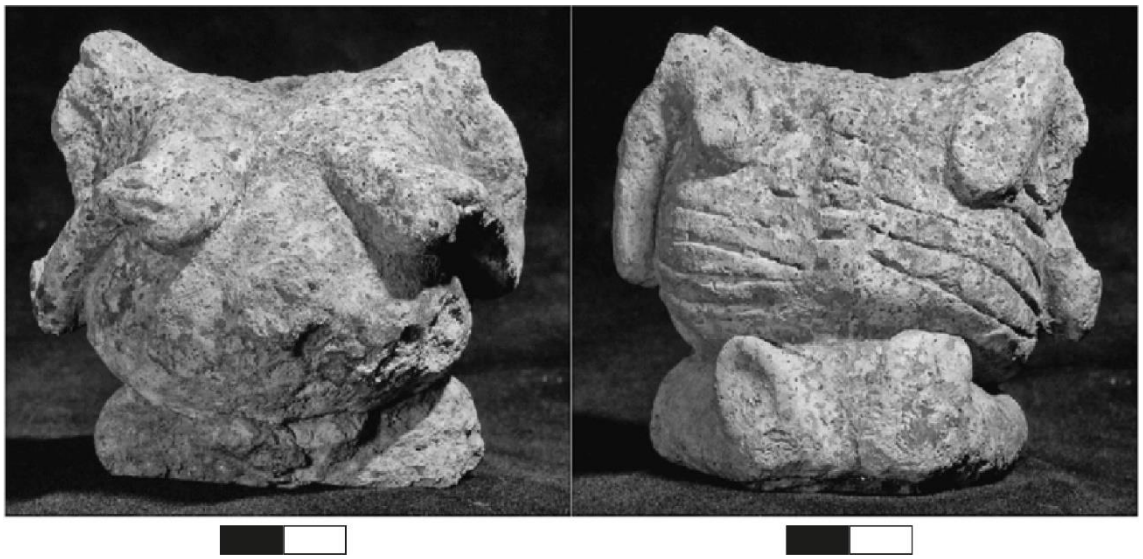

Figure 4.43. Female figurine 12401.X7, from Çatalhöyük (after Pearson and Meskell 2014: fig.13.3)



Figure 4.44. Probably Female figurine ML.THE.1128, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.276)



Figure 4.45. Probably Female figurine ML.THE.1100, Chara 1 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.176)



Figure 4.46. Probably Female figurine ML.THE.1215, Chara 1 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.178)

4.7. Burials as further evidence of different age identities

The burial practices in Neolithic Crete and Thessaly can provide us with further insight into age identities, children's roles, and social differences. In particular, the differing treatment of adults and children may help us better understand those differences and age group divisions in Neolithic Greece. Furthermore, together with iconography,

burials are the easiest and sometimes the only way to recognise sub-adults in the archaeological record (Baxter 2005: 93).

There is a striking scarcity of evidence for burial practices in Neolithic Greece. At Knossos, the only evidence for most of the period until the FN consists of intramural infant burials. Seven skeletons were reported from the Aceramic/IN (Evans 1964: 140). Six of the burials formed a group in a restricted area, just below the foundation of a House in the overlying Str.IX, that have been now re-dated to the EN based on the pottery and excavation notebooks (Triantaphyllou 2008: 143). These burials were all found articulated in a flexed position with the same orientation but without any preserved grave-goods (Evans 1964: 140-142). The burials' age estimates are three neonates, a foetus, a three-year-old infant, and a six-to-seven-year-old (Evans 1964: 142; Triantaphyllou 2008: 143). The seventh burial was more elaborate and was deposited in another area at a considerable distance from the others. It belonged to a four-to five-year-old child placed in a small pit cut in the bedrock and sealed with an oval stone (Evans 1964: 142). It has now been re-dated to the Aceramic period (Triantaphyllou 2008: 143). An uncertain number of burials were reported from later excavations (Evans 1971: 111), including two 'infants' that have now been re-identified as dog burials (Triantaphyllou 2008: 143). In contrast, a skeleton found under an upturned pot fragment initially considered a rabbit has been identified by Triantaphyllou (2008: 143) as the remains of a foetal human buried in a possibly disused structure of late MN date. A recent study of animal bones by Isaakidou (2008) was able to identify the presence of human remains within the faunal bones collected from the excavations. The remains of two further neonates were identified from a FN house, and a total of 16 human fragments are scattered through MN-FN deposits (Triantaphyllou 2008: 144). Sir Arthur Evans (1928, II: 10; see Chapter 3.4.1.1) found another child burial in a LN/FN house under the area of the Central Court. The burial consisted of a large pot containing the bones of a child together with a serpentine stone-axe, with abundant remains of animal bones and shells in the same area near a hearth. Notwithstanding the scanty nature of the burials at Knossos, it seems that infant, children and neonate burials had differential treatment practices with the intramural inhumation of articulated bodies. In contrast, adults were probably subject

to secondary disarticulation (Triantaphyllou 2008: 144). This evidence demonstrates the existence of age categories in the definition of identity and status in the Knossos Neolithic communities.

At LN Dimini, there are eight cremation burials inside the settlement (the position of six of them is illustrated in Fig. 3.64, following Souvatzi 2008). The burials are found near hearths in the floor, built-in features, or pots (Hourmouziadis 1978: 33). All the burials are of infants and were found inside houses except in one instance. In H23, a child's skull and a few bones were unearthed from a stone feature together with decorated pottery (Souvatzi 2008: 144). In H9, a child's skull and bones were deposited on the floor and not buried. The bones were possibly deposited at the time of abandonment of the house since they were associated with roof debris. The presence of child burials in the houses contrasts with the absence of adult skeletal remains. Tsountas (1908: 125) reports the presence of a burial in a contracted position underneath the fourth enclosure in the southwest part of Dimini. However, information regarding the sex, age or number of individuals is not available, and the excavation of the area was not completed.

At Sesklo, only one burial has been reported from Theocharis' excavations of EN levels (Wijnen 1981: 18) and consists of skeletal remains found in a crouched position, possibly of an adult. The burial dates to building phase 1 and had no accompanying grave goods. Articulated inhumations are rare or unknown on most tell settlements (Triantaphyllou 2008: 149). For instance, only one burial of an adult male has been found at MN Tsangli (Wace and Thompson 1912), and another two subadult pot burials from FN Rachmani (Wace and Thompson 1912) in Thessaly. Other child burials in Thessaly have been found at the sites of Argissa, Ayios Petros and Ayia Sofia. The LN cremation cemetery located *c*. 200–300m from Platia Magoula Zarkou (Gallis 1982: 103) may evidence an alternative practice at tell sites where some cremations (nos. 24, 35 and perhaps 15, 20 and 25) contained bone fragments from more than one human individual and have yielded remains of infants, juveniles or young adults and adults (Triantaphyllou 2008: 150).

Child burials are the most visible and predominant intramural burials in Neolithic Greece. Many sites are characterised by burials of isolated individuals, especially

children, although sometimes more than one individual are buried together. In Neolithic Macedonia, for instance, one of the earliest instances of a burial in a pot under the floor of a house was an EN infant burial from the site of Axos A (Chrysostomou 1996: 162). Also, at the EN site of Yanitsa B, two infants were buried in a shallow pit outside a house (Souvatzi 2008: 187). Similarly, at Nea Nikomedeia, single and multiple child pit burials have been found. At FN Mandalo, a child burial was also found in an urn. Further child burials were found at Makriyalos and Limenaria, where a pit containing an infant burial was covered with stones (Malamidou and Papadopoulos 1993: 564-565).

In southern Greece and the Peloponnese, pots containing 'infant bones' were placed inside a larger storage vessel at Alepochori (Gallis 1996). At Elateia, a child was found in a LN pit grave without accompanying offerings (Georgiadis 2011: 34). At EN Franchthi, the pit burials included adults, children and infants, most of them containing the remains of children or infants up to eight years old (Cavanagh and Mee 1998: 7), while most adult burials concentrated in the area outside the cave known as Paralia (Georgiadis 2011: 35). Ten pit burials of children have been found of EN to FN dates lined or covered with rocks and stone slabs (Fowler 2004: 28), including a juvenile whose head rested on a pillow of stones. In MN Lerna, four infants and three children were found in pit graves; only two of the child burials contained grave goods, including cups and a painted bowl (Vitelli 2007: 131-132). Interestingly, two adult burials, a male and a female, were deposited nearby, but the skeletal remains were subject to secondary treatment and only forearm and hand bones remained. Vitelli (2007: 131-132) interpreted that their proximity to the infant and child burials suggests a relationship of companionship or affection between them. In the Alepotrypa cave, the most distinctive burials are single and multiple cremation child burials since they were placed inside prominent natural niches of the cave and covered by a heap of burnt and smashed painted pottery fragments and layers of ash possibly from the funerary pyre (Papathanassopoulos 1996b: 176-177). Isolated adult burials also occur, but they tend to be placed outside houses (Souvatzi 2008: 187). The variability of burial types in Neolithic Greece is striking and suggests that no single funerary ritual existed for the whole of Greece.

Nonetheless, intramural child burials are the only burials found so far in sites such as Knossos, Dimini and Rachmani. Therefore, we have to assume that children and juvenile individuals had a different funerary treatment in these sites, possibly revealing other social identities that separated adults from children.

4.8. Conclusions

The focus of this chapter has been on the sites from Crete and Thessaly with plausible evidence for different age stages depicted in figurines, complemented by funerary data that can shed light on age identities: Knossos, Platia Magoula Zarkou, Sesklo, Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Chara 1 and Dimini. Scantier evidence exists in Rachmani, Sitochoro 1 and Zappeio 2.

At Knossos, the evidence suggests that figurines followed iconographical types indicating age-stages. Age is indicated in the figurines via the representation of physical attributes such as size, sex, including sexual features vaguely rendered or absent, breast size, gesture and decoration. From the excavations with contextual data carried out by John Evans (1964), the main evidence comes from the groupings of figurines found in LN I-II levels. Female figurines of diverse sizes appeared together with Asexual figurines of smaller sizes. I have argued that the depiction of Female figurines with diverse sizes, arm-position, breast development and presence of decoration represent different age-stages. The larger Females possibly represent adult women, especially those with decoration, while those of slightly smaller size may represent young girls or adolescents. The Asexual figurines are most probably representations of children given their general lack of attributes and their appearance together with Female figures of larger size. Groups of figurines of LN II dates, such as the seven fragmentary figurines found in context A14, are miniaturistic. Thus, some of these figurines may also be interpreted as depictions of children and individuals of young age. The other data analysed from Knossos regards the early excavations by Sir Arthur Evans (1921) and complements the interpretations deriving from the more contextualised material. Through my comparison of the different representations of

Male and Female figurines, their size, sex and especially decoration, there emerged a possible division in age-stages between children, pre-pubescent, young boys and girls or juveniles, adolescents and adults. I also interpreted the different types of decorations, e.g., diagonal incisions in the back and figurines showing their breasts or impressed dots and painting, as possible signs of age-stages between adults and younger girls. Conversely, only one figurine may be intended to portray an elder individual, given its depiction possibly sitting on a stool and showing a paunch and below, a fat bulge, considered possible signs of ageing. Overall, according to the available archaeological data from Neolithic Knossos, the figurines seem to have mostly depicted adults and younger girls and less frequently children, while elders were possibly a marginalised category.

The data is scarer for Thessaly due to the lack of comprehensive publications with photographs or drawings and contextual information for the figurines. At specific sites such as Rachmani or Dimini, most figurines are acroliths and other very schematic types, whose focus was not on showing detailed physical features. As such, age may have been unimportant in these representations. However, other sites have yielded clear representations of age-stages. An exceptional example are the figurines found in a house model at Platia Magoula Zarkou. Here, again, the nine figurines show differences in size, sex and gender, decoration, posture and gesture. The larger figurines, a Female and a Probably Male, represent the oldest couple. A smaller couple with similar decoration, postures and general body rendering was also found in the model next to two small Asexual figurines. Finally, three figurines of different sizes but smaller than the couples were found in the right-side corner. Therefore, I have interpreted the figurines in the house as representing different age-stages, including the older and younger couple and the children (possibly of different ages) of one of the couples. Thus, they may represent an extended family or a household unit.

The evidence is rather scarce from the other sites. Specific Asexual figurines of small size might be interpreted as children at the sites of Sesklo and Tsangli, based on the comparative size of the other figurines found with them. Other evidence mostly comprises figurines sitting on a stool that may represent ageing Males and the exceptional *kourotrophos* figurine from Sesklo. At the site of Tsangli, a group of

figurines might represent a child and two adults, while the other evidence comes from a possible older adult woman. At Tsani Magoula, an anthropomorphic vase represented an image of an adult or mature woman. Similarly, at Chara 1, two Female figurines with wide bases and protruding bellies may indicate old adults or elderly.

Regarding burials as complementary material for identifying age, the search for a pattern related to regions or chronology seems risky given the patchy evidence. At Knossos, the presence of infant intramural burials and the practice of secondary disarticulation of adults seems to confirm the existence of differential age identities indicated by the differential treatment of adults and young individuals. However, caution must be exercised since the child burials belong to the IN, EN, and FN periods, while most age differences found in figurines were in LN I-II assemblages. Similarly, although child burials were the only interments found at other sites such as Dimini and Rachmani, figurines do not seem to depict age-differences.

CHAPTER V. TO GENDER OR NOT TO GENDER? EXPLORING SEX AND GENDER THROUGH NEOLITHIC FIGURINES FROM CRETE AND THESSALY

5.1. Introduction

The iconography of the Neolithic period includes anthropomorphic, zoomorphic and, less frequently, figurines combining animal and human features. However, anthropomorphic beings are more numerous, their biological sex is frequently depicted but sex is noticeably absent in a high number. Furthermore, distinctions between biological sexes theoretically appear simple but there are difficulties in their identification, especially when the sexual attributes are ambiguous or unclear. There are also difficulties derived from preconceptions, for instance, the presence of long hair or jewellery understood as necessarily female. Also, Neolithic iconography is not always realistic, and a high number of images depict schematic bodies. Finally, the morphology of other figurines suggests ambiguity and, a restricted number of examples display features of both sexes.

This chapter will address sex and gender in Neolithic figurines from Greece with a statistical analysis of figurines by categories of sex and secondary traits that may help interpret their gender even if no sex is depicted. The secondary traits indicating sex and gender are the materials used to make figurines, posture, gestures, anatomical details, and incisions on the bodies. However, identifying sex and gender in Neolithic figurines from Greece is problematic. The body cannot be understood outside specific social, cultural and historical contexts (Moral 2016: 792). Therefore, in this chapter, sex and gender will be explored contextually at each site from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. For that reason, there is a need for a specific enhanced methodology to identify sex and gender in the figurines from our case studies in Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. While biological sex is not the only structuring principle for identifying sex and gender, it tends to play a significant categorising role in any given society (Herdt 1994: 80). Thus, the presence or absence of sexual attributes is one of the main ways to categorise Neolithic figurines by sex in our assemblage. The sexual attributes

identified for the analysis of sex are the presence or absence of breasts, genitalia, an exaggerated protruding belly, sexual triangle and exaggerated buttocks. Only an exaggerated swollen belly has been considered for sexing Female figurines. Specific Male figurines are represented with a slightly protruding belly but it is not exaggeratedly swollen. The identification of sex categories is defined in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1.2).

Different methodologies have been put forward by previous scholars studying Neolithic figurines. However, the traditional scholarly view that the corpus of Greek Neolithic figurines in general, and particularly those from Crete and Thessaly, predominantly represent the female sex has biased the methodologies and made this interpretation overwhelmingly dominant (Bailey 1994: 221; 2005: 151; Gimbutas 1974; 1982; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1993: 58; 1997: 91; Marangou 1991: 15; 1992: 163; Mina 2005: 111; Orphanidis 1998; Perlès 2001: 256). This thesis remains nowadays, though more nuanced than the first ideas developed and applied by Gimbutas (1989) on the figurines from her excavation at Achilleion, Thessaly.

The problems associated with such a thesis include the lack of statistics to support the claimed predominance of female figurines and the criteria used to define the different sexual categories (e.g., Bailey 1994; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1993; 1997). Therefore, without criteria or statistics, we cannot know how previous workers identified female figurines and verify their statements. In other cases, statistics are given based on questionable criteria such as the general shape of the human body, identifying females with voluptuous bodies or the presence of ample hips and thin waist as sole indicators (Marangou 1991; Mina 2005; 2007; 2008a; 2008b). Although Marangou and Mina include percentages of figurines by sex categories in their analyses, the figurines' characteristics identified remain unpublished. No catalogue or table with their Inventory Number or further details (e.g., drawings, photographs, or descriptions of the figurines analysed) is shown. Therefore, we cannot corroborate their identification. The underlying assumptions in these studies are that the larger number of female figurines translates into women having more prominent power in Neolithic times (e.g., Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997).

Similar generalisations concerning the predominance of Female figurines without adequate supporting evidence have also been put forward for material from other geographical areas and cultures such as the Balkans (Bailey 1994), Cyprus (Bolger 1996; Morris 1985) and the Near East (for Çatalhöyük see Mellaart *et al*. 1989). However, more recent scholarship has reassessed the evidence in favour of wider categories of sex beyond the male/female divide (e.g., Bailey 2013: 246; Chapman and Gaydarska 2007; Hamilton 2000; Marangou 2009; Meskell and Nakamura 2005; Mina 2005; 2008b; Nanoglou 2010: 215; Talalay 2000; Talalay and Cullen 2002), suggesting that there is more than just one gender depicted on Neolithic figurines. These views increase sex categories to include asexual, ambiguous, or double/dual-sex and add the possibility that third or fourth genders may be represented in Neolithic figurines.

On the other hand, some studies ignore the predominance of Female figurines and emphasise the existence of other binary genders, focusing specifically on Male depictions. For instance, Nanoglou's (2010) study of sex in Neolithic figurines from Thessaly aims to emphasise the presence of phalli in the sample that he considers as an aspect previously obscured and neglected in scholarship. Theoretically, he uses objective criteria to identify sex markers such as breasts and male or female genitalia. However, he omits that these are not the only criteria that represent sex and gender.

Neither of these approaches solves the problem that limits sex and gender to static and universal categories, whether by considering the binary categories of sex as more important or by interpreting the other categories (Asexual or Double-sex) as 'third genders' in non-normative exceptional cases. Intersectionality, that is, considering other axes of differentiation rather than gender, such as age, class or ethnicity, might be key to understanding depictions of non-binary individuals. Previous scholars' imposition of a binary sexual classification onto figurines has prevented the study of Neolithic conceptions of age or more fluid and multiple constructions of gender and sex. Therefore, this chapter will focus on the analysis and interpretation of sexless and ambiguous categories of sex. Although less numerous, Double-sex images will also be explored to understand the variety of ways in which sex and gender manifest themselves. Asexual figurines have only been briefly examined in previous scholarship, and their possible meanings were rarely addressed. For that reason, I aim to explore

their multiple possible meanings. Particularly, whether the omission of sexual traits could be due to their lack of importance in a specific context, the possibility of other objects being added to gender the figurines, and other factors beyond gender, such as age, to interpret different sex categories. I will also assess whether Female figurines outnumber other sex categories in Neolithic Crete and Thessaly.

5.2. Sex and gender in figurines from Neolithic Crete

5.2.1. Identifying sex

Following the methodology and classification explained in the introductory section and in Table 1.1 (Chapter 1.2), I have assigned sex categories to 82 figurines from Neolithic Crete (65%) (Table 5.1). The other 45 (35%) are assigned to the 'Non-Identifiable' (NI) group. The statistical analysis shows that Female with 31 (38%) and Asexual figurines with 30 (37%) are similar in number. However, the number of Female and Probably Female figurines counted together is slightly higher: 44 (54%) (Fig. 5.1). This figure shows a more nuanced view in which Female figurines do not clearly dominate the assemblage as the previous scholarship asserted. For instance, Mina (2009: fig.2) identified with her methodology 46% of Female and 13% of Probably Female figurines for Neolithic Crete (Fig. 5.2). She also categorises as Female figurines those that she considers displaying a female form or possibly female form but not sexual attributes. She also adds a category for Probably Asexual figurines, which seems very dubious since Asexual figurines can only be identified when figurines are whole and lack indication of sex. Previously, Ucko (1968: 316), in his analysis of Cretan figurines, included a category of figurines for which no identification of sex was possible (denominated 'Can't Say') (Fig. 5.3). Instead of using a terminology suggesting possibility (e.g., 'Probably Female' figurines), Ucko (1968: table 6.2) included some figurines in two different categories. Suppose a figurine is clearly not a Male because it has no representation of male genitalia but could represent a Female or 'No-sex'. In that case, Ucko classifies it as possible Female or No-sex and rates it as ½ in the tables.

For instance, a fragmented figurine preserving the upper torso with breasts is considered Female. The same fragment with no breasts is considered in the tables as ½ Male, ½ No-sex. Fragments of the top parts of figures are only included in his analysis if they can be identified as Females (with breasts). Figurines that are not certainly of one sex are excluded. As a result, this procedure increases the number of Females compared to the Male and No-sex figurines ratio. Regarding the lower part of the body, fragments with penis indicated are considered Male, if the fragments have a sexual triangle or vulva as Female and fragments without sexual indications as ½ Female, and ½ No-sex (Ucko 1968: 315).

Despite applying a methodology with objective criteria in the analysis of figurines, Ucko's sexing and counting methods are open to discussion. Although he recognises sexual genitalia (breasts, penis, sexual triangle and vulva) as indicators of sex, the problem is the actual identification of such features, which will be discussed later in section 5.2.2. Ucko's analysis also lacks a category that could represent either Male or Female with uncertainty which is useful to notice variations in the figurines that indicate age. He concluded that the number of Female and Asexual figurines from Neolithic Crete is almost equal, which is the conclusion I reach unless Female and Probably Female figurines are considered together. Nevertheless, it remains clear that the Male and Probably Male categories have a low representation with five and three figurines each: together, they only account for 10% of the assemblage. So far, no Double-sex figurines have been identified within the Cretan figurine assemblages.

Sex	Number of Figurines	Percentage
Female	31	38%
Probably Female	13	16%
Asexual	30	37%
Male	5	6%
Probably Male	3	4%
Double-sex	0	0%
Non-Identifiable	45	35%
Total	**127**	**-**

Table 5.1. Sex identification in my analysis of figurines from Neolithic Crete

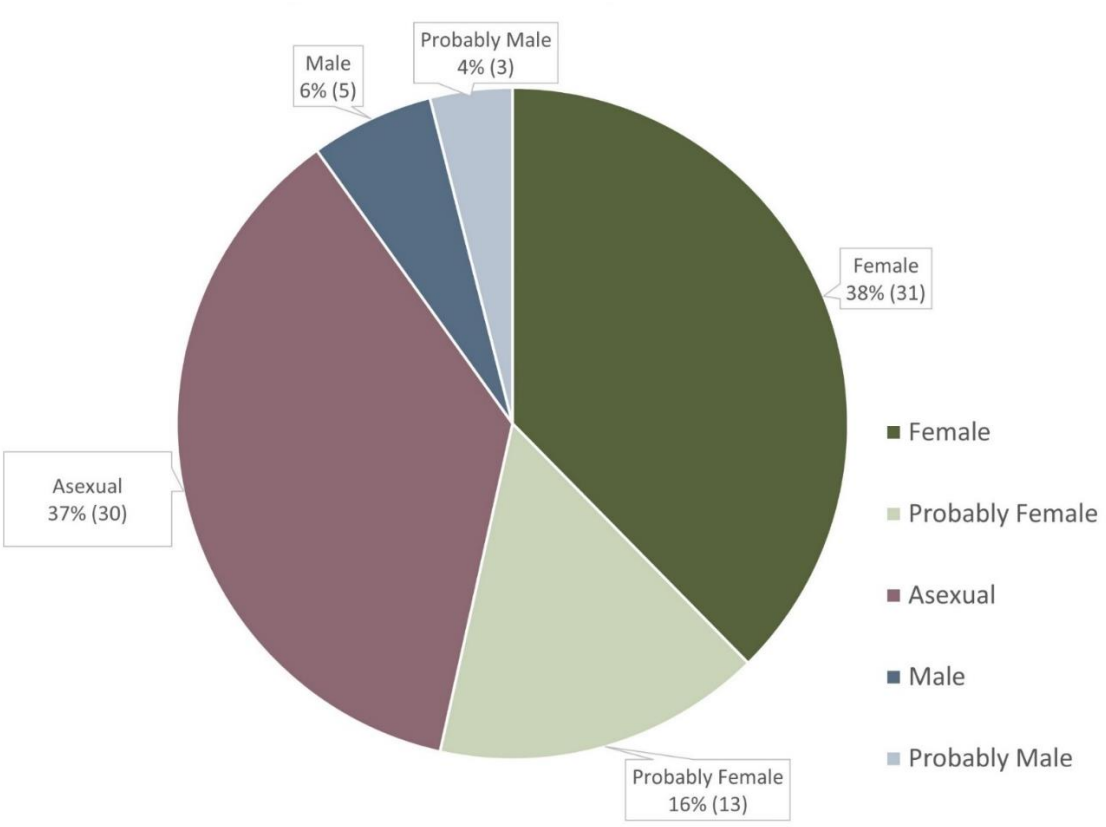

Figure 5.1. Percentages of figurines with identifiable sex by categories in Neolithic Crete.

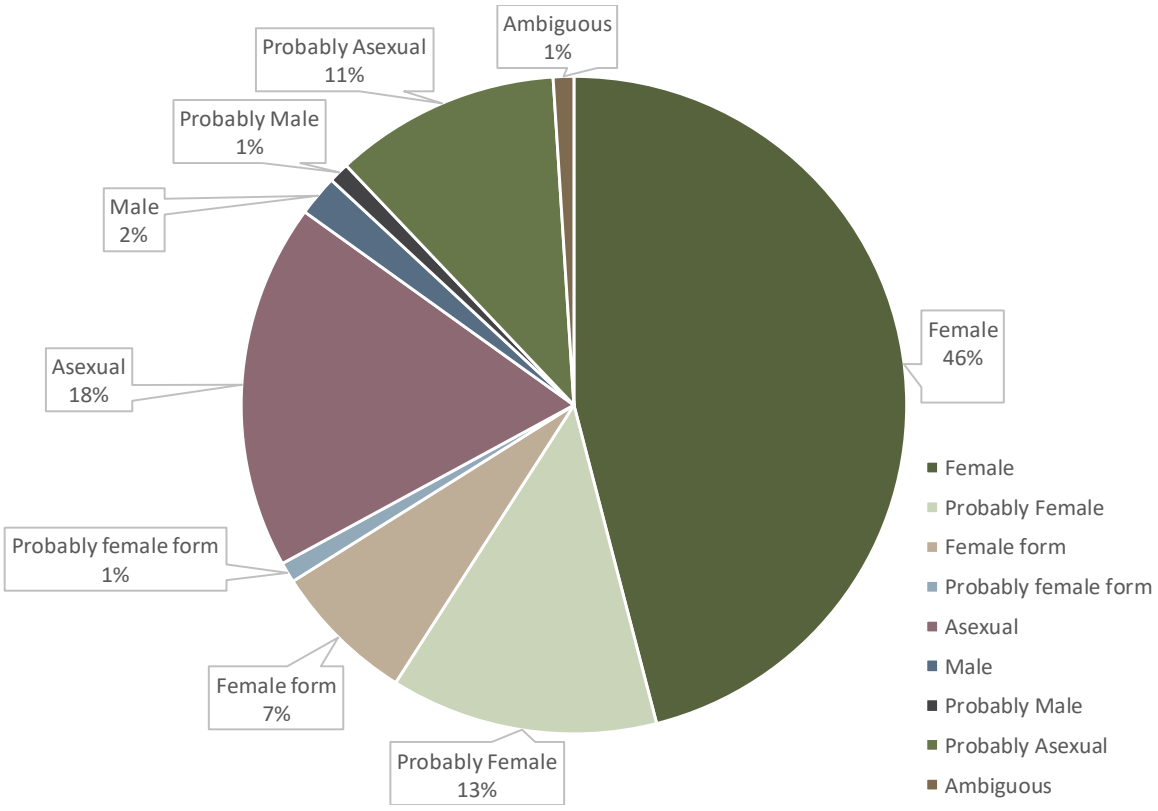

Figure 5.2. Percentages of figurines by sex categories in Neolithic Crete, according to Mina (2009).

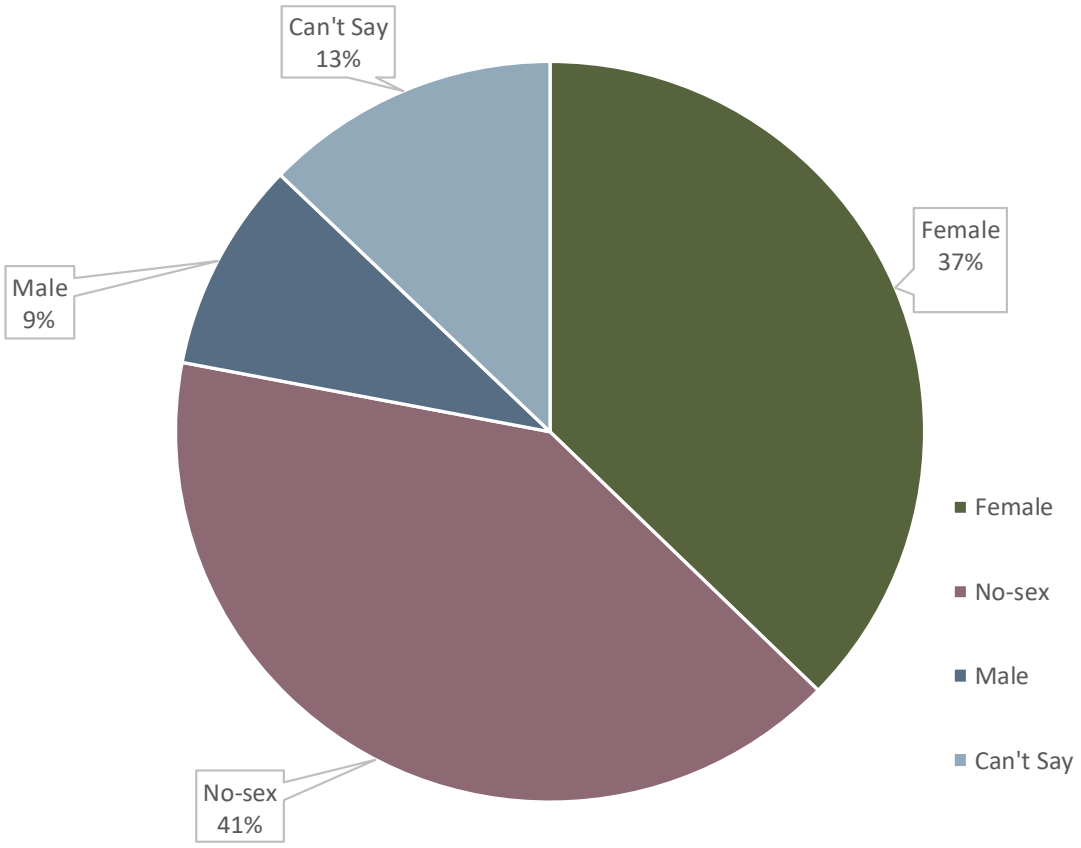

Figure 5.3. Percentages of figurines by sex categories in Neolithic Crete, according to Ucko (1968).

The sexual attributes that define sex categories in Cretan Neolithic figurines are shown in Table 5.2. Breasts are among the most common sexual traits in the assemblage, while male and female genitalia have a similarly low incidence. Some figurines bear no sexual features, but the exaggerated modelling of buttocks may only be assigned to the female sex.

Sexual attributes	N. Representations
Breasts	25
Female genitalia	9
Exaggerated buttocks	10
Male genitalia	4
Ambiguous male genitalia	4
Total	**52**

Table 5.2. Sexual attributes on the figurines from Neolithic Crete.

Chronology	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Non-Identifiable
EN	1	0	0	0	0	2
MN	1	1	1	1	4	2
LN I	4	0	0	0	3	3
LN II	7	2	0	1	3	11
General LN	7	4	2	0	7	1
FN	1	1	1	0	2	11
Generic Neolithic	10	5	1	1	11	15
Total	**31**	**13**	**5**	**3**	**30**	**45**

Table 5.3. Sex and chronology of the figurines from Neolithic Crete

Site	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Non-Identifiable
Knossos	28	9	4	2	26	44
Phaistos	1	1	0	0	1	1
Gerani cave	0	1	0	1	2	0
Pelekiton	0	0	1	0	0	0
Ierapetra	1	0	0	0	0	0
Gortyna	0	1	0	0	0	0
Unknown	1	1	0	0	1	0
Total	**31**	**13**	**5**	**3**	**30**	**45**

Table 5.4. Sex of the figurines by site in Neolithic Crete

The statistical representation of sex according to chronology is biased since a good part of the assemblage cannot be ascribed to securely dated contexts other than under a generic Neolithic label (Table 5.3). Most figurines found in the excavations of Sir Arthur Evans were labelled in the Archives as LN. However, the dating of these figurines labelled as 'General LN' must be taken with caution since reasons for these dates are not always given. Particular figurines classified as LN may be so based on their material, e.g., assigning figurines in marble to the LN because they were all believed to belong to that period (Ucko 1968: 319). In fact, later excavations by John Evans (1964) demonstrated otherwise. The nature of other rescue excavations, especially in Cretan caves (e.g., Gerani and Pelekita), means that the stratigraphical sequence was not wholly understood. At Phaistos, some contexts with figurines have been found with mixed materials from FN and EM phases. Other figurines are casual surface finds, e.g., at Ierapetra or Gortyna. A low percentage of the figurines can be assigned securely to a phase, and when possible, they mostly seem to belong to the LN, when most figurine production probably occurred. MN has produced a higher

number of Asexual figurines, mostly from the Gerani cave. In LN I, there are almost equal numbers of Female and Asexual figurines, Females being slightly higher. In LN II, Female figurines dominate.

Another bias is the difference in the number of figurines per site, which puts Knossos at the forefront of figurine production. Knossos is the site where most figurines have been unearthed in Neolithic Crete. The site has produced a similar number of Female and Asexual figurines, while other sites such as the Gerani cave have one Probably Male, one Probably Female, and two Asexual. Ierapetra has one Female figurine and Gortyna one Probably Female figurine, while Phaistos has a Female, a Probably Female and an Asexual one. Spelaio Pelekiton is the only site on Crete where a possible stone phallus was unearthed; other stone phalli were found in Neolithic Thessalian caves (Figs. 3.51-3.53) (Kyparissi-Apostolika 2001).

5.2.2. Sex and material

How is sex (or its absence) rendered in clay and hard materials? Are particular sex categories associated with specific materials? It is important to assess whether the materials selected to make the figurines influenced the depiction of sex. Otherwise, we may be interpreting the differences in sex between clay and hard materials wrongly. First, certain materials could have been intentionally selected to depict specific sex categories. Therefore, I will analyse if the selection of materials could indicate gender. Secondly, some materials are harder to sculpt than others. Thus, the choice of materials perhaps conditioned the absence of sex depiction or how sculptors depicted sex. In this sense, analysing the relationship between the material employed and the Asexual category is key to understanding the meaning of this figurine type. Clay is a more malleable material than marble or steatite that are harder materials and require different tools and techniques. It can be argued that Asexual figurines are mostly made of hard materials, not because they represent different sex or gender, but because marble and stone materials are harder to carve. This section will analyse if such an assertion is accurate and whether clay and hard materials depict same-sex categories.

The statistical analysis reveals that clay is used to produce figurines of all the different sex categories, but Females are mainly associated with this material (Table 5.5). Twenty-four Female figurines (77% of the Cretan Female figurines) were made of clay. This figure means that 49% of the clay figurines are Female. Twelve Asexual figurines are also made of clay, 40% of the total Asexual figurines. These numbers also mean that 25% of the figurines in clay are Asexual. Probably Female, Male and Probably Male categories are also made of clay but in low numbers with seven, three, and another three examples, respectively. However, marble is mainly used for Asexual figurines in 11 examples, 37% of the total Asexual figurines found in Crete and 58% of marble figurines. This material is less frequently used for Female and Probably Female figurines with four (21%) and three examples (16%). Only one Male figurine has been identified in marble (representing 5% of all the marble figurines), and none are Probably Male.

Furthermore, counted together, there is a slightly higher number of Asexual figurines in hard materials (including marble, stone, steatite, shell, slate, breccia and bone), a total of 18 pieces, 60% of the Asexual figurines from Crete. However, these materials present different levels of hardness. For instance, although bone is easier to carve than marble, the only figurine in bone (59/40, Fig. 3.33) is Asexual. In steatite are made two Female figurines given their exaggerated buttocks (1938.666 and 1938.665, Figs. 4.15-4.16), and two Asexual (60/183 and 60/191, Figs. 3.12, 3.15), which depict very schematic bodies. Shell is used for a Probably Female figurine (1389, Fig. 5.4). The other two examples in shell come from Knossos and central Crete, identified as Asexual (O431 and 1938.663, Figs. 3.13, 5.5). Only one figurine was made in slate and is Female (L3273, Fig. 3.11). In breccia, a figurine with wide emphasised hips and buttocks (1934,0115.4; Fig. 5.6) has been identified as Probably Female. Stone was used mostly for the Asexual figurines (2, 67%), including one from Knossos (unknown inv.no., Fig. 5.7) and one from Gerani cave (L276, Fig. 3.46). The phallic-shaped stone No.7730 from Spelaio Pelekiton has been identified as Male (Fig. 3.51). Overall, there is a low number of Females in hard materials: seven (23% of the total Female figurines), while Probably Female are six (46% of the total Probably Female figurines). Together, the total of female-related categories (Female and Probably Female) in hard materials

is 13 figurines (30% of the total of the female-related category), a low percentage compared to the 70% depicted in clay. Female figurines in hard materials are made of marble, steatite and slate, while Probably Female are in marble, shell, stone and breccia. Can some of these materials be indicative of sex or gender? Can we sex Asexual figurines in those materials shared with Female and Probably Female figurines? Do the materials condition the way the sexual attributes in figurines are depicted?

Material	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Non-Identifiable
Clay	24 (49%)	7 (14%)	3 (6%)	3 (6%)	12 (25%)	41
Marble	4 (21%)	3 (16%)	1 (5%)	0	11 (58%)	3
Steatite	2 (50%)	0	0	0	2 (50%)	0
Shell	0	1 (33%)	0	0	2 (67%)	0
Slate	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0	0
Stone	0	1 (33%)	1	0	2 (67%)	1
Bone	0	0	0	0	1 (100%)	0
Breccia	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Total	**31**	**13**	**5**	**3**	**30**	**45**

Table 5.5. Sex and material in the figurines from Neolithic Crete

The lack of detailed depictions of sex in hard materials, especially marble and stone, may be a consequence of the material's hardness and the difficulty of sculpting it. However, explaining why more Asexual figurines appear in marble and hard materials is not so simple. As mentioned before, a high number of clay figurines have also been identified as Asexual. However, Neolithic sculptors were interested in sex/gender

when modelling figurines in clay, it is reasonable to suppose that they also were interested in representing sex/gender in hard materials.

However, we also need to consider that identifying Asexual figurines is easier in hard materials precisely because these materials are less prone to breakage. There is a larger number of whole figurines preserved in harder materials than clay. Asexual figurines can only be identified when they are intact since they are characterised by the lack of breasts or sexual genitalia. Most of the preserved whole or almost whole figurines (lacking the head or a leg) are made of harder materials: 30 (79% of the figurines in hard materials). In contrast, 22 were in clay (25% of the figurines made of clay), a low percentage considering 90 clay figurines make up the assemblage. Clay figurines are widely fragmented, as shown by the number of Non-Identifiable clay figurines in Table 5.5: 41 (91% of the Non-Identifiable category), while only four (9%) are made of hard materials.

On the other hand, it is important to analyse what sexual traits are represented on the different materials (Table 5.6). Female-related figurines in clay are identified mainly by the representation of breasts, in 25 examples, exaggerated buttocks in five and genitalia in one and sexual triangle in another. Figurine AE.729 is the only known example from Knossos depicting female genitalia in clay (Fig. 5.11). Another Female figurine from Phaistos represents breasts, exaggerated buttocks and sexual triangle but is only half preserved (unknown inv.no., Fig. 3.41). In contrast, breasts never appear on marble and other hard materials. This fact may represent a bias in our ability to categorise sex (especially Female sex) in the figurines of harder materials. In hard materials, sex is mainly depicted with incisions of the genitalia. Such incisions appear in eight figurines identified as Female and Probably Female, and in one example of Male sex (L2623, Fig. 3.4.a) with the sexual triangle carved. Female genitalia include possible incisions representing the vulva (Figs. 3.11, 5.10) and partitioned sexual triangles (Figs. 3.16, 5.8). Other figurines in hard materials represent neither breasts nor genitalia and only have exaggerated buttocks in five examples (1938.666, 1938.665, 09.408, 1934.0115,4 and G100; Figs. 4.15-4.16, 5.13, 5.6, Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.4) (Table 5.6). Why is there such a difference in the indication of sex in clay and hard materials? Perhaps the depiction of breasts is more easily

achievable in clay, a malleable material, than harder ones. Conversely, incisions of the genitalia were probably easier to carve to make explicit the sex of figurines in hard materials. Some materials, e.g., bone or shell, would be sculpted with great difficulty given their fragile nature. However, do all incisions in the groin area represent sex?

Ucko (1968: 93-94) interpreted incisions in the groins of particular figurines from Crete as 'waistlines' and 'leg muscles'. Such incisions may also be interpreted as sexual triangles or schematic genitalia. Hamilton (2000: 20-21) argues that those figurines should be all recognised as Female, but I consider that some may be interpreted as Female and Probably Female. However, figurines with ambiguous incisions will be compared with definite Female figurines in case they share secondary features (e.g., decoration, painting, arm-position, posture or anatomical details) that make the identification firmer. Given the importance of accurately identifying these incisions to categorise sex in hard materials, it is necessary to compare those markings that clearly represent genitalia or sexual triangles with those that are more dubious. In hard materials, the figurines with more securely identified female genitalia and sexual triangles are L3273, L3271, G103, G99, G184 and 1389 (Figs. 3.11, 3.16, 5.8-5.10, 5.4). Initially classified as Asexual, other figurines present incisions in the groins, which cannot be clearly classified as female genitalia or sexual triangles. These are 1938.663, L19, L276, G104 and 1938.664 (Figs. 5.5, 3.48, 3.46, 5.19, 5.12).

Sexual attributes	N. Representations	Clay	Hard materials
Breasts	25	25	0
Female genitalia	10	2	8
Exaggerated buttocks	10	5	5
Male genitalia	4	3	1
Ambiguous male genitalia	4	3	1
Total	**49**	**38**	**15**

Table 5.6. Sexual attributes by materials in the figurines from Neolithic Crete.

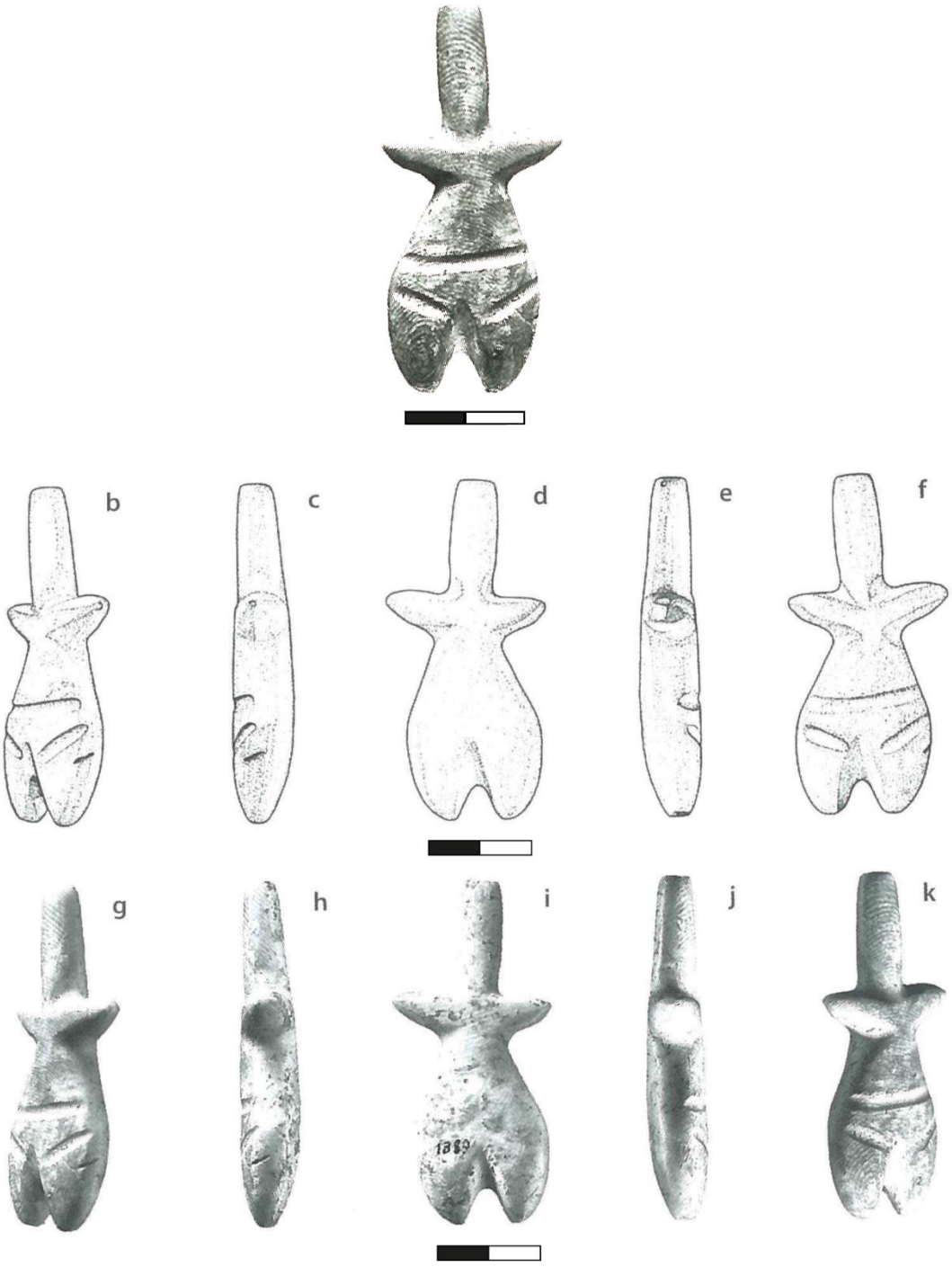

Figure 5.4. Shell Probably Female figurine 1389 (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.16)

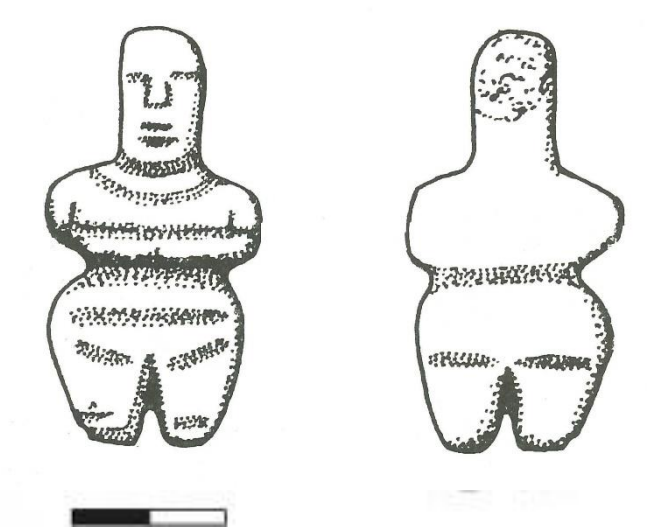

Figure 5.5. Shell Asexual figurine 1938.663, Central Crete (after Ucko 1968: fig.103).

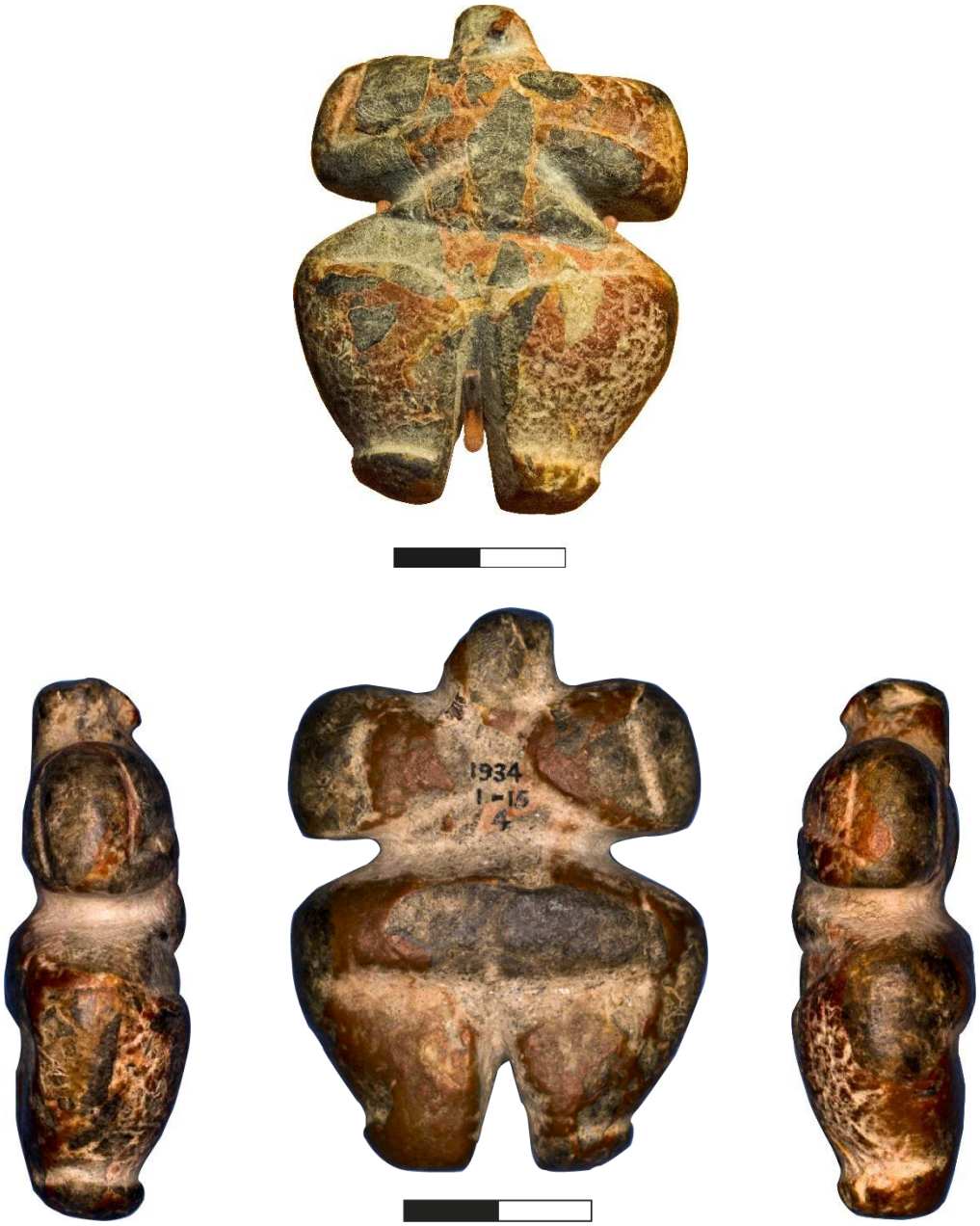

Figure 5.6. Probably Female figurine 1934,0115.4 in breccia, Gortyna (Crete) (after © The Trustees of the British Museum; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Minoan_figurine,_5300-3200_BC,_brekcia,_BM,_GR_1934.1-15.4,_142745.jpg; https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1934-0115-4; 10/09/2020).

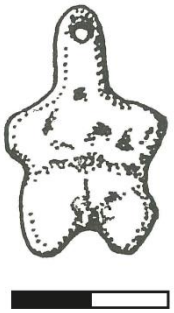

Figure 5.7. Stone Female figurine with unknown inv.no., Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.98).

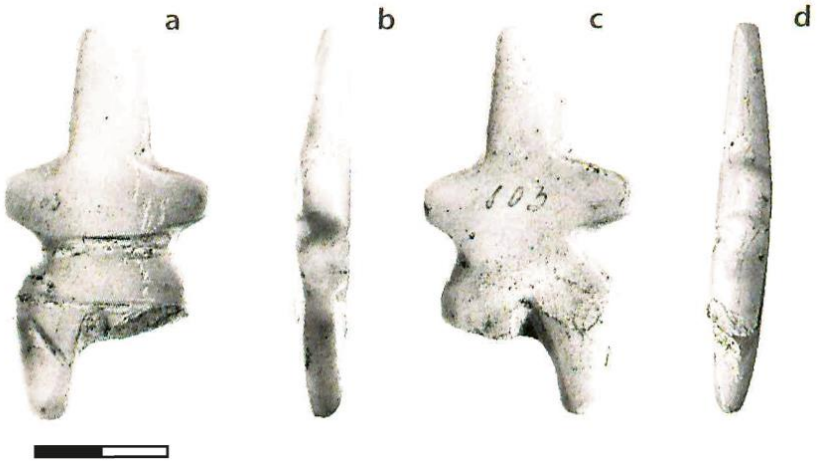

Figure 5.8. Marble figurine G103 with partitioned sexual triangle, Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.10).

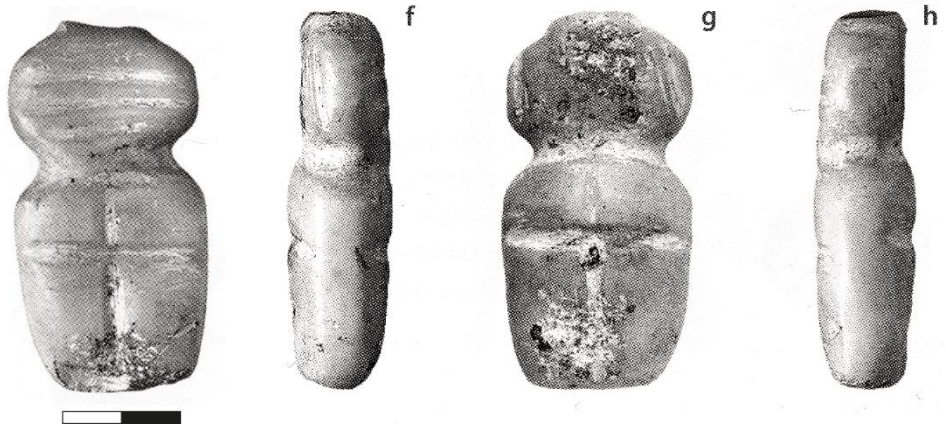

Figure 5.9. Marble Probably Female figurine G99 with a schematic representation of the Folded Arms gesture, Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.3)



Figure 5.10. Marble figurine G184 with female genitalia indicated by incisions, unknown provenance in Crete (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.13).



Figure 5.11. Clay figurine AE.729, Neolithic Knossos (Photographs by the author)



Figure 5.12. Marble figurine 1938.664, Neolithic Knossos (Photographs by the author)



Figure 5.13. Front, sides and back of marble figurine 09.408 with exaggerated buttocks, LN Knossos (Photographs by the author).

Although in clay, incisions also mark the genitalia in figurine R1556 (Fig. 3.47) from Gerani cave, a rare type compared to the assemblage of Neolithic Crete. Two incised lines in the belly area may be representations of the genitalia and probably indicate a phallus. In that case, this figurine is a Probably Male representation considering the robust body shape and the stance with the open limbs. The head represented as a triangular stump with a pointed nose in a bird-like form is dissimilar to those from Crete, except for figurine L62, also from Gerani cave, with a very schematic body shape and similar triangular head. These triangular pointed heads are also known in LN figurines from Saliagos (Renfrew 2017: figs. 3.6-3.7), which finds typological parallels with the figurines from Gerani cave. The combination of triangular head and arm-stumps is also present in the Probably Male figurine from Knossos 59/143 (Fig. 3.31), which may strengthen further its classification as Probably Male sex.

It is pertinent to question whether Asexual figurines may represent male gender, considering their overall low percentage in the assemblage. While the low number of definitely Male depictions could be used as evidence, other than Asexual most figurines from the Cretan assemblage are Female (31 total, 38%). This evidence rather suggests the possibility that some of the figurines identified as Asexual could be Female. For that reason, I analyse the Asexual figurines on a case-by-case basis to explore whether they could be better assigned to other categories: Male, Female or other.

Small figurines with ambiguous male genitalia have been interpreted in Chapter 3 as probably younger males. In chapter 3, I have also argued that specific Asexual figurines of a small size found in groups together with larger sexed figurines may represent children and prepubescent individuals. So, what is the meaning of Asexual figurines that are not small and do not fit the hypothesis of children? Are these figurines just intended as schematic human representations that generally lack details? I have already explored those Asexual figurines in hard materials where sexual features might be hard to depict, but how can we interpret the figurines in clay, where details are easily modelled?

A low percentage of clay figurines does not meet the criteria for age-stage interpretation— just three figurines from Knossos. Of these, figurine 59/9 (Fig. 3.37) from FN Knossos represents a featureless oval body, and only its shape with a rough division of head/waist and lower part of the body suggests that it might represent a human figure. This example is similar to some Early Cycladic pebble-like figurines from Naxos of the 'Apeiranthos' style (Renfrew 1969: 14, 29, pl.7a-b), or EBA schematic figurines found at Thermi on Lesbos (e.g., MM4727, Fig. 5.14).

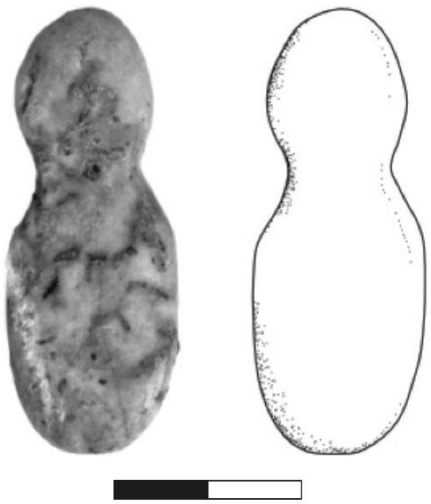

Figure 5.14. EBA schematic figurine MM4727 from Thermi (after Philaniotou 2019: fig.17.2)

The other two Asexual figurines from Knossos that do not fit the age-stage hypothesis, 1938.658 (Fig. 5.15) and 2716 (Fig. 4.14), represent similar typologies to those in hard materials. Both figurines are of LN date and represent the human form with elongated neck-heads without facial features. The only details depicted are gesture and posture, while in figurine 2716, details also include incised and painted decoration at front and back, possibly representing elements of attire (see Chapter 6.4.4). Similarities appear in the marble figurines from Crete that also lack representation of sex, for instance, the LN figurine G408 (Fig. 5.16) from Knossos and figurine L19 from Gerani cave (Fig. 3.48). However, similar figurines or fragments are among the sexed categories, for instance, the previously illustrated figurine G103 (Fig. 5.8) and LN figurine 2723 from Knossos (Fig. 4.12), which are Female. Unfortunately, the head is one of the most fragile and breakable parts of a figurine. Thus, possible similarities with other figurines of this typology, especially in clay, are lacking.



Figure 5.15. Front, side and back of clay Asexual figurine 1938.658, Knossos (Photographs by the author).

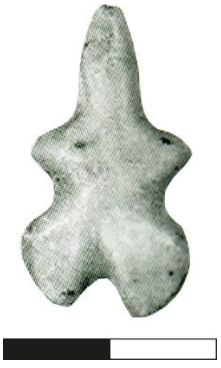

Figure 5.16. Marble figurine G408, Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.9)

Several interpretations have been put forward concerning the meaning of the long neck-heads of Neolithic figurines. Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 93-95) first

proposed that the EN figurines with elongated necks from Thessaly should be interpreted as 'phallic' and an amalgamation of both sexes when the elongated necks appear in figurines with emphasised breasts or buttocks. Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 95) considered such representations a combination of the woman-mother reproductive qualities, influenced by the Mother-Goddess theory. However, not only female bodies with exaggerated sexual traits from EN Thessaly have elongated necks, but also figurines of Male and indeterminate sex. Following Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou's interpretation, Whittle (1998: 140) also argued that Neolithic figurines from Starčevo-Koros with long necks and heads may represent erect male genitalia. An example is a figurine from a Starčevo context found at Gladnice (Whittle 1998: 140) (Fig. 5.17). The whole figurine has the shape of male genitalia with the buttocks shaped as testicles. Further to this phallic symbolism, Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 58) proposed that LN and Chalcolithic Hamangia figurines with cylindrical elongated necks are signs of maleness. When cylindrical necks are present with swelling breasts in the same figures, the authors find a resemblance with male gonads (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 60). They further argue that removing the head by deliberate fragmentation in these figurines signifies removing the male part or male gender, resulting in a female figure (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 62).



Figure 5.17. Phallic figurine from Gladnice, Starčevo culture (after https://alchetron.com/Star%C4%8Devo-culture#starevo-culture-ebe6a512-c524-450d-b3df-5cae4fd8b80-resize-750.jpeg; 16/09/2020)

Were LN Cretan figurines with long neck-heads intended to symbolise phallic sexual traits? There are several reasons why this might not be the case for the Cretan examples. No figurines have been found in Neolithic Crete like those from Starčevo-Koros mentioned by Whittle (1998), which may have a clear phallic symbolism. In Neolithic Crete, the only stone shaped phallus is No.7730 from Spelaio Pelekiton (Fig. 3.51). However, it differs from the Starčevo-Koros culture figurines because it lacks a human-shaped body, facial details, feet, hands and any human traits in general. The figurines with long necks from Crete (e.g., Figs. 5.4, 5.7-5.8, 5.15-5.16, 3.46) generally lack the androgynous characteristics outlined by Chapman and Gaydarska (2007). Only in rare exceptions, are breasts represented, e.g., in figurine 2723 from Knossos (Fig. 4.12), but they are not swollen or exaggerated and, therefore, not suggestive of male gonads. A high percentage of these figurines is Asexual, and when they depict sexual traits, these are primarily female genitalia (Figs. 3.11, 5.8) rather than breasts.

Elongated neck-heads are not a rare trait in Neolithic figurines from Crete: despite the high percentage of fragmented heads from the assemblage, 16 figurines can be classified into this category, especially in the LN phase. Ten of these figurines are made

of hard materials, while six are made of clay. Most elongated neck figurines are Asexual, six, while five are Female, four are Probably Female, and one is Non-Identifiable. They do not seem to be related to gender representation, although none are Male. A possible explanation for elongated heads may be the practice of headshaping. This practice has been attested in the EN burials found near Skotini Cave in Tharrounia, Euboia (Greece) (Lorentz 2009). Headshaping denotes the intentional or unintentional modification of cranial form for cultural reasons (Lorentz 2009: 77). At Tharrounia, 11 out of 13 crania present evidence for headshaping (Lorentz 2009: 83). Similar skull reshaping has been identified in Neolithic Khirokitia crania, in Cyprus (Lorentz 2003). The lack of male crania among the most visible cranial reshapings from Tharrounia may suggest a gender differentiation (Lorentz 2009: 85). In Crete, both archaeological data and mentions in modern times speak of cranial modifications (Dingwall 1931). However, further evidence is lacking in Neolithic Greece due to limited skeletal remains and the lack of headshaping studies in this area.

5.2.3. Gesture, posture and sex

The most frequent arm-position is arm-stumps. Most categories of sex display arm-stumps: Female, Probably Female, Probably Male and Asexual, except for Male figurines (Table 5.7). There is a slight difference in the classification of arm-stumps. Female and Probably Female figurines are mostly depicted with rounded stumps (e.g., Fig. 3.21). Conversely, Asexual figurines are mostly depicted with triangular stumps (e.g., Figs. 3.13, 5.16) and also Probably Male figurines (e.g., Figs. 3.31, 3.45). In the case of Asexual figurines, triangular stumps seem to be related to the material as it appears in most Asexual figurines in hard materials (in seven figurines out of nine total). Arm-stumps are probably a schematic depiction of the arms to chest. This view is supported by the LN figurine 2716 (Fig. 4.14) whose arm-stumps are modelled in a triangular shape, but the arms are bent to the chest in low relief. Perhaps triangular and rounded arm-stumps are two different schematic variations of the arms to the chest gesture, which may show gender differentiation. More generally, arm-stumps

might be a way of avoiding the breakage of the arms, especially in clay figurines. Ucko (1962: 45) proposed this idea using an ethnographic parallel with the dolls of the Ashanti tribes, which employed this method for figurines that children carried around.

'Arms to the chest' is the second category in the series of gestures. Similarly to arm-stumps, 'arms to the chest' appears in all sex categories except for Probably Male. I have further subdivided this gesture into: a) 'arms to the chest under the breasts' (e.g., Fig. 3.17) exclusively in Female figurines; b) 'arms to the chest covering their breasts or touching them' (e.g., Fig. 4.7) attested mainly for Probably Females (e.g., 2715, AE.731 and 1927-3260) and in two Female figurines (1938.662 and unknown inv.no.; Figs. 4.13, 5.18). Specific figurines depicted covering their breasts might show a meaningful division, perhaps of age-stages as I argued in Chapter 4.5.3, or a taboo of nudity that could be related to age. For instance, Egyptian children, boys and girls, were often represented naked until they reached puberty. Similarly, in Minoan Crete, images of children appear naked but young men on stone vases and frescoes wore loincloths (Pomadère 2012: 434). Thus, Pomadère (2012: 434) suggests that nudity in the Minoan imagery from Crete was reserved to young children but not to the young in general. This may suggest that the figurines with arms covering their breasts perhaps depict young females who have reached pre-pubescent or pubescent ages, but not children. In her study of Minoan Bronze Age figurine' gestures, Hitchcock (1997) considers that this arm-position appears in females lacking clear details like facial features and other traits including sex, perhaps suggesting a similar link between the gesture and younger age representation in Minoan iconography.

Further, less frequent variations of the 'arms to the chest' gesture are the 'arms to the sides at waist level' (e.g., AMH.249; Fig. 6.36a) and 'arms to the abdomen' (e.g., G184; Fig. 5.10).



Figure 5.18. Clay Female figurine with 'hands to the chest touching the breasts', Knossos (after Mina 2009: fig.7)

The Male figurine 18717 from LN Knossos displays a different gesture with the arms protruding outwards of the body. However, the arms are broken at the midpoint (Fig. 4.5). Furthermore, at Knossos appears a very schematic early depiction of the 'Folded Arms' gesture with three groves' incisions in the marble Probably Female figurine G99 (Fig. 5.9). This figurine was found in the same area as the marble legs of a figurine of Cycladic type, and it may be of FN date. Finally, two figurines – the Asexual L276 from Gerani cave and the Probably Female 1389 (Figs. 3.44, 5.4) – are depicted with extended horizontal arms, both in hard materials, which may be a similar depiction to that of the Male gesture at Knossos.

At least five figurines are armless (59/9, L62/L722, G104, 1941.200, 7730; Figs. 3.37, 3.49, 5.19-5.20, 3.51). Four armless figurines are Asexual and almost all of marble, except for figurine 59/9 in clay. These figurines are very schematic. They represent a basic body contour shape that divides the head or waist from the rest of the body and, in a few instances, with leg differentiation (G104 and 1941.200).

Gesture	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	NI
Downward projection	1	0	0	0	0	0
Arms to the chest	1	3	1	0	7	5
Arms to the chest under breasts	5	0	0	0	0	0
Triangular stumps	2	0	0	3	9	4
Rounded stumps	11	2	0	0	3	2
Stumps (other: broken, rectangular)	0	0	0	0	5	1
Arms to the chest touching/covering the breasts	2	3	0	0	0	0
Folded Arms by incision	0	1	0	0	0	0
Protruding outward of the body	0	0	1	0	0	0
Horizontally extended outwards	0	1	0	0	1	0
Arms to the abdomen	1	0	0	0	1	0
Arms to the sides at waist level	1	0	0	0	0	0
No arms	0	0	1	0	4	0
Total	**24**	**10**	**3**	**3**	**30**	**12**

Table 5.7. Sex and gesture of the figurines from Neolithic Crete

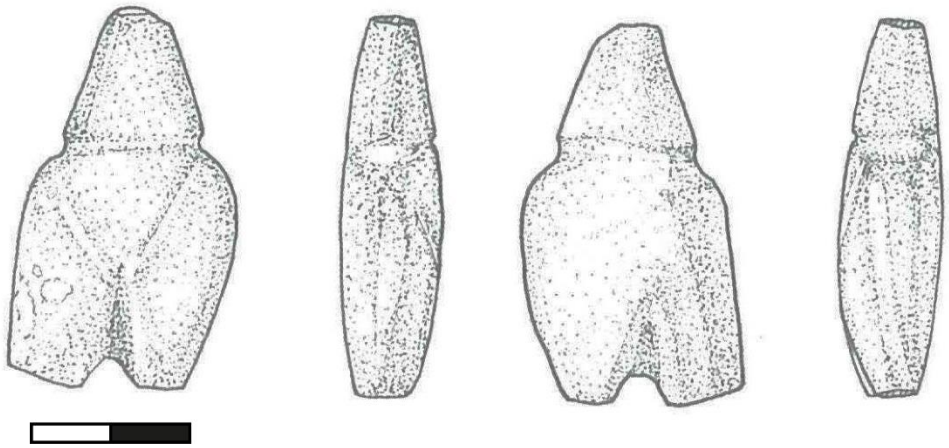

Figure 5.19. Marble Asexual figurine G104 without arms, Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.11)



Figure 5.20. Neolithic marble figurine 1941.200 without arms, Knossos (Photograph by the author)

The main figurine postures in Neolithic Crete are standing and sitting, but with different variations. All sex categories are depicted standing with differentiated legs, but this posture is more numerous in Asexual figurines (Table 5.6). Also, nine examples of Asexual figurines are possibly depicted in a standing position but without showing leg differentiation (e.g., 59/9, L62/L722, Figs. 3.37, 3.49). Twenty-four figurines in hard materials appear standing, while two are squatting (e.g., 59/153, Fig. 3.4b), four are

sitting (e.g., 60/183, Fig. 3.12), and another is sitting with legs crossed (09.408, Fig. 5.13). Therefore, the standing posture is prevalent in hard materials. However, the presence of squatting and sitting with legs crossed postures may indicate that the depiction of other postures was not difficult to achieve in hard materials. Four Female and five Probably Female figurines display a standing position with leg differentiation. Also standing are the Male L2623 (Fig. 3.4.a) and three Probably Male figurines (e.g., Fig. 3.45). Two Male figurines (1927.3261, 60/232, Figs. 4.4, 3.35) may either be standing or sitting; their legs are inclined towards the front which means they are unable to stand and needed a miniature stool to sit on or were meant to be put against a wall to stand. Considering that the Male figurine 18717 (Fig. 4.5) is probably sitting on a stool, other Male figurines perhaps had the same posture, although the stool was not attached to their bodies. Two Female figurines show sitting postures with legs crossed (AMH.249 and 09.408; Figs. 6.36a, 5.13). This was probably a posture only used for Females. Similarly, the squatting posture appears in two Probably Females, in one Female and another Asexual (e.g., 59/153, Fig. 3.4b). The kneeling position appears in two Female figurines (AE.729 and 2718, Figs. 5.11, 5.22) and in two Asexual (2722 and 1938.658, Figs. 4.10, 5.15).

Posture	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	NI
Standing with differentiated legs	4	5	1	3	12	3
Sitting	6	4	0	0	4	8
Sitting with legs crossed	2	0	0	0	0	0
Standing with no leg differentiation	1	0	0	0	9	2
Sitting/Standing	0	0	2	0	0	0
Seated (on a stool?)	0	0	1	0	0	0
Kneeling	2	0	0	0	2	1
Squatting	1	2	0	0	1	1
Total	**16**	**11**	**4**	**3**	**28**	**15**

Table 5.8. Sex and posture of the figurines from Neolithic Crete



Figure 5.21. Figurine 1934,0115.2, 'sitting', LN Knossos (front after https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cd/Terracotta_figurine%2C_Neolithic%2C_5300-4500_BC%2C_Knossos%2C_BM%2C_GR_1934.1-15.2%2C_142800.jpg; 28/02/2021; side after ©The Trustees of the British Museum https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1934-0115-2; 10/09/2020)



Figure 5.22. Female figurine 2718, 'kneeling', Neolithic Knossos (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurine,_pottery,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144516.jpg; 27/05/2020)

5.3. Sex and gender in figurines from Neolithic Thessaly

5.3.1. Identifying sex

As with the Cretan Neolithic figurines, for Thessaly sex has been identified following the methodology explained in the introductory section (5.1). The selected sites included in the analysis of sex and gender are those mentioned in Chapter 1.2.1.2.

Overall, there is a similar percentage of Female and Asexual figurines in Thessaly. However, the distribution of Sexless and Female figurines is unequal across the sites analysed. Seventy-four figurine fragments are Non-Identifiable, 36% of the total analysed. Therefore, it should be born in mind that percentages for sex identification are based on a small dataset, which also excludes Non-Identifiable figurines. Fifty-four (40%) of the figurines can be classified as Female, and 11 (8%) as Probably Female (Fig. 5.23). Therefore, Female-related categories account for 65 (48%). This is slightly higher compared to Asexual figurines: 51 (38%). In contrast, Male figurines continue to appear in small numbers with only seven examples (5%), and eight of Probably Male sex (6%). Male-related categories, therefore, comprise 15 figurines (11%), in contrast with Asexual and Female categories, that clearly dominate the assemblage. In our

selected sites from Thessaly, three Double-sex figurines have been identified (2%), all depicting sexual attributes of male and female sexes: breasts and male genitalia.

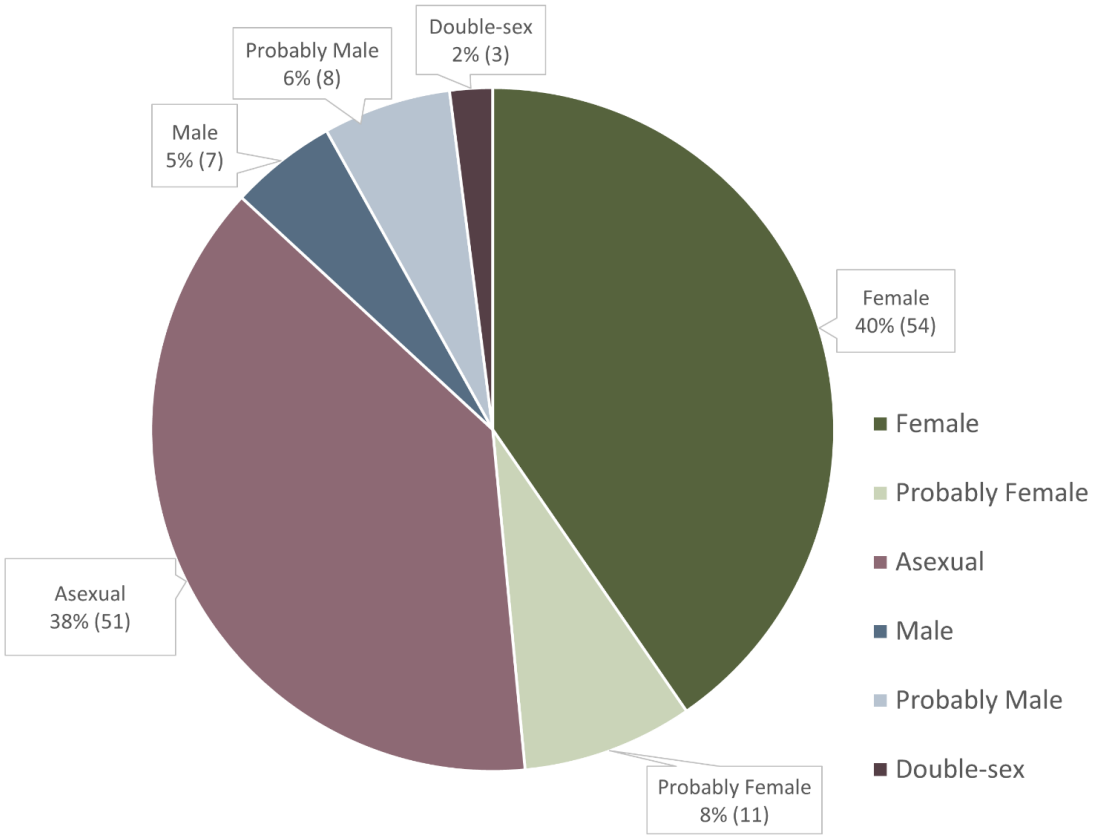

Figure 5.23. Percentage of sex categories in my analysis of Neolithic figurines from Thessaly

The depiction of breasts is the main trait that identifies Female sex (Table 5.8). Although less frequent, Female genitalia are also commonly depicted on the figurines from Thessaly. Likewise, the genitalia are frequently depicted on Male figurines in Thessaly. Most Male figurines are depicted seated on a stool with an applied phallus. In our selected case studies, this figurine type appears at Sesklo with three EN-MN examples (BE.4667, MB.M.5109, and MB.M.4340; Figs. 4.29-4.31), in MN Tsangli (M.2430, Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75e), at MN Tsani Magoula (M.5108; Fig. 4.41), and Zappeio 2 of unknown dates (ML.THE.1285; Fig. 5.24). Similarly, Double-sex figurines are depicted sitting on a stool with an applied phallus and with applied or modelled breasts. The similarities and differences between these two figurine types

will be analysed in section 5.3.3. Two figurines with only the upper torso remaining may depict Probably Males of the same 'sitting on a stool' type. They have been classified as Probably Males given the shape of the torso and the broken arms looking downwards (as if they would rest on the knees or legs). These were found at Zappeio 2 (ML.THE.1245; Fig. 5.25) and Tsangli (M.2751; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75d). A fragmentary figurine from Rachmani (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.26m) with the hand resting on the knee probably represented a Male figurine of the 'sitting on a stool' type. Also Probably Male, is figurine ML.THE.1158 from Zappeio 2 with two ambiguous incisions that may depict male genitalia (Fig. 5.26). An ambiguous figurine from Tsangli has also been identified as Probably Male: it depicts a phallic-shaped figure with an elongated phallic neck (Fig. 5.27). Similar phallic-shaped figurines have been found at Kyparissos 2 (ML.THE.1231, Fig. 5.28a) and Krannon 3 (ML.THE.1180, Fig. 5.28b), although in standing postures, and a Male figurine seemingly sitting on a stool from an unknown site in Thessaly (ORF.545/545; Fig. 5.29). Two figurines from Tsangli might represent individuals with a beard (6069 and 'unknown inv.no.'; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.77e, 76g). Nevertheless, these fragments depict only the head and neck, so it cannot be ascertained if these figurines are indeed Male. The posture and the shape of the torso have been used as an indicator of their gender in other Probably Male figurines; this will be explored in section 5.3.3.

Sex	N. of Figurines	Percentage
Female	54	40%
Probably Female	11	8%
Asexual	51	38%
Male	7	5%
Probably Male	8	6%
Double-sex	3	2%
Non-Identifiable	74	36%
Total	**208**	**-**

Table 5.9. Sex of figurines from the selected sites from Thessaly

Sexual attributes	N. Representations	Percentage
Breasts	35	47%
Female genitalia	22	29%
Exaggerated belly	2	3%
Exaggerated buttocks	5	7%
Male genitalia	10	13%
Ambiguous male genitalia	2	3%
Total	**75**	**-**

Table 5.10. Sexual attributes in the figurines from Thessaly



Figure 5.24. Male figurine ML.THE.1285 with applied phallus, sitting on a stool, Zappeio 2 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.488)



Figure 5.25. Probably Male figurine ML.THE.1245 perhaps of the 'sitting on a stool' type, Zappeio 2 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.488)



Figure 5.26. Probably Male figurine ML.THE.1158, Zappeio 2 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.714)



Figure 5.27. Phallic-shaped figure, MN Tsangli (after Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.77c).



Figure 5.28.a. (Left) Phallic figurine ML.THE.1231, Kyparissos 2. b. (Right) Phallic figurine ML.THE.1180, Krannon 3 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: figs.494, 738).



Figure 5.29. Male figurine sitting on a stool with elongated phallic neck-shape, unknown site, Thessaly (after Orphanidis and Malakasioti 2011: fig.73)

The analysis by site reveals an insightful picture of the distribution of sex categories in Neolithic Thessaly (Table 5.9). Sesklo, for instance, has a higher number of Female figurines and a smaller number of Asexual, while it is the site with the most Male

figurines (three in total). Likewise, Tsangli has a slightly higher proportion of Female than Asexual figurines. This could be due to the phases from which those figurines have been found since Sesklo has many figurines belonging to EN-MN strata and Tsangli to MN stratum. The differences in figurines by period will be assessed later. However, Dimini and Rachmani have a higher number of Asexual figurines. At Rachmani, most figurines found are Asexual, which might be explained by the high number of acroliths found in this site. At Dimini, only three figurines can be identified as Female and one as Probably Female, while a total of 17 are Asexual, completely lacking sexual attributes. Skafida's (1992) study suggests that 26 figurines lack sex depiction in LN Dimini. However, the unpublished state of this data impedes us to include it in my study. As in Rachmani, at Dimini most figurines belong to the acrolith type, which may partially explain the higher number of Asexual figurines. However, other figurine types were found in Dimini: schematic marble figurines, the cross-shaped type and figurines decorated with the pottery styles in marble and clay (see Chapter 6.4.4). The marble schematic figurines have also been found in the LN phases of Sesklo.

Double-sex figurines appear at three of our selected sites in Neolithic Thessaly: Chara 1, Zappeio 2 and Nees Karyes. Only one figurine of the Double-sex category has been found at each site. This category is lacking in most sites from the region. However, two ambiguous Double-sex figurines have been found at Melissochori 6 (ML.THE.1241, Fig. 5.48), and at Agios Georgios (Magoula Vrasteri; ML.XO.172, Fig. 5.49). All the Double-sex figurines, even those more ambiguous, may be classified among figurines 'sitting on a stool' type, which will be analysed in more detail in section 5.3.3.

Site	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Double-sex
Sesklo	22	2	3	1	13	0
Dimini	3	1	0	0	17	0
Tsangli	10	1	1	2	5	0
Platia Magoula	3	0	0	2	5	0
Tsani Magoula	1	1	1	0	0	0
Rachmani	0	2	0	1	7	0
Sitochoro 1	6	0	1	0	2	0
Chara 1	5	4	0	0	2	1
Zappeio 2	4	0	1	2	0	1
Nees Karyes	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	**54**	**11**	**7**	**7**	**51**	**3**

Table 5.11. Sex categories by site from Neolithic Thessaly

Previous studies of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly, such as those of Gallis and Orphanidis (1996), and Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou (1997: 90) have asserted that figurines from the EN and MN phases have a more detailed body shape with well-defined body parts and sexual attributes in contrast with LN and FN figurines, which depict the rough shape of the human body. This generalisation needs to be corroborated with a more detailed study site by site since, for instance, at Sesklo, the figurines of the EN I period were very schematic (Wijnen 1981: 45-46). Unfortunately, a significant number of figurines from our selected case study sites cannot be securely assigned to specific periods. One of the main problems stems from old excavations such as those of Tsountas (1908) and Wace and Thompson (1912) at Sesklo, Dimini,

Rachmani, Tsangli and Tsani Magoula, as they lacked an advanced methodology that defined accurately the stratigraphy and chronology of the sites excavated. Also, the figurines from Chara 1, Sitochoro 1, Zappeio 2 and Nees Karyes cannot be securely ascribed to a concrete period since these were mostly surface finds. This is problematic given that all the Double-sex figurines come from those sites that lack contextual data. Overall, Table 5.10 shows that in the earlier Neolithic (EN-MN), Female figurines are more numerous than Asexual ones, although these are only slightly fewer in number. Definite Male figurines are only present in EN-MN phases. The phallic figurines illustrated beforehand with one example from MN Tsangli (Fig. 5.27) are more ambiguous. Hourmouziadis (1973) argued that another decorated figurine from Tsangli is also phallic in shape. However, this fragment was probably part of a ceramic vase decorated in red on white rather than a phallic figurine. Hourmouziadis (1994: 89) has suggested that the examples of phalli proposed by other scholars such as Marangou (1991: fig.4) and Theocharis (1973b: fig.242) are broken at the base. This means that those 'phallic' clay objects were attached to something, most probably as handles or other parts of ceramic vessels. Two examples of this type come from the site of Sesklo (Fig. 5.30). In some cases, like the dubious figurine from Tsangli, their resemblance to a phallus is very questionable.



Figure 5.30. Phallus-shaped handles EAM.12493 and 15948, Sesklo (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Phallus_terracotta_neolothic,_NAMA_080797.jpg; 24/06/2020)

Most Asexual figurines were found in LN and FN levels, explained mainly by the presence of acroliths and schematic stone and clay figurines. Male figurines disappear from LN and FN levels which might be due to a different way of depicting Male figurines that does not evidently depict male genitals but, instead, uses other conventions to reflect male gender. The posture sitting on a stool is mostly associated with Males in EN-MN, therefore, the same posture depicted more schematically in LN without representing sex may indicate a male gender. Female figurines continue to be depicted in the LN period, although in a smaller quantity than Asexual categories.

Among our selected case studies from Thessaly, the site occupied through most Neolithic phases was Sesklo, although with an abandonment phase at the end of the MN until it was reoccupied in the LN (see Chapter 3.4.2.1). Although figurines from the EN I levels at Sesklo are rather schematic, overall, the EN period has produced mostly Female figurines. In EN-MN phases, clay Female figurines feature voluptuous bodies with naturalistically modelled fat folds. Male representations of the same period at

Sesklo include three figurines 'sitting on a stool' with the genitalia represented and a Probably Male without sexual attributes. In LN Sesklo, Female figurines are more common than Asexual ones, but many Asexual figurines cannot be ascribed to this phase without caution. During this phase, Female figurines are rendered in poor detail: the arms tend to be depicted as stumps, the legs undifferentiated and forming a cylindrical base, while the head appears as a stump or was inserted in the clay body (now lost). Clay Asexual figurines are equally devoid of details and represent only part of the torso. Those in stone are small and represent only the body shape with an elongated or triangular head, no leg differentiation and arm-stumps.

At Dimini, the presence of both a high number of acroliths and small stone figurines akin to those from Sesklo, may explain the high number of Asexual figurines. However, Asexual figurines are also made of clay and similar to those from Sesklo depict the arms as stumps, undifferentiated legs that end in a cylindrical base and a head devoid of facial details that also tends to tilt upwards (see Fig. 5.42). However, the stump arms of the figurines from Dimini are exaggerated, forming a cross-shape in relation to their bodies. At FN Rachmani, all the figurines with definite sex are acroliths. However, some figurines lack contextual data and are casual finds, including the fragments of the legs and waist of two Probably Female figurines. Both figures probably belong to an earlier phase, perhaps MN, considering the more naturalistically rendering of the bodies. These figurines are identified as Probably Female because of the body shape and exaggerated buttocks, although the posture of ML.THE.535 also points to a female gender (Fig. 5.45a). Unfortunately, the rest of the figurine assemblage is fragmentary, comprising mainly legs and heads that do not allow for further analysis of sex and gender. Most of the figurines except for two unearthed in MN levels are restricted to the FN period. Half of the figurines were found in a deposit from House Q in stratum III (see Chapter 3.4.2.6).

At Platia Magoula Zarkou, the figurines found appeared in a pit dug in the destruction level of a MN house and under a LN house and have been interpreted as the representation of family members (see Chapter 4.6.1). The figurines depict Female, Probably Male and Asexual sexes, showing a variety of gender conceptions and ages through different sizes, postures, gestures, sexual attributes and decorations. The site

of Tsangli also yielded a wide variety of sex, gender and diversity of figurine' types but unfortunately, most of the figurines are in a very fragmentary state. The sites without contextual information: Zappeio 2, Chara 1, Nees Karyes and Sitochoro also show a variety of sexes. Zappeio 2 has figurines possibly belonging to EN/MN, which depict Males and Double-sex figurines sitting on a stool, fragments of heads with elaborated hairstyles (see Chapter 6, Figs. 6.39-6.43) and coffee bean eyes which are typically found in those phases (Gallis 1985).

Similarly, Chara 1 has yielded head fragments with similar hairstyles and coffee bean eyes, other with slit eyes and bun headdresses which also suggest that at least specific figurines belong to the EN-MN phases. Similar figurine heads with slit incised eyes and headdress resembling a bun were found in the earliest levels of EN Sesklo. In contrast, at Sitochoro, the dates of the figurines are less clear, although some possibly belong to the EN-MN phases, for instance, the head fragment ML.THE.1286 with the hair applied in strips of clay, and the Male figurine ML.THE.689 which resembles the Male figurines sitting on a stool, although depicted standing. The other figurines can be less clearly assigned to a period given the variety of portraying styles. Noteworthy, at Sitochoro, all five Female figurines are identified by the representation of female genitalia, including the depiction of pubic hair in three examples, rather than breasts, which appear only on the Female figurine ML.THE.1661.

Chronology	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual
EN	8	1	1	0	4
EN/MN	12	4	1	3	2
MN	8	4	4	3	5
MN/LN	3	0	0	2	4
LN	17	2	0	0	26
FN	0	0	0	0	7
Neolithic	6	0	1	0	3
Total	**54**	**11**	**7**	**8**	**51**

Table 5.12. Date and sex of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly

Phase and Site	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Double-sex
EN Sesklo	8	1	1	0	4	0
EN-MN Sesklo	3	0	0	1	0	0
MN Sesklo	1	0	2	0	2	0
LN Sesklo	10	1	0	0	7	0
LN Dimini	3	1	0	0	17	0
MN Tsangli	6	1	1	2	3	0
LN Tsangli	4	0	0	0	1	0
MN Tsani	1	1	1	0	0	0
MN Rachmani	0	2	0	1	0	0
FN Rachmani	0	0	0	0	7	0
MN-LN Platia Magoula	3	0	0	2	5	0
EN-MN Zappeio 2	4	0	1	2	0	1
EN-MN Chara 1	5	4	0	0	2	1
EN-MN Nees Karyes	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	**48**	**11**	**6**	**8**	**48**	**3**

Table 5.13. Phase and sex of figurines per site from Neolithic Thessaly

Overall, as shown in Table 5.7, sex categorisation in Thessaly shows similarities with Crete. Both regions share similar percentages of Female and Asexual figurines. However, female-related categories (Female and Probably Female) are slightly higher in both regions. Regarding the sexual attributes represented in the figurines,

noteworthy, there is a difference compared to Neolithic Crete in that the representation of female genitalia doubles in Thessaly. It is more common in Neolithic Thessalian Female figurines to represent both breasts and genitalia, or only the genitalia (e.g., Female figurines from Sitochoro 1), perhaps showing naked bodies. Male genitalia are also more commonly depicted in figurines from Thessaly. In contrast with Crete, at Thessalian sites, Probably Male figurines are identified by their torso shape and posture, but less frequently by the ambiguous depiction of male genitalia, as is the case at Knossos. Another difference with the figurines from Neolithic Crete is the depiction of exaggerated swollen bellies which may represent pregnant females that are absent from the assemblage from Crete: for instance, EAM.5952 (Fig. 4.38) from LN Sesklo. EN-MN figurines from Thessaly depict bodies in which it is not rare to find fat folds, protruding bellies and ample hips in both Female and Male figurines, a tradition that is not known at Knossos and other Cretan sites, except for the Female figurines from Phaistos (unknown inv.no., and F1864, Figs. 3.43-3.44) and Ierapetra (AMH.249, Fig. 6.36a). The different conventions for depicting sexed bodies in both regions may show particular cultural conceptions about Male and Female bodies or perhaps diverse ideas of beauty.

5.3.2. Sex and material

This section will analyse the relationship between figurines' sex and the materials employed to make them. Table 5.12 shows the comparison between sex and material of the figurines from Neolithic Thessaly. Females are predominantly made of clay: 52 figurines (50% of clay figurines). In contrast, only two marble figurines depict Females (12% of marble figurines). Likewise, most Probably Females are made of clay: 9 examples (9% of clay figurines). Marble and stone are the other materials used for Probably Females, although there is only one example of each, representing 6% of the marble figurines and 33% of the figurines in stone. Noteworthy, no other hard materials are used to shape Female figurines. There are no Male figurines in marble or other hard materials. All Male-related categories are modelled in clay, including seven

Male (7% of clay figurines) and eight Probably Males (8% of clay figurines). Also, the three Double-sex figurines from our selected case-studies are made of clay (3% of the clay figurines). The Asexual category is the second in number of clay figurines with 25 examples (24% of clay figurines). Fourteen Asexual figurines are made of marble, representing 82% of the total marble figurines. A unique figurine made of slate is also Asexual, as are two other examples in stone (67% of the stone figurines). This data indicates that most figurines in hard materials, including marble, stone and slate, depict human bodies without sexual attributes. Seventeen figurines in hard materials are Asexual (33% of the Asexual category). This suggests that most hard materials did not depict sexual features and were perhaps selected specifically to depict sexless figurines. The only figurines in hard materials to depict sexual attributes are two EN marble Female figurines from Sesklo (unknown inv.no.; Fig. 5.31). In the LN, no breasts or genitalia appear in figurines made of hard materials. However, a marble figurine from LN Sesklo and the stone figurine ML.THE.1387 from Rachmani depict body shapes with wide hips and thin waists, swollen abdomen, suggesting Probably Female bodies. All the acrolith figurines found at Dimini and Rachmani are Asexual. Noteworthy, most Asexual figurines whether in clay, hard materials or acroliths are concentrated in the final phases of the Neolithic, especially LN (I-II) and FN. This may evidence the intention of the figurine' makers to depict human figures devoid of details and gender, intentionally leaving behind the more detailed bodily features present in EN-MN dates that show breasts, genitalia and swollen bellies (including slightly protruding bellies in Male figurines), fat folds, and exaggerated buttocks.

Material	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Double-sex
Clay	52 (50%)	9 (9%)	7 (7%)	8 (8%)	25 (24%)	3 (3%)
Marble	2 (12%)	1 (6%)	0	0	14 (82%)	0
Slate	0	0	0	0	1 (100%)	0
Stone	0	1 (33%)	0	0	2 (67%)	0
Acrolith	0	0	0	0	9 (100%)	0
Total	**54**	**11**	**7**	**8**	**51**	**3**

Table 5.14. Material and sex of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly



Figure 5.31. Female figurines in marble, EN Sesklo (after Hourmouziadis 1973: fig.71b; after Theocharis 1962: fig.13).

However, some figurines might have been gendered by other means rather than depicting sexual traits, for instance, by adding decorative motifs (see Chapter 6.4.4). In the LN, marble figurines of anthropomorphic shape have been mainly found at Sesklo and Dimini. At Sesklo, these figurines have an elongated neck-head that recalls the

shape of Neolithic stone axes in miniature size. These figurines have a division of head and waist from the rest of the body and arms-stumps (Figs. 5.32-5.33). A similar type of head was also used to make acrolith figurines at Dimini and Rachmani. A triangular-shaped head was carved in other examples of marble Asexual figurines in Dimini and Sesklo, which recall the heads of Cycladic figurines (e.g., Fig. 5.34). The head and neck sizes are exaggerated in proportion to the rest of the body. Neolithic parallels for the figurines from LN Dimini are the clay figurines from the LN settlement at Strofilas on the island of Andros (Televantou 2019). P1560 from Strofilas (Fig. 5.35a) is a close parallel to the triangular shape of the LN figurines from Dimini. Similarly, the head fragment ML.KR.31 from Rachmani shares the flat triangular shape and the upward tilt of these figurines with perforated holes at the top of the head, perhaps for suspension or to add a headdress or hair (Fig. 5.36).



Figure 5.32. Marble Asexual figurine, LN Sesklo (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Zde/Neolithic_in_NAMA#/media/File:Neolithic_marble_and_stone_figurines,_NAMA,_191113.jpg; 13/08/2020)



Figure 5.33. Stone Asexual figurine, LN Sesklo (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Zde/Neolithic_in_NAMA#/media/File:Neolithic_marble_and_stone_figurines,_NAMA,_191113.jpg; 13/08/2020)



Figure 5.34. Marble figurine EAM.5994, LN Dimini (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Figurines_female_marble_neolithic,_NAMA_080805.jpg; 13/08/2020)



Figure 5.35a. (Right) Figurine P1560, LN Strofilas, Andros (after Televantou 2019: fig.14). b. (Left) Head of figurine, LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: fig.27)



Figure 5.36. Head and neck fragment ML.KR.31, Rachmani (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.162).

5.3.3. Sex, gesture and posture

To analyse the gestures of Neolithic figurines from Thessaly, I have defined different categories shown in Table 5.13. This analysis of the gestures compared to their sex shows that arm-positions are definitely gendered. In Female figurines, the most widely used gestures are 'arms to the chest below the breasts', 'arms to the chest touching/covering their breasts', and 'arms to the abdomen'. 'Arms to the chest touching/covering breasts' also appears in three Probably Female figurines, ML.THE.1128 and ML.THE.1788 from Chara 1 (Figs. 4.44, 6.23) and a torso fragment from Sesklo (unknown inv.no., Fig. 5.37). The breasts seem to be slightly outlined in these figurines but are unclear due to the hands covering them. Similar to the examples from Crete, the presence of breasts is ambiguous and not clearly outlined, which might be a way to depict a young girl without developed breasts or the intention to cover them. Figurine ML.THE.1215 from Chara 1 (Fig. 4.46) has the same gesture with the arms to the chest but not distinct breasts, perhaps also indicating an individual of Probably Female gender but of younger age (see Chapter 4.6.4). A small marble Asexual figurine from LN Dimini also seems to represent the hands to the chest arm-position schematically (Tsountas 1908: fig.37,8).

The Double-sex figurine ML.THE.1070 from Chara 1 (Fig. 5.38) has the right hand touching the right breast, the left hand is broken, although it probably rested on the sternum area. Therefore, this figurine shows a gesture only associated with Females. Gallis and Orphanidis (1996: fig.132) suggest that the gesture recalls homosexuality. Instead, this figurine should be viewed as an amalgamation of Male and Female sexes given the depiction of breasts and a phallus, and the combination of a Female gesture and a Male posture ('sitting on a stool').

'Arms to the chest below the breasts' is found in ten Female figurines, for instance, M41 from MN Tsangli (Fig. 4.39). A similar figurine shares the same gesture, also from MN Tsangli (10.673, Ucko 1968: pl.LXVII). Another example with hands under the breasts is figurine ML.THE.642 from Zappeio 2 (Fig. 5.39) with a round flat base. At Platia Magoula Zarkou, the two figurines considered adult women are also represented

with 'arms to the chest below the breasts', while in the younger girl, the arms are missing (see Chapter 4.6.1). Therefore, Female figurines with hands under the breasts may represent older or adult women. Thus, the difference in representing gesture may be an indication of both gender and age. However, there might also be a difference in gesture depiction between sites. For instance, six Female figurines with arms to the chest covering/touching the breasts, were found at EN/MN Sesklo. Three further examples of the same gesture in Probably Females come from Chara 1 (ML.THE.1128 and ML.THE.1788, Figs. 4.44, 6.23) and EN Sesklo (unknown inv.no., Fig. 5.37). In contrast, 'arms to chest below the breasts' appears in five figurines from Tsangli, two from Platia Magoula Zarkou, two from Zappeio and two from Chara 1. Interestingly, two Female figurines from Chara 1 (ML.THE.1203; Fig. 5.40) and Tsangli (unknown inv.no.; Wace and Thompson fig.75b) depict the left hand resting below the breasts or on the abdomen, while the right arm raises upwards but in both examples is broken.

Conversely, Male figurines are mostly associated with the gesture 'hands to the thighs': in MB.M.5109 and MB.M.4340 from Sesklo (Figs. 4.30-4.31) and M.2430 from Tsangli (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75e). The gesture 'hand to the knee' appears in another Male figurine from Tsani Magoula (M.5108, Fig. 4.41). The gesture 'hands to thighs' is shared by two Double-sex figurines: ML.THE.644 from Zappeio 2 (Fig. 4.35) and ML.THE.68 from Nees Karyes (Fig. 5.41). Thus, this gesture may represent a close gender relationship between Male and Double-sex figurines in the way both genders are conventionally portrayed. Probably Male figurines are represented without arms, one being the phallic-shaped figurine from Tsangli (Fig. 5.27) and the other two from the house model from Platia Magoula Zarkou (Figs. 3.61-3.62).

Twenty-nine Asexual figurines depict the arms as stumps. This is the sex category with the highest number of arm-stumps. However, Female figurines have arm-stumps in nine examples, as does one of Probably Female sex. Most arm-stumps appear in figurines made of hard materials, where the anthropomorphic shape of the figurine is merely outlined. This schematic gesture also appears in clay materials, particularly striking is a type of figurine from Dimini with cross-shaped arm-stumps (Fig. 5.42). Thirteen Asexual figurines also appear without arms. Figurines without arms are particularly associated with depictions of children analysed in Chapter 4.6, for

instance, the small figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou (Figs. 3.61-3.62). Female and Probably Females are also depicted without arms. Finally, an unusual gesture appears in the Asexual figurine EAM.5945 from MN Sesklo (Fig. 5.43) with the arms to the crotch, perhaps representing an individual covering their genitals.

Considering the various chronological phases, the division in gestures is more pronounced and varied in the EN-MN. The contextual evidence from Sesklo, Tsangli and Tsani suggests that Female gestures such as 'arms to the chest' with variations (with hands touching/covering breasts, hands below breasts, or hands to abdomen) and Male gestures like hands to thighs concentrate in the EN and MN phases. The exceptions are the two MN/LN adult Female figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou. In contrast, in the LN and FN phases, arm-stumps and no arms proliferate in both Asexual and Female figurines at sites such as Dimini, Sesklo, or Rachmani. Therefore, it is highly probable that the figurines from Chara 1, Zappeio 2, Nees Karyes and perhaps Sitochoro 1 belong to the EN-MN periods since both gestures and figurine types are similar to figurines from other sites dating to those phases. However, an exception is the schematic figurines found in EN I levels from Sesklo, which are represented with arm-stumps and no arms.

Gesture	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Double sex
Arm-stumps	8	1	0	0	28	0
No arms	1	0	0	3	13	0
Arms to the abdomen	6	0	0	0	1	0
Arms to the chest touching/covering breasts	7	2	0	0	0	1
Arms to crotch	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hands to thighs	0	0	4	0	0	2
Arms to the chest below the breasts	9	2	0	0	0	0
Arms to the chest	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hands holding an object	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hands to knees	1	0	1	0	0	0
Hands to sides resting on hips	0	0	1	0	1	0
Hands holding a child	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	**33**	**5**	**5**	**3**	**47**	**3**

Table 5.15. Gesture and sex of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly



Figure 5.37. Probably Female figurine with 'arms to the chest touching/covering the breasts', EN Sesklo (after Theocharis 1973a: fig.12).



Figure 5.38. Double-sex figurine ML.THE.1070 with arm to the chest touching the breast, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.132)



Figure 5.39. Female figurine ML.THE.642 with arms to chest below the breasts, Zappeio 2 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.226)



Figure 5.40. Female figurine ML.THE.1203 with left hand below breast and right arm pointing upwards, Chara 1 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.701)

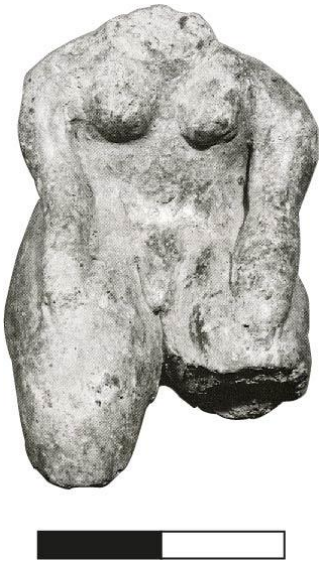

Figure 5.41. Double-sex figurine ML.THE.68 depicted with hands to the thighs, Nees Karyes (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.131)

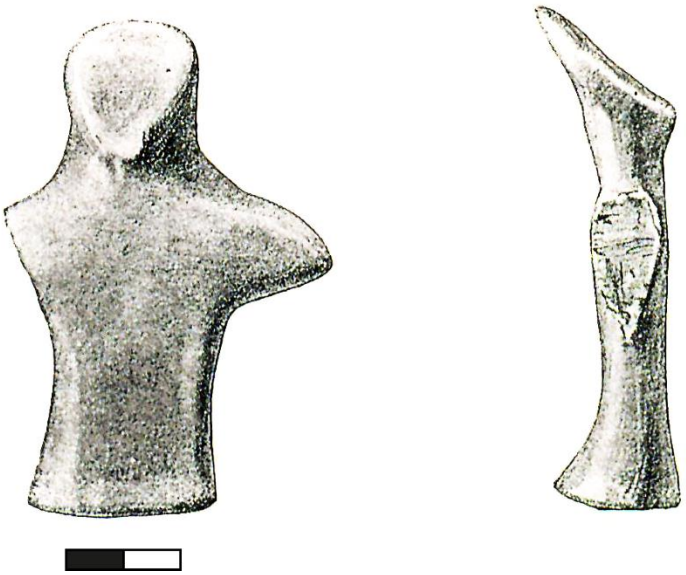

Figure 5.42. Clay cross-shaped Asexual figurine, LN Dimini (after Tsountas 1908: fig.35,6)

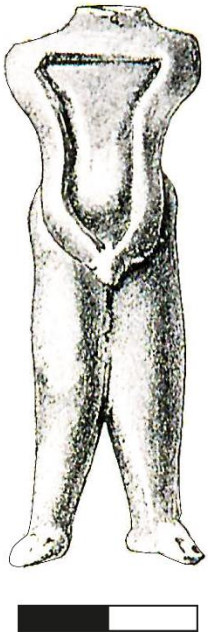

Figure 5.43. Asexual figurine EAM.5945 with 'arms to the crotch', MN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.33,2)

Figurine postures in Neolithic Thessaly are also related to gender. Female figurines appear in a range of standing and sitting postures (Table 5.14). Postures like 'sitting with legs crossed' and 'sitting with legs to the right side' are only associated with Females, although in our assemblage, the fragments ML.THE.446 from Chara 1 (Fig.

5.44), Tsangli (unknown inv.no.; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.71a) and ML.THE.535 from Rachmani (Fig. 5.45a) have only the legs remaining and, therefore, have been identified as Probably Females. Another example of a Female figurine sitting with legs to the side is ML.THE.1677 from Magoula Magoulitsa, in Thessaly (Fig. 5.45b). The Female figurine ML.THE.1062 from Chara 1 (Fig. 5.46) has an unusual posture with the legs drawn up, perhaps a birth-giving position as Gallis and Orphanidis suggest (1996: fig.143). Female figurines are mainly depicted standing. Nine Female figurines appear standing with leg differentiation. In most examples (14), Female figurines appear 'standing with undifferentiated legs'. The figurines without leg differentiation depict the lower body as a flat rounded or cylindrical base, perhaps designed to stand on a flat surface (e.g., Fig. 5.47). In some instances, Female figurines with wide flat bases may depict elements of clothing, particularly skirts or dresses, e.g., the older Female figurine from Platia Magoula Zarkou (Figs. 4.18-4.19) or figurine ML.THE.726 from Chara 1 (Fig. 4.42). The standing with undifferentiated legs posture appears more frequently in the LN and FN phases in figurines with scanty details like arm-stumps. Not surprisingly, this is the main posture modelled in Asexual figurines, in 40 examples. Acrolith figurines, LN marble figurines and most LN clay figurines, which tend to be Asexual, display this posture. Asexual figurines are also represented in other postures such as 'sitting' (2), 'standing with differentiated legs' (2) and with a flat base with no recognisable posture (6). The figurines classified under 'flat base' lack the depiction of legs, for instance, ML.THE.642 from Zappeio 2 (Fig. 5.39) which depicts only the torso.

Posture	Female	Probably Female	Male	Probably Male	Asexual	Double sex
Standing, undifferentiated legs	14	1	0	0	40	0
Standing legs differentiated	9	2	1	0	2	0
Sitting on a stool	1	0	6	5	0	3
Sitting	4	0	0	1	2	0
Sitting legs crossed	0	2	0	0	0	0
Sitting, legs to the right side	0	1	0	0	0	0
Legs drawn up	1	0	0	0	0	0
Flat base	3	0	0	0	6	0
Total	**32**	**6**	**7**	**6**	**50**	**3**

Table 5.16. Posture and sex of figurines from Neolithic Thessaly



Figure 5.44. Probably Female figurine ML.THE.446 'sitting with legs crossed', Chara 1 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.608)



Figure 5.45a. Probably Female figurine ML.THE.535 'sitting with legs to the right side', Rachmani. b. Female figurine with the same posture ML.THE.1677, Magoula Magoulitsa (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: figs.575, 567)



Figure 5.46. Female figurine ML.THE.1062 with legs drawn up, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.143)

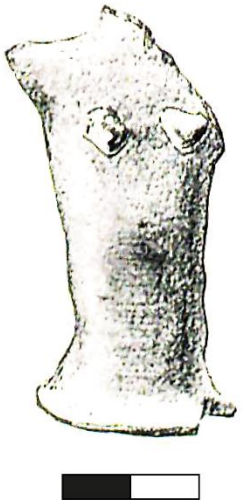

Figure 5.47. Female figurine 'standing with undifferentiated legs' and with flat base, LN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.34, 4)

In contrast, Male figurines are mostly depicted in the 'sitting on a stool' posture, except for the Male figurine ML.THE.689 shown standing with differentiated legs (Fig. 5.51). These Male representations date to the EN and MN, depicting the lower body as four legs that symbolise the 'sitting on a stool' posture. In the EN-MN, the stool is ambiguously rendered. In most instances, the stool is only recognisable by the modelling of the buttocks end, a division that is not always shown, while the figurine's

legs fuse with those of the stool. The legs sometimes show the feet rendered by incisions at the end. Tsountas (1908: pl.33.4a), who first encountered this type of figurine in Sesklo, posited that it represented a female centaur considering the long hair and absence of sexual attributes (EAM.5947; Fig. 4.28). This figurine was later interpreted as a seated figurine, a goddess or perhaps a woman on a birthing stool (Vasič 1908: 327; Wace and Thompson 1912: 68). Gimbutas (1982: 230; 1989: 181-182, 198) considered them representations of 'enthroned' males, depicting a 'sorrowful' god. The 'sorrowful' interpretation of the god was based on the expression of two male seated images: the figurine known as the 'Thinker' found in the Cernavoda Neolithic Hamangia culture cemetery and a figurine found in Tîrpeşti, Moldavia (Gimbutas 1982: figs.248-250, 251-252). Gimbutas (1989a: 198) compared those figurines with the seated males from Sesklo and Tsangli and proposed they represented a vegetation god or an old year-god that dies and is reborn the following spring, or perhaps a god of death, consort of the Great Goddess. Later, Talalay (2000) regarded this as the posture 'par excellence' of male figurines. However, she recognised the need to study this type in more detail. Five Male figurines of this type have been found at our selected case study sites: three at Sesklo (BE.4667, MB.M.5109, and MB.M.4340; Figs. 4.29-4.31), one at Tsangli (M.2430; Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75e), at Tsani Magoula (M.5108; Fig. 4.41), and Zappeio 2 (ML.THE.1285: Fig. 5.24). A further figurine sitting on a stool, but without genitalia depicted, was found at EN-MN Sesklo (EAM.5947, Fig. 4.28). Forty-three figurines from Neolithic Thessaly can be included in this sitting on a stool with four legs category, excluding the fragmentary examples of possible figurines of the same type where the posture is not shown. The majority lacks contextual information, which prevents us from knowing how they were deposited, their use and more precise chronology. However, for those with chronological information, eight belong to the EN period and seven to the MN; only one may be assigned to the LN (Tables 5.15-5.18). The distribution of this type is wide, ranging from the south-eastern to the north-eastern part of Thessaly (Nanoglou 2010: 218). Regarding their sex, sexual attributes are not always represented but phalli or indications of detached phalli occur in 29 figurines, only breasts in two, one figurine may depict a sexual triangle with no further sex indication, another has female genitalia, while four examples depict both phalli and

breasts, and a further one may ambiguously portray breasts and a phallus. The figurines depicting both breasts and phalli have been classified as Double-sex figurines. In our assemblage, there are three examples of Double-sex figurines from Chara 1 (ML.THE.1070), Zappeio 2 (ML.THE.644) and Nees Karyes (ML.THE.68) (Figs. 5.38, 4.35, 5.41) represented in the same posture as EN-MN Males. Therefore, they possibly date to the same period and perhaps embody/symbolise a similar concept. Another example of Double-sex figurines possibly sitting on a stool comes from Melissochori 6 (ML.THE.1241; Fig. 5.48). Other examples of Double-sex figurines are more dubious, for instance, figurines ML.XO.172 from Agios Georgios (Magoula Vrasteri, Fig. 5.49) and a figurine from Karamourlar (ORF 60/60; Fig. 5.51) were considered possibly hermaphrodites by Orphanidis and Gallis (2011) and Orphanidis and Malakasioti (2011). The latter example is very questionable given that they interpret the chest as having breasts, but similar sagging chests have been found in numerous figurines sitting on a stool that I interpreted in chapter 4.6.2 as signs of ageing.

The *kourotrophos* figurine from LN Sesklo (EAM.P5937, Fig. 4.36) is also depicted sitting on a stool but with clearer separation between the stool and the female body than the Male figurines in the same posture. Furthermore, this composite figure is richly decorated in brown-on-buff, while the examples of decorated Male figurines are always in red-on-white (Chapter 6.4.4).

In the LN, Probably Male figurines seated on a stool turn more schematic with the depiction of four legs where no differentiation between the legs and the stool is distinguishable (Gallis 1985). Examples of this type are the two Probably Male figurines in the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model (ML.PMZ.619; Figs. 3.61-3.62).

Accession Number	Site	Posture	Arm-position	Sexual attributes	Date
ML.KR.315	Sofades	Sitting on a stool	Hands on knees	Traces of applied penis	-
ML.THE.1284	Sofades	Probably sitting on a stool, broken	Hand on thigh	Applied penis, damaged	-
ML.THE.1143	Dendra 2 (Otzaki)	Sitting on a stool, broken	One hand on penis	Applied penis	-
ML.KR.277	Sofades	Sitting on a stool	Hands on base of penis	Applied penis	-
ML.THE.644	Zappeio 2	Sitting on a stool	Hand on thigh holding an object	Applied penis and breasts	-
ML.THE.1285	Zappeio 2	Sitting on a stool	-	Applied penis	-
ML.THE.1158	Zappeio 2	Possibly sitting on a stool	-	Incised penis	-
ML.TL.155	Dendra 2 (Otzaki)	Sitting on a stool, broken	-	Penis plastically rendered	-
ML.THE.1073	Pineiada	Sitting on a stool, broken	Left hand to chest, right on belly	Traces of penis plastically rendered	-
MLGK.5407	Koilada 1	Sitting on a stool, broken	-	Penis plastically rendered	-
ML.KR.425	Domeniko 1	Sitting on a stool, broken	-	Pubic triangle, no sex indication	-

Table 5.17. Figurines 'sitting on a stool' from Neolithic Thessaly (I)

Accession Number	Site	Posture	Arm-position	Sexual attributes	Date
ML.THE.68	Nees Karyes	Sitting on a stool, broken	Hands on thighs	Applied penis and breasts	-
ML.THE.1070	Chara 1	Sitting on a stool, broken	Right hand to right breast, left detached to sternum area	Applied penis and breasts	-
BE 4667	Sesklo	Sitting on a stool	-	Applied penis	EN
MB.M4340	Sesklo	Sitting on a stool?	Hand on thigh	Applied penis	MN
MB.M5109	Sesklo	Sitting on a stool	Hands on thighs	Applied penis	MN
EAM.5947	Sesklo	Sitting on a stool	-	No breasts, no penis. Long hair	EN/MN
EAM.5937	Sesklo	Sitting on a stool	Hands holding a child	No traits	LN
MB.M2429	Pyrasos	Sitting on a stool	Hands on thighs	Penis	EN
ML.XO.172	Agios Georgios (Magoula Vrasteri)	Sitting on a stool	-	Applied small penis, breasts?	-
ML.THE.1074	Agios Georgios 3	Sitting on a stool, broken	One hand on knee	Applied penis, detached	EN
ML.XO.84	Agios Georgios 2	Sitting on a stool	Hands (broken) on thighs/knees	Traces of penis	EN

Table 5.18. Figurines 'sitting on a stool' from Neolithic Thessaly (II)

Accession Number	Site	Posture	Arm-position	Sexual attributes	Date
MB.M5135	Nessonis 1	Sitting on a stool?	Left hand on knee	-	EN
MB.M5110	Pirgos Kieriou	Sitting on a stool?	Hands on thighs	-	-
MB.M5108	Tsani magoula	Sitting on a stool	Hand on right knee	Penis	MN
MB.M2428	Achilleion	Sitting on a stool	one hand on the belly	-	MN
-	Achilleion	Sitting on a stool	Hands on knees	-	EN
MB.M2430	Tsangli	Sitting on a stool	Hands on thighs	Penis	MN
MB.M5287a	Prodromos	Sitting on a stool	Hand on knee	-	EN
MB.M5216	Prodromos	Sitting on a stool	Right hand on genitals	Penis	EN
MB.M2735	Magoulitsa	Sitting on a stool	One hand on thigh	Penis	EN?
ML.THE1186	-	Sitting on a stool	Hand on thighs, hand on penis	Breasts	?
MB.M5250	Megalo Patzaraki	Sitting on a stool	-	Breasts	MN
ML.GRA.88	Ambelonas 3 (Magoula Karaghioz	Sitting on a stool	Hands on thighs	No penis, no breasts	-
ML.THE.1691	Zappeio 3	Sitting on a stool	Hand on knee	Applied penis	-

Table 5.19. Figurines 'sitting on a stool' from Neolithic Thessaly (III)

Accession Number	Site	Posture	Arm-position	Sexual attributes	Date
ML.GRA.1	Melia 2 (Magoula St' Ambelia	Sitting on a stool	Hands on thighs/knee	Applied penis	-
ML.THE.1241	Melissochori 6 (Magoula Karaikia 1	Sitting on a stool	Right hand on thigh (detached)	Applied penis and right breast remaining	-
ORF 70/70	Karamourlar	Sitting on a stool	Right hand on thigh, left to penis	Applied penis	-
ORF 60/60	Karamourlar	Possibly sitting on a stool	Hands towards thighs but broken	-	-
ML.THE.87	Unknown provenance	Sitting on a stool	Hand on knee (detached)	Applied penis	-
ML.KAR.92	Unknown provenance	Sitting on a stool	-	Detached penis	-
ML.XO.192	Unknown provenance	Sitting on a stool	Arms to chest/abdomen	Female genitalia, no distinguishable breasts	-
Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 26m	Rachmani	Sitting on a stool	Hand to thigh	-	MN

Table 5.20. Figurines 'sitting on a stool' from Neolithic Thessaly (IV)



Figure 5.48. Probably Double-sex figurine ML.THE.1241 possibly sitting on a stool, Melissochori 6 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.498)



Figure 5.49. Possible Double-sex figurine ML.XO.172, Agios Georgios (Magoula Vrasteri) (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.497)



Figure 5.50. Doubtful Double-sex figurine possibly of the sitting on a stool type, Karamourlar (after Orphanidis and Makalasioti 2011: fig.78)

A standing figurine with similar features to the Double-sex figurines, i.e., that represents the penis in the same manner, comes from Sitochoro 1 (Fig. 5.51). Its torso is broken, therefore, we cannot discern whether it featured breasts; its body is rendered in an ambiguous shape with ample hips and a slightly protruding belly. Strikingly, this figurine and two Double-sex figurines hold a crescent-like object on their right hand, which recalls a sickle. It is significant to note in this connection, that this latter group comes from a cluster of neighbouring sites, which are located in the middle of the fertile plain of Thessaly (Nanoglou 2010: 218).

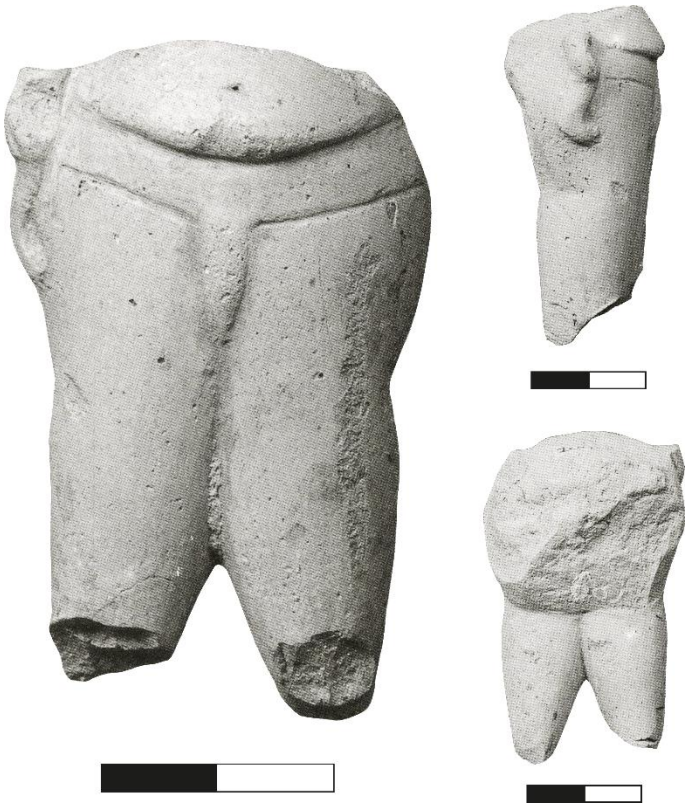

Figure 5.51. Male figurine ML.THE.689, Sitochoro 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.139)

5.4. Refining the methodology to interpret sex and gender in Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly

Following my analysis of figurines from the regions of Crete and Thessaly, some points are made clear:

1. The importance of the material to identify sex and gender.

2. The importance of gesture and posture to identify and understand gender.

To interpret further the findings of sex and gender in the figurines from Crete, is there a further way to refine the methodology and identify sex and gender in figurines with no sexual traits? Particular figurines that cannot be sexed with sexual attributes, like the Asexual and Non-Identifiable categories, but share characteristics with sexed figurines will be analysed in this section to understand if those features may gender the figurines. The features analysed will be the type of materials, gesture and posture

and the combination of two or more characteristics together. The aim is to refine the previous methodology employed to analyse the assemblage of figurines which may also be applied to other regions of Neolithic Greece.

Crete

In section 5.2.2, specific materials like steatite are employed to make two Female figurines at Knossos. Can the two Asexual figurines in steatite be sexed by comparison? Do they share other characteristics in common? The Asexual steatite figurine 60/183 (Fig. 3.12) shares a similar posture with the Female figurine 1938.666 (Fig. 4.15). Both examples are represented in an ambiguous, possibly sitting position but with the legs inclined forwards, which means that if they were indeed sitting, their bodies would be leaning back at an obtuse angle. This bodily comportment was perhaps associated with a Female gender, as it only appears in those two figurines.

Similarly, shell may be used for Female figurines. A Probably Female figurine said to come from the Mesara plain (1389, Fig. 5.4) is similar to another example in shell from central Crete, identified as Asexual (1938.663, Fig. 5.5), perhaps it could also be classified as Probably Female given the similar incisions in the groin area, although the vulva is not indicated. Furthermore, the figurine from Central Crete is shown with arms to the chest, a gesture mostly associated with Female figurines, except for the Male figurine L2623 (Fig. 3.4a). Similar to 1938.663 (Fig. 5.5) is the marble figurine from Knossos 1938.664 (5.12), initially classified as Asexual, but with identical incisions on the groin which do not form a sexual triangle. Likewise, this figurine is also represented with the arms to the chest gesture with a cross-shaped incision in the middle of the chest area.

The only known figurine in breccia from Gortyna, rather flat but with wide emphasised hips and buttocks (1934,0115.4, Fig. 5.6) has been identified as Probably Female. The body shape of this figurine is similar to a marble figurine from Knossos, which even though it lacks emphasised buttocks and displays a rather flat surface, has wide hips and a thin waist which may depict a Probably Female (G101, Fig. 5.52).

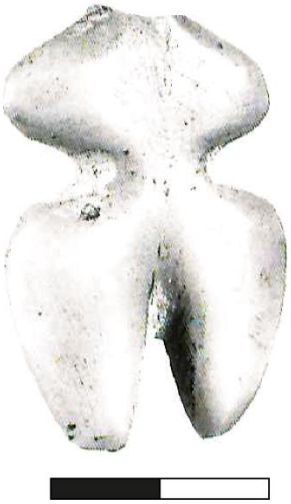

Figure 5.52. Figurine G101, Neolithic Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.5)

Table 5.6 shows that specific postures are mostly associated with Female and Probably Female figurines: sitting, kneeling, squatting, and sitting with legs crossed. Can we hypothesise that other Asexual and Non-Identifiable figurines with those postures may reflect a Female gender? The Probably Female clay figurine 1927-3260 (Fig. 4.7) is represented sitting. This figurine was interpreted as probably representing a young girl (see Chapter 4.5.3). Two further sitting figurines 59/135 and 59/136, were interpreted as Probably Females based on their exaggerated buttocks (Figs. 3.27-3.28). The sitting Asexual and Non-Identifiable clay figurines and fragments are similarly modelled, although some are much smaller (see Table 4.3): 59/121, 59/134, 59/142, 59/144, F.I.77, D.IV.1 (Figs. 3.23, 3.26, 3.29-3.30, 4.1-4.2). As I suggested in Chapter 4.5.2-4.5.3, these figurines may represent individuals of young age, perhaps children, and their similarities in material and posture may indicate a Female gender. In contrast, the two Probably Male figurines interpreted as children or juveniles have a standing posture (59/143, 2725, Figs. 3.31, 4.6), which may further support the idea that the sitting figurines represent Females.

Similarly, figurines with a kneeling posture are mostly related to Female sex. However, two Asexual figurines and one Non-Identifiable appear with the same posture. The clay Asexual figurine 2722 (Fig. 4.10) is very similar in shape to 2718 (Fig. 5.22), perhaps

suggesting a Female of a younger age (see Chapter 4.5.3). The fragmentary figurine 1941.160 (Fig. 4.3) from Knossos, initially classified as Non-Identifiable, is possibly in a kneeling posture, which was also interpreted as representing a child or young age (see Chapter 4.5.3), could be suggestive of Female gender. Likewise, the clay Asexual figurine 1938.658 (Fig. 5.15) is kneeling with the arms to the chest gesture. Both features seem to be associated with female characteristics. Although no other features suggest Male or Female gender given the generally flat surface and ambiguously rendered shape, figurine 1938.658 perhaps was intended to portray a female gender.

Similarly, three squatting figurines have been classified as Female and Probably Female. If we consider this posture as associated with the female gender, perhaps the other figurines in the same posture may be interpreted as Females. Two other figurines are squatting, the Asexual 59/153 (Fig. 3.4b), which is very schematic and made of marble and a Non-Identifiable clay fragment of lower body (Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,12). Possibly, these two figurines depicted a female gender.

Thessaly

Body stance is an element that has not been analysed. The Female figurine MB.M.2767 from LN Tsangli (Fig. 5.53) depicts a body stance inclined forward. May this stance be interpreted as Female? Unfortunately, the only other figurine represented in the same stance leaning forward comes from Sesklo, and it is a Non-Identifiable fragment of the torso and lower body (unknown inv.no.; Fig. 5.54).

Also, in Thessaly, the 'arms to the chest' gesture is restricted to Female and Probably Female figurines. Likely, all depictions of this gesture in Neolithic Thessaly were used for Females, even when sexual attributes are lacking. For instance, figurine ML.THE.1215 from Chara 1 (Fig. 4.46) initially interpreted as Non-Identifiable should instead be categorised as Probably Female as three other figurines from the same site and same arm-position are Female and Probably Female depicted with breasts sometimes vaguely rendered (ML.THE.1128, ML.THE.1788 and ML.THE.17). Similarly, a marble figurine from LN Sesklo (Tsountas 1908: fig. 37,8) seems to depict the arms to

the chest gesture although broken at the elbows and, therefore, perhaps representing a female gender.



Figure 5.53. Female figurine MB.M.2767 leaning forward, LN Tsangli (after Hourmouziadis 1973: pl.80)

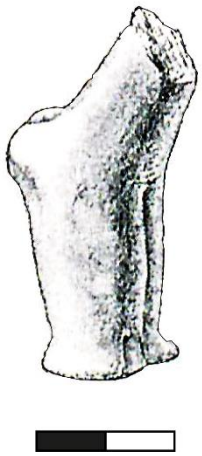

Figure 5.54. Figurine with the torso leaning forward, Neolithic Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.35,5).

5.5. Conclusions

To gender or not to gender?

In the introductory section, I mention that most scholars have interpreted figurines from Crete and Thessaly as representing predominantly females. In the present study, the analysis of sex and gender in Neolithic Crete and selected sites in Thessaly reveals that the previously preconceived dominance of female figurines needs to be reassessed. The statistical analysis has shown that both Female and Asexual figurines are found in similar percentages in Crete and Thessaly. Their number varies depending on specific sites and phases, but no clear predominance of Female figurines can be supported by the data. Even an attempt to refine the methodology to identify more possibly sexed figurines results still in a high percentage of figurines without sexual attributes that cannot be sexed.

On Crete, Knossos has a similar number of Female and Asexual figurines. However, in the LN I, Asexual figurines appear in a similar percentage, while in LN II, Female figurines are clearly more numerous. At MN Gerani cave, two out of four figurines are Asexual, which seems to relate to the use of hard materials. At Phaistos, two of the figurines found in FN phases represent a Female and a Probably Female, while the marble figurine is Asexual.

In Thessaly, EN-MN Sesklo shows a higher percentage of Female figurines. However, the percentage of Asexual figurines increases in the LN when we observe similar percentages of Females and Asexual. Tsangli also has a higher percentage of Female figurines, especially in MN times. However, LN Dimini has a clear preponderance of Asexual figurines and fewer Females. This situation is even more pronounced in FN Rachmani, where only two Probably Females have been found, and Asexual figurines have clear preponderance. The high numbers of acroliths in these sites partially explains the differences in respect to the other sites and periods. However, Dimini produced a variety of highly schematic figurines, including acroliths, clay and marble figurines.

Thus, how may we explain the high number of Asexual figurines? A first attempt to interpret these figurines was explored in Chapter 4, where I have hypothesised that small Asexual figurines represented children and the vague rendering of sexual attributes may also be intended to represent different age-stages. In this chapter, the study has focused on analysing figurines' sex, material, posture and gesture, as these are aspects overlooked in the bibliography that may shed light into sex and gender identification. All these aspects considered in relation to each other and analysed in a consistent way have drawn meaningful conclusions in comparison to previous works. The relation between sex and the material employed for their manufacture showed a correlation between clay and the modelling of Female figurines. This material was less frequently used to represent Asexual figurines. In contrast, hard materials, especially marble, are more widely employed to make Asexual figurines. This trend appears both in Crete and Thessaly and suggests that the selection of material was a conscious choice in the elaboration of a figurine with a more or less detailed body and characteristics. As it has been shown, the presence or absence of breasts and the depiction of other sexual traits are determined by the materials used to manufacture the figurines.

Furthermore, the analysis of gesture and posture reveals that these features are also clearly gendered. In Crete, there is extensive use of the arm-stumps both in Female and Asexual categories, while other arm-positions such as arms to the chest in the different varieties (touching/covering breasts or below breasts) are associated with Female and Probably Female figurines. The same results apply to the figurines from Neolithic Thessaly, where these are by far the most common gestures employed for Female figurines. Other postures such as sitting, sitting with legs crossed, or sitting with legs to the right side in Thessaly, kneeling and squatting in Crete, are mostly associated with Female figurines.

In contrast, in Thessaly, Male and Double-sex figurines are mostly represented with hands to the thighs or knees. Regarding the posture, in Neolithic Crete, Males appear in standing/sitting posture and sitting on a stool, while two Probably Males are standing. In Thessaly, Male figurines are generally represented 'sitting on a stool', possibly the same posture as the MN/LN Probably Males, although more schematic.

Double-sex figurines share the same position with Male figurines. Specific figurines identified as Double-sex may be, in fact, Males, like the figurine from Zappeio 2 with very small breasts. However, other examples perhaps embody a similar concept to Males; some may subsume features of both genders like the figurine from Chara 1 represented in a gesture with the arm touching the breast and sitting on a stool posture, and perhaps embody a special category of gender persona.

How should we interpret Asexual figurines? The meaning of asexual figurines probably varied according to their context of use. Specific traits such as those analysed: materials, posture, gesture and anatomical details possibly gendered the figurines. This chapter has shown that some of those features may be used to gender the figurines. Decorative motifs, body shape, hair, headdress or addition of other removable accessories and objects may have also been used to gender the figurines. However, not all the figurines may be gendered with those characteristics. The lack of indication of biological sex shows a refusal to represent a permanent or a constructed gender. Figurine' makers perhaps opted for a deliberately changeable body that permitted modifications depending on the context of their use. An intentional refusal to represent a permanent gender and other individual details may also be related to a similar concept to that of the ancestors and their representation as a generic human form, which have lost individual traits.

CHAPTER VI. DECORATION AND COLOUR IN NEOLITHIC FIGURINES FROM CRETE AND THESSALY

6.1. Introduction

Colour and decoration were prominent features of Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly. However, too frequently, we are robbed of that perception since most publications consist of black and white photos or simplified drawings that often fail to convey essential decoration details. Although many such details and colours have also faded over time, we know, for instance, that many Cycladic figurines were painted, and it is only on close inspection that the colour traces are visible (Birtacha 2017). From a visual perspective, the painting made figurines radically different, for instance, to the 'white look' of Cycladic figurines that we have in our imaginary. This probably also occurs with figurines in marble and clay from Crete and Thessaly, in which painting has faded. Colour and decoration tell us about different aesthetics and, importantly, about past identities too. Colour and decoration must be an integral part of any archaeological study of Prehistoric figurines since they may reflect aspects such as gender, age, status, identity or group affiliation.

In Neolithic figurines, schematisation, abbreviation and ambiguity are characteristics that often cause fundamental problems in our understanding of figurative images. Incised decoration could well reflect a physical reality, meaning a deliberate indication of the ornaments on the garment or the naked body of the real human. Can clothing or the presence of specific attributes function as an allusion to gender or age? May figurines' decorative motifs derive from contemporary vase painting, from clothing or both? Could the distinct motifs and applied colours bear any concrete meaning and symbolism?

This chapter aims to answer these questions by analysing paint and decoration on figurines from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. It will discuss the main theories of colour – from Turner's symbolism of colour to Berlin and Kay's paradigm, which have been widely influential in archaeology and are key to understanding how decoration and

painting have been interpreted in prehistoric archaeology, particularly, in Aegean prehistory. It will also assess the influence that colour studies have had on Aegean prehistory and the main interpretations of Neolithic figurines' decoration. It will subsequently analyse the contextual evidence in the archaeological record from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly, including the natural colours of figurines derived from the material from which they were made and the possibility that colour was an important characteristic for selecting a specific material. Colour was also applied, therefore, the surface finish of clay figurines will be explored as an important factor in their aesthetic. This chapter will also explore the archaeological finds of pigments associated with figurines, the decoration and motifs preserved on figurines and their possible interpretations, their similarities with the decoration on ceramic vessels, and the possibility of a relationship with textile production.

The interpretation of Neolithic figurines requires caution since the contextual evidence is scarce and very fragmented, which impedes us from interpreting more rigorously the diachronic changes of Neolithic ornamentation trends in different periods. To assess the presence of painting requires careful handling of the figurines and using the most up-to-date publications with drawings and pictures of images. The use of specific techniques like Multispectral Photography (MP), which uses different spectrums of light (e.g., daylight, infrared and ultraviolet) and Decorrelation stretch (http://www.dstretch.com/) enhancement plug-in are helpful tools to bring out pigment remains. D-stretch is a widely used tool for the study of rock art to enhance the visualisation of colour in paintings. The enhancement works by increasing differences in hue on photographs using the D-stretch plugin in the program ImageJ. Recently, D-Stretch has also proved helpful for visualising preserved pigments that are not visible or very faint in the figurines from Koutroulou Magoula (Papadopoulos *et al.* 2019). I have applied this tool to analyse the figurines from Crete in which good quality images were available, to enhance the perception of pigments present in the figurines barely visible to the naked eye.

6.2. Theories of colour: from symbolic to linguistic interpretations and their influence in archaeology

The study of colour in archaeology has developed from different perspectives, mainly symbolic and linguistic. The anthropological study of Victor Turner (1967) considered the symbolic aspects of colour in Ndembu initiation rituals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Ndembu use white and red clay in ritual decoration. In other nearby groups, the same colours have a similar symbolism in rituals. For instance, Nkula rites use the colour red to represent menstrual blood. In the Wubwang'u rite, performed for a mother of twins, Turner (1967: 60) considers the use of powdered white clay, kept in a phallus-shaped container to be linked to semen. The use of powdered clay represents the 'blood of the mother' (Turner 1967: 61). White, black and red – the triad of colours – are also widely attested in Ndembu initiation and puberty rituals, in the Ngonde of Central Africa, Bushmen and the Semang, Sakai and Jakun of the Malay Peninsula (Turner 1967: 61). Australian aborigines use all three colours in cave art: they believe that the paintings are filled with the essence of both water and blood, symbolised respectively by white and red (Turner 1967: 84). The prolific literature on burial practices and rock art paintings of the European Palaeolithic shows that the triad of white, red and black colours is recurrent (Bahn and Vertut 1997: 115, Clottes and Lewis-Williams 1998). Turner's (1967: 88) suggestion that among ethnographically-studied societies, the three colours are always used in initiation rites is significant. He relates this to their explicit reference to bodily fluids. Tuner considers red a universal symbol of blood, white a symbol of breast milk and semen, and black of faeces and urine. However, this notion of black is rare as this colour often symbolises death, sleep, pollution, or darkness. Black is often the neglected member of the triad and does not appear as often as the other colours. The association between blood and red colour is further supported by the use of the word meaning 'blood' to refer to the colour 'red' in some languages, e.g., in the Nasioi and the aborigines of the Seven Rivers District in Queensland, Australia (Berlin and Kay 1969: 26-27, 38). Further support for this association comes from the etymological root for red iron oxides in Greek, $\alpha\tilde{\iota}\mu\alpha$ (haima) from which the mineral haematite (also used as a red pigment in Prehistory)

takes its name. Also, in a few cases, the use of blood mixed with ochre is attested in paintings, e.g., in 8000 BC Tasmania (Gage 1999: 111). Turner's association of colours with human bodily fluids has been adopted in some archaeological interpretations (Tilley 1999; Jones 1999; Jones and McGregor 2002; Parker-Pearson 1999). Although red, white and black may be related to the body and its fluids, colour meanings are always plural, contextual and culturally constructed (Sahlins 1976). Although red is widely understood as a representation of blood in many contexts and cultures, the meaning of red depends on the context of use.

The linguistic approach has attempted to study the diversity in colour categories in different languages. From this perspective, Berlin and Kay (1969) based their influential work *Basic colour terms: their universality and evolution*, on experimental research on data from 20 different languages, supplemented by written and published material from up to 98 languages. The study concluded that all the languages analysed have a maximum of eleven basic colours: white, black, red, green, yellow, blue, brown, purple, pink, orange, and grey, and posited a regular set of combinations of basic colours (Berlin and Kay 1969: 1-10). They interpreted a sequence of six or seven evolutionary stages of colour recognition extending as far back as the Palaeolithic (Berlin and Kay 1969: 14-16). Stage I was characterised by the basic differentiation between black and white, dark and light colours. For instance, Homeric Greek, according to Berlin and Kay (1969: 70-71), had a colour system that differentiated between dark and light shades rather than colours. The subsequent Stage II added red to the colour palette; Berlin and Kay (1969: 18) considered that if no more than three basic colours were recognised, those colours would be white, black and red. Stage III included green or yellow followed by yellow or green in Stage IV (whichever was not recognised in Stage III), blue in Stage V, brown in Stage VI, and purple + pink + orange + grey in Stage VII (Berlin and Kay 1969: 17-44). As such, Berlin and Kay's sequence is an evolutionary one, based on their idea that terms for colours increased in line with increasing technological and 'cultural development'. Therefore, they posited that all the industrialised countries of Asia and Europe should be at Stage VII (with a high number of colour categories, from 'eight-' to 'eleven-term systems'). The

representatives of Stages I, II and III (from two- to five-colour systems) are spoken by peoples with small populations and limited technology (Berlin and Kay 1969: 16).

However, Berlin and Kay's work poses several problems. One of the problems of giving primacy to the linguistic differentiation of colours is exemplified by the Egyptians, whose language only had terms for black, white, red and green (Gage 1999: 111). However, the Egyptians used a wider range of colours, including several hues of red, blue, yellow, brown, grey and pink (Baines 1985), despite not giving them a basic colour term (Scarre 2002: 228). For their colour categorisation, Berlin and Kay discarded words derived from objects or natural elements, considering them to be non-basic colour terms, which may be problematic. Basic colour concepts derive from certain 'universals of human experience' even in European languages (Wierzbicka 1990: 40).

Nevertheless, Berlin and Kay's colour stages have particularly influenced archaeology. In the context of its growing influence in archaeology, the *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* published a collection of short archaeological papers, *What Meaning had Colour in Early Societies?* (Gage 1999), discussing the validity of Berlin and Kay's paradigm for the archaeological record. The contributions are based on examples from archaeological materials, contexts and symbolisms beyond Berlin and Kay's ideas and draw attention to colour symbolism and how it may be approached in the archaeological record. The authors also concentrated on an overlooked aspect in colour theory: the innate colours of the materials, showing the limitations of Berlin and Kay's linguistic approach.

Shifting away from linguistics and symbolism into materiality, the exploitation of red ochre mines at Lion Cavern in South Africa dates from at least the Middle Stone Age 2b period (110,000-75,000 BP) (Knight *et al*. 1995). Later evidence, dating to *c*. 60,000 BP, comes from the rock shelters of Malakunanja II and Nauwalabila I in North Australia, where pieces of red, yellow ochre and ground haematite have been found. In this context, the presence of haematite seems to be due to its use as a red pigment, evidenced by its ground faces and striations (Flood 1996: 10). The earliest evidence of red ochre associated with burials is the Neanderthal skeletons at Le Moustier and La Chappelle-aux-Saints, suggesting a symbolism connected to blood and life (Scarre

2002: 228). However, red ochre was more commonly associated with the early burials of Homo sapiens. For instance, red ochre was placed on the heads of the two male burials and the pelvis and thighs of the other male burial at Dolní Věstonice (Klima 1987; Mittnik *et al*. 2016). In the Upper Palaeolithic, red ochre was also used in a female burial known as the 'red lady' at El Mirón Cave (Cantabria, Spain) (Straus *et al.* 2015). Also, many Venus figurines were painted with red ochre or hematite, for instance, the Venuses from Mauern, Grimaldi Caves, Willendorf and Laussel (Petru 2006: 206). The application of red ochre over the groins of female burials, attested in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic periods across Eurasia (Bradley 1998; Jones and MacGregor 2002), may be symbolically associated with blood (Scarre 2002: 229). For instance, at the Late Mesolithic site of Vlasac in Serbia, red ochre was placed over the groin area of five female burials, while in four male burials it was over different parts of the body (vertebrae, ribs and feet bones) (Srejović and Letica 1978: 52-82). Four infant burials were covered entirely in red ochre (Borić 2002: 31). Particularly, the female Burial 67, whose pelvic area was covered in red ochre where a foetus was found, might have died giving birth. In these burials, red ochre may be interpreted following Turner's ideas as related to blood and death.

Therefore, if we take the human body as both metaphor and symbol, the association of red and white with body fluids is clear. Jones and Bradley (1999) noted that while colour is physically perceived in the same way by all human beings (unless they are colour blind), the categorisation of colours varies and is culturally specific. The archaeological record can provide a different approach based on material culture, symbolism and use of a range of coloured materials and pigments in different cultures and contexts that we would ignore with a purely linguistic approach. For instance, several authors have reflected on the symbolic meaning embedded in the selection of coloured stones for the construction of Prehistoric megaliths (Jones and Bradley 1999; Spence 1999) or the painted decoration in the Iberian megalithic tombs that used a white background and red and black motifs (Scarre 2002; Bueno *et al.* 2018). The prominence of the triadic colour classification black, white and red invites comparison between the archaeological and ethnographical record and probably provides a basic classification of reality (Turner 1967: 89). In this sense and criticising the validity of

Berlin and Kay's neo-evolutionary colour stage, studies such as Chapman's (2002; 2003) provide an alternative model in which the perception of colours derive from a society's specific view of natural and cultural elements. Particularly, Chapman (2002) considers the increasing presence of a wider range of colours in the archaeological record as a sign of increasing social complexity, especially with the introduction of metallurgy. Chapman analyses the cemeteries of Varna and Durankulak, where the presence of colours rises in number as imported materials become more common. In turn, this situation invites the creation and naming of new colours and the development of different perceptions of them.

In conclusion, material culture seems to develop differently from the linguistic basic colour terms of Berlin and Kay's theory. In prehistoric contexts, the validity of applying such an approach might be questionable. Turner's identification of symbolism in Ndembu ritual use of colours seems to find links with the archaeological record in which black, white and red have a special significance (maybe even universality in many cultures). Conversely, Berlin and Kay's linguistic scheme can only provide an account of these colours' importance given their presence in most languages.

6.3. Use and symbolism of colour and decoration in Aegean Prehistory

Berlin and Kay's colour theory has also influenced studies of colour in Aegean Prehistory. For instance, words for colour categorisation have been studied in early Greek texts. Linear B texts include 350 attestations of 39 different words for colours (Blakolmer 2004: 63). Evidence on Linear B tablets has shown that specific colour terms mention a pigment source (Moonwomon 1994: 59), linking the material used for pigments and colour names. Linear B had colour terms for grey and purple (Stage VII), but other terms such as yellow, green and brown are absent, contradicting Berlin and Kay's evolutionary stages. Therefore, Linear B lacks terms corresponding to Stages III, IV, V or VI (Peters 2008: 191). However, Gillis (2004: 58) offers a different view, noting that there are very few words for basic colours in Linear B comprising only white/light, red or purple, but lacking a word for black/dark. Nonetheless, as we have seen for

Egypt, the scarcity of basic colour terms in the written record does not match the wide range of colours present in the archaeological record.

Berlin and Kay's colour theory has also been applied to the study of Aegean frescoes, particularly from Minoan Crete. Peters (2008) examines the diachronic changes in the use of colour, concluding that from Middle Minoan II-III (*c.*1800-1600 BC), the colour range was extensive, with nine colours represented. However, the palette expands towards the Neopalatial period (*c*. 1750-1490 BC). The preferred colours in the earlier Minoan periods were black, white, red and yellow until the Final Palatial Period (*c*. 1490-1360 BC). In the transition between the MBA and LBA, there is an increase in the use of blue, which is explained by the wider availability of the Egyptian blue pigment in the Mediterranean area at the end of the MBA. Instead, the colour green was rarely used. The colours in Minoan frescoes differed from those used for pottery decoration until the introduction of Kamares pottery in Middle Minoan (*c*. 2000-1700 BC), which employs black, white and red.

Similarly, Blakolmer (1997; 1999; 2004) considers that several stages of chromatic taste may be recognised in the BA Aegean. Following an evolutionary approach, he poses the following phases (Blakolmer 2004: 61-62): 1) 'monochrome' characterises the EBA Aegean with either blue or red pigments found in Cycladic burial contexts, blue, black or red paint on Cycladic figurines and red or black plaster painting in Early Minoan architecture; 2) 'oligochromy' is typical of the MBA with the Kamares Style pottery, also used on terracotta figurines and other materials; 3) Middle Minoan III (*c*. 1750-1700 BC) is represented by two-colour styles in pottery and polychromy in wall painting. The Kamares style survives at the beginning of the period, but it is slowly replaced by the 'dark-on-light' pottery decoration; 4) finally, the LBA is characterised by polychromy and abstract colour.

Frescoes, figurines, seals and pottery in Aegean Prehistory have plastic, incised and painted decoration. The symbolism and meaning of the depicted motifs have aroused many questions. For instance, Blakolmer (2012: 327) gives three different explanations for 'body marks' in the Aegean BA, including figurines and frescoes: 1) mere decoration with no other meaning, e.g., the 'decorative' motifs on the Mycenaean 'Lady of Phylakopi'; 2) symbolic or semantic markers, e.g., the crocus motifs on the cheeks of

the female figurines in the wall paintings of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri; and 3) body marks may reproduce real marks painted, tattooed or scarified on the body, e.g., motifs in Early Cycladic figurines. This suggestion that the decoration represented real marks on the human body has been widely used to explain the motifs depicted on figurines from the Prehistoric Aegean. The motifs present in figurines are mainly interpreted as depicting: 1) body painting; 2) tattooing or scarification; 3) clothing; and 4) jewellery. In this sense, Yiannis Papadatos (2016: 14-15) differentiates between fixed decoration: incisions and reliefs; as opposed to temporary decoration: painting. He suggests that they represent different identities and messages. Tattoos and scarification are permanent, expressing identities and messages that are considered fixed, stable and everlasting (Papadatos 2016: 15). In contrast, body painting applied either on figurines or on the actual human body is changeable, temporary and the transmitted messages and identities are therefore changeable or negotiable (Papadatos 2016: 15). In Cycladic figurines, incisions and reliefs are used mostly for anatomical features such as the depiction of the nose considered permanent and fixed (Papadatos 2016: 15). In contrast, Papadatos considers that painted decoration was employed to represent features that could be modified, such as hairstyle, eyebrows, eyes, or the mouth (perhaps indicating lipstick), and the rendering of abstract and symbolic motifs. However, he includes certain body parts, e.g., eyes, fixed characteristics that humans cannot change except with modern plastic surgery. Thus, the differentiation between permanent=incised vs changeable=painted decoration is not always as straightforward as Papadatos suggests. However, Papadatos' ideas may be of great use to our interpretation of fixed and temporary/changeable decorations. Papadatos (2016: 15) explains that movable objects such as daggers are represented in relief to signify masculine identities or special status fixed to the individual. However, according to Papadatos, this only seems to apply to masculine identities; the same could apply to aspects of female decoration, but he does not offer any example. Therefore, it seems that Papadatos is trying to adapt his theory to all decoration while not all incisions or reliefs render anatomically fixed features. For instance, jewellery and objects of body adornment, which are changeable, are – according to Papadatos – always depicted by painting; why then is jewellery not considered a sign of status and perhaps identity like the daggers? Also, there are many known examples of incisions in the neck of Cycladic

figurines, which probably represent jewellery, perhaps necklaces. The explanation of the difference between incised and painted decoration in the case of Cycladic figurines may have been due to the material employed since the depiction of intricate details was probably easier with painted decoration in marble figurines than by incisions.

6.4. Colour and decoration in Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly

6.4.1. Introduction

On Neolithic figurines, colours differ widely depending on the selection of the material. Therefore, the following section will explore the differences between the chosen materials and the final surface colour results. On the other hand, the selection of pigments also depends on the figurines' surface treatment and colour. For instance, at Neolithic Knossos, black is rarely used since most clay figurines are dark burnished. In Thessaly, however, the employment of light-coloured clay to make figurines reinforced the use of red colour for decoration. However, the aesthetic patterns in Neolithic Greece are not so simple that a functional approach can explain them. In this section, the contextual data of figurines, associated pigments and other archaeological materials will be traced to help interpret the meaning of the application of both colour and decoration to figurines and the ornamentation of the human body. Figurines' ornamentations have been interpreted as tattooing/scarification, body painting, clothing or jewellery on real humans' bodies. The accuracy of these interpretations will also be assessed in this section and, when possible, figurines' decoration in my assemblage is analysed and classified as either tattooing/scarification, body painting, clothing, jewellery, hair and headdress. In the final part, I will explore the possible relationship between the decoration on figurines, ceramic vessels and textile production.

6.4.2. The colour of figurines from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly

Observing the actual colour of figurines rather than the 'applied' colours, clay, marble, slate, shell, steatite, and other types of stones show noticeable differences. The colour properties may determine the selection of the material. For instance, marble, shell, bone or other white/whitish materials were perhaps chosen for their hardness, colour and brightness. However, these materials were easily painted or left unpainted. The use of steatite to make Aegean figurines was infrequent but probably an intentional choice considering it is a very soft material to carve and appreciated for its grey, bluish, green, dark brown or black colour. The four known steatite figurines found at Knossos present a vibrant dark green colour. Marble was also a desirable material since it is the second most frequent with 21 examples from Crete. Some of the marble figurines from Crete may have been painted, although we have no remaining evidence since painting on marble is easily erased in a short period of time (e.g., see 6.4.4.1, Fig. 6.3). Among our selected sites from Thessaly, seven marble figurines of LN and FN dates have painted decoration. For instance, the marble heads of the acrolith figurines from Rachmani (Wace and Thompson 1912), and other sites like Palioskala (Toufexis 2016), representing both anatomical details and ornamentation motifs.

Regarding the clay figurines, the surface treatment was an essential aspect of the resulting colour. The final surface treatment of the figurines was polishing and burnishing. In Neolithic Crete, at least 48 (89%) of the figurines show signs of burnishing. This statistic does not include figurines without data on burnishing (Table 6.1). Just five figurines (9%) lack surface burnishing treatment: two are coarse clay fragments whose identification as figurines is doubtful. They may be simple fragments of coarse pottery. The other three include a doubtful figurine from Knossos (59/100), a figurine from Phaistos (F1864) and another from Gerani cave (P1556). The few clear unburnished fragments are either dubious figurines or from sites other than Knossos, and most clay figurines at Knossos show a preference for burnished surface treatment. The firing of the slipped surface of clay figurines resulted in an array of mostly dark burnished colours: especially dark brown and grey, brown, or grey and black (Table 6.2). Light burnished colours such as red and pinkish are also present in the sample,

although less common. The available publications (Evans 1921; Evans 1964; Ucko 1968; Mina 2005) are not consistent in categorising colours, nor do they use a classification system such as the Munsell colour chart.

Clay figurines	Number of figurines
Burnished	48
Unbaked	1
Unburnished	5
No data	36
Total	90

Table 6.1. Figurines from Neolithic Crete classified as burnished, unburnished surface and unbaked.

Burnished colour	N. of Figurines
Dark grey/brown	4
Dark brown/grey	3
Dark brown	8
Grey/brown	7
Grey	6
Brown	8
Black/dark brown	2
Black	5
Grey/black	5
Green/grey	1
Black/light pink	1
Light brown/grey	1
Light grey	1
Light brown	1
Red/black	3
Red	6
Pink	5
Light pink	2
Place clay	1
Unknown	19
Total	**90**

Table 6.2. Burnished colours on Neolithic figurines from Crete.

The surface treatment of Neolithic figurines from Crete has not attracted much attention and remains widely understudied. However, it is similar to ceramic vessels: the surface was either polished or slipped, resulting in a thin compacted layer (Tomkins 2001: 53-54). According to Tomkins (2001: 54), sometimes, the addition of a slip layer was intentional to manipulate the colour and ensure a dark polished surface. The firing techniques ranged from mixed oxidising/reducing to reducing and firing temperatures ranged from clay that is not vitrified (750-800°C) to estimates of more than 1000°C in the vitrified examples. The dark burnished ware required surface vitrification which is observed in specific figurines and pottery found in Knossos. To achieve the highly burnished black wares (e.g., AE.731, Fig. 4.8) required considerable firing skills and the use of completely reducing firing conditions. This technique differentiates black burnished wares from other medium or dark grey and brown wares, also common in Neolithic figurines from Knossos. Black burnished figurines achieved a lustrous black produced by the ceramic surface's vitrification at very high temperatures. The aesthetic result of this technical achievement was an attractive object with a shining, almost obsidian-like surface (Gaydarska and Chapman 2008). Gaydarska and Chapman (2008) suggest that the colour symbolism and aesthetic appeal of dark and especially black burnished and polished wares were of major significance for their gradual emergence as the preferred fine ware over wide areas of Anatolia, the Aegean, and the Balkans in the late VI and early V millennium *cal.* BC. Equally, the use of this surface treatment for figurines from Knossos may have a similar effect as the pottery. The black background of these shiny objects easily created colour contrasts, which may explain why red and white colour paste was applied to decorate some dark burnished figurines, e.g., AE.731 (Fig. 4.8). Black burnished pottery is also characteristic of the Larissa culture of LN Thessaly (Gallis 1985: 20). However, this colour was not employed in the figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou or Tsangli in the same region. However, figurines with dark burnished colours, particularly dark brown and dark grey, appear at both sites in the LN.

Colour and brightness must have been important in categorising material culture, based upon the striking colours and brilliance of fine painted, slipped and burnished figurines together with the colour and shininess of polished stone figurines. This

aesthetic selection of materials and burnishing techniques may have had symbolic properties that imbued figurines and manifested in distinctive colours and polished textures. Thus, the selection of materials to make Neolithic figurines and its associated aesthetic and symbolic properties may explain why EN-LN I figurine makers preferred stone figurines at Knossos—perhaps explaining a preference for specific colours and brightness such as white/light (marble, shell) or green (steatite)— and its complete abandonment in favour of clay in LN II, featuring a dark-colour canvas. However, the preference was the opposite in Thessaly, where we mostly find clay figurines in EN-MN, and marble and acroliths in LN-FN.

In our selected case studies from Thessaly, clay figurines range from pale to dark colours (Table 6.3) and qualities (firing varies from excellent to moderate and ineffective). Unfortunately, not all the publications of the material provide information regarding the surface colour and burnishing. However, the available information suggests a preference for light-coloured clay. The most common light surface clay colours are pink, white and light brown, and less frequently, yellow/red, yellow and pink/grey. In EN-MN, the clay selected to make figurines tended to be of light clay or pinkish colour with a whitish coating and baked evenly throughout the surface (Hourmouziadis 1973: 25). Red colour is also very common with 15 examples, mostly due to the burnishing surface treatment. In contrast with Crete, dark colours are less common, but there are examples of blackish, grey, black/grey and grey/brown clays. However, in our assemblage from Thessaly, no figurine presents the black burnished ware surface characteristic in LN Knossos.

Slipped colour	N. of Figurines
Yellowish	5
Pink	10
Pale	3
Pink/grey	6
Red	15
Yellow/red	8
Red/brown	7
White	11
Grey	4
Blackish	5
Black/grey	3
Orange	2
Light brown	10
Brown	2
Grey/brown	3
Light grey	1
Total	**95**

Table 6.3. Slipped colours of Neolithic figurines from Thessaly.

6.4.3. Colour, decoration and motifs applied to the figurines

6.4.3.1. Colour applied to figurines

Colour in itself has not been widely studied in Aegean Neolithic figurines and those studies that do (Talalay 1993; Mina 2008c; 2014) have followed a different approach to that of Berlin and Kay. For instance, Talalay (1993: 35) addressed the use of the same colour palette to decorate Neolithic pottery and figurines in the Peloponnese, which may allude to a similar symbolic use of colour in material culture. Mina (2008c; 2014) focused on the relationship between gender, colour and symbolism in Neolithic figurines from the Aegean. Following Turner's suggestion of the use of red and white colours in body painting as symbols of bodily fluids, Mina (2008c: 126) concluded that a similar symbolism may be in play in female figurines.

The repertoire of pigments used to decorate figurines throughout the Aegean Neolithic are black, white, red, purple, yellow, red-on-white, white-on-red, brown, brown-on-buff, pink and grey; and, additionally blue and green from FN. In our assemblage of figurines from Thessaly, the most widely used pigments are red, red-on-white, brown-on-buff and brown (Table 6.4). In Neolithic Crete, the colours include red, yellow, white paste and red-on-white (Table 6.5). Black colour is only attested for rendering hair in a figurine from Knossos (Mina 2008c: 126), but not for bodily decoration. According to Ucko (1968) and Mina (2008c: 126), the figurine markers' preference was for white painting rather than red in the figurines from Knossos. However, during my study of the Ashmolean Museum material, slight traces of red painting were found on some figurines undetected in previous studies, and more may be identified in the future.

Applied colour	Numbers of appearances
Pink	3
Purple	1
Brown-on-buff	11
White-on-red	1
Red-on-white	9
Brown	17
Red	21
White	9
Black	3
Yellow	1
Grey	1
Total	77

Table 6.4. Applied colours on Neolithic figurines from Thessaly.

Applied colour	Numbers of appearances
Red	8
White	14
Black	1
Yellow	1
Total	24

Table 6.5. Applied colours on Neolithic figurines from Crete.

Another possible explanation for the more frequent occurrence of white painting on the figurines put forward by Ucko (1968) and Mina (2008c) may be that red painting is poorly preserved in comparison. Much of the red colour mainly survives when white paste was applied beforehand (in Table 6.5, of eight red applications, six probably had white paste applied before). Indeed, in the Ashmolean Museum collection, I have been able to identify surviving applied red painting on at least three figurines from Knossos (1927-3260, AE.731, 1938.660, Figs.4.7-4.9). The wide application of red-on-white paste at Knossos might be a way to apply red onto a white canvas so that the pigment adheres better to the surface, perhaps to render the pigment more durable or to make it stand out.

6.4.3.2. Decoration and painting

Scholars have put forward different views on Neolithic figurine decoration. For instance, Gimbutas (1986) gave much importance to the symbolic character of the incised decoration on the Neolithic figurines from Sitagroi. She interpreted some figurines as showing interesting details of women's clothing. Regarding Cretan Neolithic figurines, Ucko (1968) considered classifying or interpreting the decoration impossible and subjective. In his view, much of the decoration may be purely aesthetic

but, when an interpretation is possible, he classifies it either as decorative with no meaning, or as tattoos, and less frequently, as clothing or jewellery (Ucko 1968: 329-333).

Similarly, Talalay (1993: 70), studying Neolithic figurines from Franchthi cave, considers that any interpretation of figurine's decoration is problematic, and that it represents clothing, tattoos, or even pleasing aesthetic designs with no other meaning. Likewise, Mina (2008c; 2014) interprets the decorations on Neolithic Aegean figurines as mainly representing body decoration, attire or jewellery. Marangou (2020: 40) draws attention to the deposition of figurines with textile tools, especially spindle whorls, in numerous Neolithic sites from Southeast Europe to support a connection between figurines and clothing. These views, however, fail to establish a method to differentiate between clothing, tattooing, scarification and body painting, which are rather subjectively identified by many authors. Furthermore, decoration is commonly interpreted as 'decorative' with no other purposes, forgetting that it may pose other meanings beyond the purely aesthetic (on encoded symbolism see e.g., Hodder 1982; Tilley 1991; 1999), perhaps expressing cultural conceptions and practices involving gender and age identities.

On Crete, 31 figurines are decorated or painted (22%), including five doubtful figurines (59/115, 59/100, 57/95, 57/100, 57/139; Evans 1964: fig.60, 2-3, 5-6, 14). Most decorated figurines were found at Knossos, except for figurine AMH.249 from Ierapetra (Fig. 6.36a). Most decorated figurines are Female: 11 (58%), followed by four Probably Female (21%), four Asexual (21%), and none are Male or Probably Male (Table 6.6). However, these percentages exclude twelve decorated figurines (39% of the total) that are too fragmentary to be classified and are Non-Identifiable; some preserve possible scars in the clay that might represent traces of breasts, but this is uncertain. The decoration motifs mainly comprise incisions (21) and impressions (11) (Table 6.7). Impressions are the only decorations on six figurines, but they also accompany incisions and painting in five examples. Painting mainly survives as the filling of incisions and impressions in 13 examples. In three figurines, white paste and red pigment did not accompany incisions or impressions, and only colour decoration was applied. Mina (2008c: 126) considers painting to have a clear pattern: it occurs on

breasts and genitalia, which are fertility-related parts. However, my analysis of the evidence suggests that this pattern is not as clear as previously thought. No figurines feature colour applied to the genitalia. Only occasionally red or white colours do appear on the breasts or the surrounding area, such as in figurine 1927-3260 (Fig. 4.7), or applied to incisions in the buttocks area, but decoration and colour was also applied to other areas of those figurines. Finally, plastic decoration to model headdresses or coiffure appears only in figurine AMH.249 from Ierapetra (Table 6.7), although possibly the marble figurine 3275 from Knossos has the same headdress (Fig. 6.36a-b).

Sex	Number of figurines	Percentage
Female	11	58%
Probably Female	4	21%
Asexual	4	21%
Male	0	0%
Probably Male	0	0%
Non-Identifiable	12	39%

Table 6.6. Sex and decoration on Neolithic Cretan figurines

Decoration	Number of decorations
Incisions	21
Impressions	11
Plastic	1
Painting on incisions/impressions	13
Painting not on incisions/impressions	3
Pontillé	1
Grooves	1

Table 6.7. Decoration types and number of times a different type of decoration appears per figurine at Neolithic Crete.

On Neolithic figurines from Knossos, incisions on the back of the head represent hair. Incisions indicate permanent anatomical features such as the eyes, pupils, backbone, navel, female genitalia, and the sexual triangle. Incisions sometimes indicate symbolic features like arm-position (e.g., 1938.664 and G99, Figs. 5.12, 5.9), and on occasions, these have been incorrectly interpreted as decoration (e.g., Ucko 1968). Incisions were probably widely used to represent attire elements since they are frequently painted. Figurines from other Neolithic Greek sites, such as Franchthi or Corinth, use paint more than incisions to represent the changeable decoration, as do Cycladic figurines.

The material selected for each of the figurines may explain the differences. While the marble Cycladic figurines constitute a characteristic white canvas on which the depiction of painted decoration was easily achieved, clay figurines from Neolithic Knossos were mostly given a dark burnished finish to which paint could not easily adhere. Neolithic figurines from Franchthi cave are decorated with paint rather than incisions but were made of lighter-colour clay.

A high number of Neolithic figurines from our Thessalian case studies are decorated. There are 113 decorated figurines (54% of the assemblage). The main decoration types are incisions, impressions, painting, painting on incisions or impressions, and plastic decoration (Tables 6.8-6.9). Different decoration types may appear combined in the same figurine. For instance, a figurine may have plastically rendered hair, painting, and incised decoration. The most frequent is painted decoration, more so than in Crete. In Crete, most painting was preserved in incised/impressed motifs, while in Thessaly, painted motifs are commonly used without incisions or impressions. Plastic decoration is used considerably more than in Crete, principally to model hair, headdresses, and accompanying objects.

Decoration	Number of appearances
Incisions	41
Impressions	6
Painting	63
Painting on incisions/ Impressions	5
Plastic	27

Table 6.8. Decoration types and number of appearances on Neolithic figurines from Thessaly

Site	N. figurines	Incisions	Painting	Plastic	Impressions
Sesklo	61	9	5	8	1
Tsangli	31	5	8	3	0
Tsani Magoula	5	1	2	1	0
Platia Magoula	10	6	4	0	1
Dimini	36	1	18	0	1
Rachmani	15	0	5	0	1
Zappeio 2	14	6	6	5	1
Chara 1	22	9	12	7	1
Sitochoro 1	13	4	7	3	0
Nees Karyes	1	0	1	0	0
Total	208	41	68	27	6

Table 6.9. Number of appearances of decoration types on Neolithic figurines from Thessaly per site

The different ornamentation types in Neolithic Thessaly vary greatly depending on specific sites and chronology. For instance, incised decoration is more common at

earlier sites from EN to early LN: Sesklo (e.g., M.4311, EAM.5944, Figs. 6.28, 6.15), Tsangli (e.g., M41, M.2770; Figs. 4.39, 6.45), Platia Magoula Zarkou (e.g., ML.PMZ.619; Figs. 3.61-3.62), or Chara 1 (e.g., ML.THE.1125; Figs. 4.42, 4.46). Painting appears at all the sites considered for this study. However, it is common in LN-FN phases at Dimini (e.g., KM.5012/916, LG.2058/54; Figs. 6.31-6.32) and Rachmani (e.g., MB.2748a, ML.KR.10; Figs. 3.65). Painting is also common at EN-MN Chara 1, Zappeio 2, Sitochoro 1 and Tsangli (e.g., ML.THE.446, ML.THE.1245, ML.THE.68, M.2759c; Figs. 5.44, 5.25, 5.41, Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75c). At particular sites, painted decoration is associated with specific figurine types. For instance, at Dimini, painting is mostly applied to the LN marble figurines (e.g., EAM.5994; Fig. 5.34), although clay figurines in the brown-on-buff pottery style also show painted motifs (e.g., KM.5258/1159; Fig. 6.26). Acrolith heads at Rachmani and Dimini frequently bear painted motifs (e.g., MB.2748a, ML.KR.10; Fig. 3.65, Tsountas 1908: fig.37,10). In Rachmani, the five painted figurines are acroliths (Table 6.9). The colour applied to marble figurines and acrolith heads was mainly red and brown and, less frequently, black. It is possible to differentiate two styles on clay figurines. The first has red or brown colour on a white or buff background. In the second, the painting consisted of white colour on a red background. Both types of painting followed the same styles as those used to paint pottery, and generally, the appearance of painted figurines and pottery coincides in the same contexts and dates. The painting was either applied to the surface of the figurine without any further surface treatment or preceded by the coating of the surface with white or whitish colour in the case of red-painted decoration, or red when the decoration was rendered in white colour. The ornamentation mainly represents geometric or linear motifs. Linear motifs mainly depict straight or slanting lines (see Fig. 6.29), while geometric patterns tend to be more complex and cover the whole figurine (EAM.5936; Fig. 6.1). The most complex patterns of painted decorations probably represent attire and woven patterns. However, ornaments, jewellery, hair and bodily decorations such as body painting or tattooing are also depicted with painting.



Figure 6.1. Marble figurine EAM.5936 with geometric motifs painted in red, LN Sesklo (13/08/2020; https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Figurines_female_marble_neolithic,_NAMA_080807.jpg)

Incised decoration was the most common way of representing anatomical or ornamentation details on the surface of EN-MN figurines at Sesklo, Tsangli and Chara 1. However, the site of Platia Magoula Zarkou, with figurines dating to the MN/LN, also shows a preference for incised decoration to which painting was also applied. The prevalent incisions represent anatomical and facial details such as the eyes and hair, body folds or sexual triangles (e.g., M.4311, M41; Figs. 6.28, 4.39). Other incisions mainly represent decoration with motifs sometimes covering the whole surface of the figurines, perhaps indicating clothing, although other body markings are also present (see ML.PMZ.619; Figs. 3.61-3.62). Incisions were not restricted to any part of the figurines, but are common in the neck, face, shoulders and back (e.g., Figs. 6.10-6.11, 6.22, 6.28).

Regarding the sex of decorated figurines, a high number is Non-Identifiable (52; 46%). In those with identifiable sex, most decoration focuses on Female bodies (27; 44%)

which, together with Probably Females (7; 11%), account for 34 examples (55%). Fourteen Asexual figurines also bear ornamentation (23%). In contrast with Crete, in Thessaly, some Male (4; 7%) and Probably Male (6; 10%) figurines have decoration as have three Double-sex figurines (5%) (Table 6.10).

Sex	Number of figurines	%
Female	27	44%
Probably Female	7	11%
Asexual	14	23%
Male	4	7%
Probably Male	6	10%
Double-sex	3	5%
Non-Identifiable	52	46%

Table 6.10. Sex and decoration on Neolithic figurines from Thessaly

6.4.4. The interpretation of decorative patterns on Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly

There is a great deal of variety in the decorative patterns on Neolithic figurines from Crete and Thessaly. The spacing of the elements, whether incised lines or impressed dots, varies, and the general density of the chosen decoration pattern differs widely even among examples from the same site. This means that figurines were produced in small quantities and handcrafted individually. In this sense, figurine decoration may be a corporal extension to the individualised human body since they are decorated in a unique fashion. It is challenging to develop a theoretical framework able to identify

and interpret the meanings of unique design patterns. However, by using the evidence from other regions of Neolithic Greece with ethnographic parallels on the one hand and ideas regarding permanent vs changeable decoration on the other, we may identify avenues for interpreting the data. Although we have previously mentioned the theoretical possibilities that decoration represented body painting, clothing, scarification or tattooing and jewellery, body decoration's meaning or significance can only be determined in its cultural context.

Among the most common motifs in Neolithic figurines from Crete, we find chevrons or 'V' lines either on the back or on the chest, single and parallel rows of diagonal incised lines, diagonally crossed lines, zigzag lines, parallel rows of dots, triangles, lozenges and hatched-lozenges, rows of parallel lines, slanting lines, circles, lines with parallel lines of dots and a cross. Painted motifs from southern Greece share similar decorations, i.e., motifs principally representing chevrons or 'v' lines, vertical lines, horizontal lines, and less frequently a series of dots and diagonal lines (Talalay 1993: 69). Parallel lines, chevron, zigzags, lozenges, spirals and circles representing abstract symbols or ornaments on clothing are very commonly present on figurines from Neolithic Greece and the Balkans, and there are also examples from the Karanovo and Vinča cultures. Similarly, the painted patterns on Cycladic figurines share some motifs with those of Neolithic Crete. Cycladic painted motifs include abstract symbols such as dots, stripes, zigzag lines and dot-rosette motifs, depictions of non-anatomical eyes and jewellery, including diadems and necklaces (Hendrix 1998; Hoffman 2002; Papadatos 2016; Goula 2016). Similarly, in Thessaly, painted motifs include intricate geometric and linear patterns such as checked, parallel and zigzag lines, spirals that tend to be combined and cover the whole body. In contrast, incisions tend to focus on a specific body part, except for the figurines found in the house model at Platia Magoula Zarkou.

Due to the scarce and fragmentary nature of the research sample, the design elements are discussed in the following lines, but these are present in a few examples and sometimes just in a unique example. As each figurine has a unique decoration, each piece must be interpreted individually, but groupings of motifs are presented when they are shared by more than one figurine.

6.4.4.1. Body markings: scarification, tattooing or body painting?

In her study of Neolithic figurines from the Franchthi Cave, Talalay (1993: 70) mentions ethnographic parallels for similar designs on human bodies and figurines. For instance, a striking example comes from the Tabwa of the Lake Tanganyika region of the south-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (Maurer and Roberts 1985: 130), who mimic their body scarification on the body of a figurine. Permanent body markings, such as tattooing and scarification, tend to be applied on ritual occasions and, in many cases, are related to rites of passage that involve the person's transition from one status to another (Talalay 1993: 71). These permanent markings also tend to categorise the person into a corporate group or clan membership, affiliation, social rank, or age class. The practice of tattooing may have different meanings: magical protection against disease or misfortune, therapeutic marks, part or even the whole process of an initiatory ritual, identity affiliation including gender, age, membership in a caste, or group (Papaefthimiou-Papanthimou 1997: 103). In contrast, body painting is temporary and represents more transient stages or is done for special occasions (Sieber 1972: 93-94). Talalay (1993: 71) outlines an array of functions in anthropological studies: identification marks that secure a place in the spirit world; cures for pain; protective signs for repelling evil; good luck or love charms; mechanisms for preserving youth; and signs of mourning.

The practice of tattooing is ancient. The earliest evidence was preserved in the mummy of Ötzi, also known as the 'Iceman', around 3370–3100 *cal.* BC (Rom *et al.* 1999). Ötzi's body was covered with around 61 tattoos, created by rubbing pulverised charcoal into incised cuts in his skin (Samadelli *et al*. 2015). The motifs consist mainly of lines and crosses placed on his ribcage, lumbar spine, wrist, knee, calves, and ankles. Their study suggests that these tattoos may have served therapeutic purposes, i.e., to relieve pain (Capasso 1998; Deter-Wolf *et al.* 2016), as they are all found on those parts of Ötzi's body with considerable wear and tear and degenerative conditions. Other well-known examples of tattooing include Egyptian mummies, dated around 2000 BC. The body of Amunet (*c*. 2160-1994 BC) was found tattooed with abstract and geometric patterns. The tattoos are placed below the navel in an elliptical pattern of dots and dashes, on the thighs and arms in parallel lines of the same pattern. Another

female mummy of the same dates was decorated with dots in a diamond pattern on the upper arms and chest, and a cicatrix on her lower abdomen (Bianchi 1988: 22). Contemporary with these two, a third mummy had similar tattoos. Noteworthy, similar motifs and patterns also appear on contemporary faience figurines, often placed in graves. For instance, figurine 44.226 from the Brooklyn Museum (Bianchi 1988: fig.3) has rows of dots in horizontal lines and in a diamond shape.

Anthropological records from Moko (New Zealand), Mekeo District (New Guinea), Ma Nyema (Democratic Republic of Congo), Australian Aborigines, and Sarawak (Borneo) show that the practice of tattooing or scarring starts at a prepubescent age, and more markings may be added at the onset of puberty, at betrothal or when significant events (generally age-related) take place (Talalay 1993: 71). These markings vary considerably, from covering the whole body to just a few marks that may focus only on a specific body part, such as the upper arm, face, or abdomen. The simpler designs and those specific to a part of the anatomy tend to function as tribal or family markings (Hambly 1925: 183). A recent study has identified a 'tattoo kit', dated between 3200 BC and 1600 BC, at the site of Fernvale, Nashville, Tennessee (Deter-Wolf 2013) (Fig. 6.2). The 'tattooing kit' consists of wild turkey bones with sharp points and red (ochre) and black (charcoal) pigment remaining on them, flint blades and bivalve shells. Experimental work with a replica of the kit supported the idea of its use for tattooing. Kononenko *et al.* (2016) compared the results with Nanggu tools from the Solomon Islands, which preserved traces of blood, charcoal and ochre. Although bone points are common tools found in many Neolithic sites, such an analysis has never been carried out in Neolithic Greece. Similar to bone points, copper awls or points are known from specific sites in Northern Italy (Pearce 2007: 48-50; 2000: 67-73), the Balkans (Kuna 1981: 16-17, 57-58), the Aegean (Renfrew 1972: 310-311), Austria, Switzerland and southern Germany (Skeates 1994: 10-17; De Marinis and Pedrotti 1997: 256). Pearce (2007: 48-50; 2000: 67-73) reflects on the possible use of copper awls as tools for tattooing, leather-working and shoe-making, basketry-making or for flint pressure-flaking. Pearce (2000: 72) concludes that their use for pressure-flaking is more likely since copper does not maintain a point well, so copper awls would not be suitable for tattooing.



Figure 6.2. Bone points from Fernavalle (after Deter-Wolf *et al*. 2021: fig.3) and Knossos (after Evans 1964: pl.61,3).

The function of bone tools remains uncertain in Neolithic Greece, but they constitute a heterogeneous group. Some, especially those with a hole, may have served as needles or pins. However, others have very sharp points that suggest a different use, especially when associated with figurines and pigments in the same deposit. Interestingly, such archaeological evidence appears at specific Neolithic sites in Thessaly. For instance, the structured deposit of House Q in FN Rachmani, probably placed inside a pit, contained painted acrolith figurines (see Chapter 3.4.2.6, Figs. 3.65a-b), a lump of ochre, very sharp bone points and flint knives together with other objects and food. The painting on these figurines, which focuses on the face, might indicate real tattooing or body painting as part of a ritual. Bone points and flint knives may indicate the practice of tattooing and shaving. Similarly, a structured deposit in the MN House T at Tsangli contained many objects, including six figurines, bone points of different sizes, some very sharp, and a whole vessel containing a quantity of red ochre (see Chapter 3.4.2.2).

This evidence supports body painting or tattooing in MN and FN rituals at Rachmani and Tsangli. Likewise, Nikolaidou (2003, 2007) suggests that decorative motifs on Neolithic figurines from Sitagroi show embellishments, including garments, ornaments, tattooing and body painting. She identifies other implements such as engraved cylinders and stamp-like objects, lumps of ochre, colour trays, and needles as evidence for objects possibly used for scarification/tattooing or body painting. This evidence suggests that the decoration of figurines may be related to that of the human body. In the EBA Aegean, Cycladic burials contained painted figurines together with pigments, bone tubes, miniature vessels for pigments, decorated bone points or needles and thin obsidian blades, probably employed in body modification rituals (Carter 1994; 1998; Goula 2016: fig.3.1). These artefacts were part of the funerary ritual (Catapoti 2011: 83) and imply the use of tattooing or body painting of the mourners or the deceased (Papadatos 2016: 14). Carter (2008) points out that metal scrapers and tweezers also appear alongside pigments in many Cycladic funerary contexts used for shaving and body depilation followed by the body's painting.

Further evidence for body painting as part of rituals is perhaps the association of ochre pigment with a marble figurine (1905.1136a.1, Fig. 6.3) at MN Knossos. This association was found during the re-study of A.J. Evans's excavation materials in the Stratigraphical Museum at Knossos. A.J. Evans' notes indicate that figurine 1905.1136a.1 was found together with a large fragment of the base of a bowl that once broken was inverted and had traces of yellow ochre (Tomkins 2017: 98). The figurine and sherd probably date from MN Knossos like the other objects, principally pottery, contained in the box from the same excavation levels. The staining and scattering of the ochre powder on the sherd seem to have left a mark that perfectly matches the figurines' size and shape.

Moreover, there is still a thin stain of yellow ochre on the front of the figurine. Originally, the figurine was probably placed face down on top of the sherd with the ochre and then separated once stored in the box (Tomkins 2017: 98). XRF analysis on the figurines' yellow ochre stain and the bowl showed a similar composition. Therefore, they were probably coloured with the same pigment (Giumlia-Mair 2017: 99-101). The sherd of pottery found with yellow ochre had been heated, causing the

mineral pigment to change colour, turning it red. The pigment remains included yellow ochre and parts of ochre turning into red (Giumlia-Mair 2017: 99-100). This evidence suggests that the ochre was intentionally heated to obtain a red rather than a yellow colour. The archaeological evidence associating ochre pigment on the bowl with figurine 1905.1136a.1 may imply its use to colour the figurine or perhaps for human body painting. However, we lack further evidence of this practice at Knossos. The contextual information is scarce regarding the other objects accompanying figurine 1905.1136a.1 and the bowl or the type of deposit where it was found. Strikingly, the figurine lacks its head and part of the left leg, similar to the fragmentation pattern of the two figurines found in Pit A, also of MN period (see Chapter 3.4.1.1). In all three figurines, both the head and the left leg were broken and probably removed intentionally, conceivably indicating the practice of a similar ritual that included deliberate fragmentation. The similarities in rituals are accentuated by the type of figurines used. This type of marble figurine is rarely present in later periods at Knossos (except for the LN I figurine L3271).

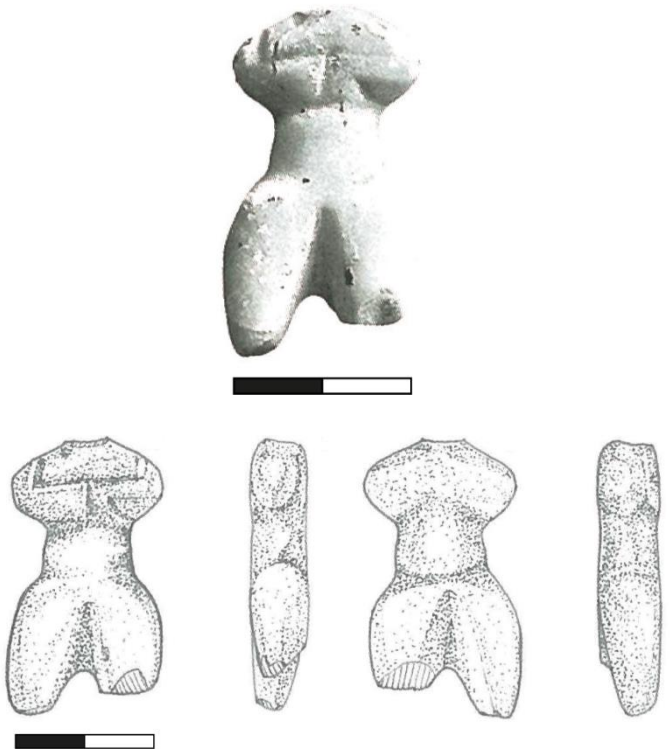

Figure 6.3. Marble figurine 1905.1136a.1 found with yellow and red ochre stain, Knossos (after Kanta and Kokosali 2017: fig.12).

Although of a more doubtful nature, other evidence for pigments at Knossos includes a 'lump of artificially formed chalky material with pieces of bone', which 'appears to be shaped to fit the hands' (Evans 1964: 172). This material found in A9, Str.IV (LN II), where many figurines were found, might have been used to produce white colour paste (see Chapter 3.4.1.1).

Further evidence for body painting or tattooing/scarification may be adduced from the decoration of some figurines. At least three figurines from Knossos have traces of painting that does not accompany or fill incisions. Two figurines have painting remaining on some parts of the body, while the third features decorative incisions and painting. I studied the painting in these figurines via a careful inspection and the treatment of photographic images using D-Stretch (Jon Harman). Figurine AE.731 has traces of red-on-white paste on its neck, left hand or breast, and elbows (Fig. 6.4); similar traces were visible on the elbows on its back. Figurine 1938.660 (Fig. 6.5) has traces of red paint on its chest between the left hand and left breast, on the breast

area, on its elbows, between its hands at the centre of its chest, along its sides on the lower torso and below its belly. Figurine 1927-3260 (Fig. 6.6) has traces of red painting between its breasts or arms, below its arms or elbows, possibly along its sides on the lower torso and on its right side starting below its arm to the buttocks area. This painting could have indicated different motifs, although perhaps all the figurine's body was covered in red given that similar painting was also visible on its back.

Additionally, figurine 1938.660 has an incision on the left hand, perhaps representing jewellery (shell bracelets were found at Knossos and were common in other sites of Neolithic Greece, especially at Dimini). An incised hatched-lozenge appears on its belly, and three parallel lines on its left torso, all filled with white paste. The scarcity of the incised motifs may indicate tattooing/scarification (permanent motifs), and the painting perhaps represented body painting (transitory). However, the incised elements may also represent jewellery or parts of a garment. The red painting on these three figurines is thus applied to the same areas: left breast or hand, elbows, between hands or breasts, and left and right side of the body in figurines 1938.660 and 1927-3260.

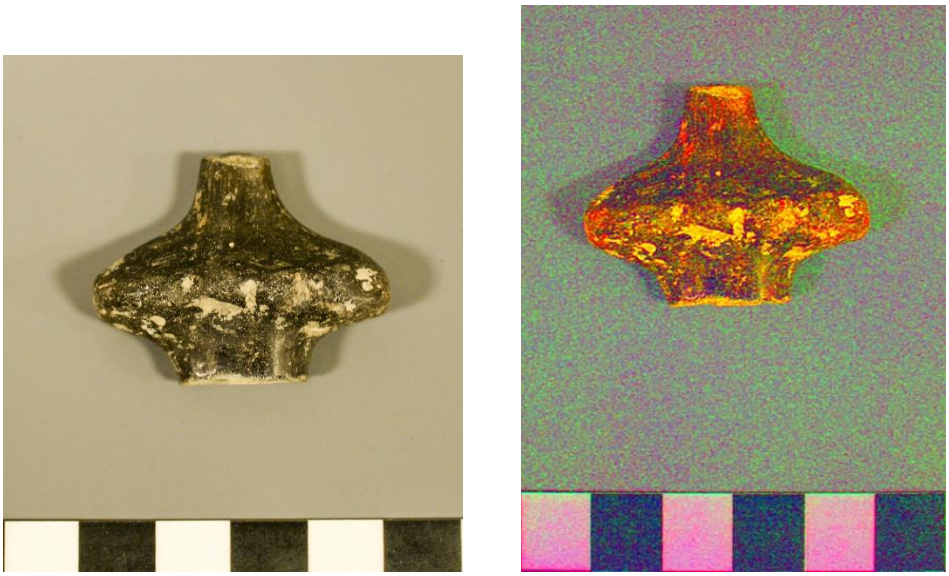

Figure 6.4. (Left) Figurine AE.731 with barely visible white and red paste colour, LN Knossos. (Right) D-Stretch image in colorspace RGB, which highlights red pigments (Photographs by the author).



Figure 6.5. (Left) Figurine 1938.660 with incised motifs in white paste and red painting. (Right) D-Stretch image in colorspace LAB, enhancing traces of red pigments (Photographs by the author).





Figure 6.6. Figurine 1927-3260 front and side with traces of red-on-white paste. (Bottom) D-Strech image in colourspace LAB, highlighting red pigment traces (Photographs by the author).

Body decoration often takes place in rites of passage to mark puberty, adulthood, marriage, childbirth and death (Hoffman 2002: 537). Frequently, women are the primary bearers of such marks due to their critical role in these life transitions (Hoffman 2002: 537-8), possibly explaining why most decorated figurines in Knossos are Female, except for two Asexual figurines: 2716 and 1905.1136a.1 (Figs. 4.14, 6.3). Rubin (1988: 16, 19) emphasises the focus on female bodily changes, particularly in the case of girls of marrying age, who are given marks to their faces, breasts or belly in recognition of their position in society and future biological role. The symbolism associated with ochre might add significance to female decorations. For instance, González-Ruibal (2014: 126-127), referring to the Gumuz and Dat's in groups in Ethiopia, reported that an informant said: 'in old times if a girl wanted to get married, she had to look red.' Ochre among the Gumuz and Dat's in is generally related to ideas of cleanliness, and the main event for which women employ this pigment is their wedding (González-Ruibal 2014: 127). However, given the use of red in rites of passage, perhaps this colour was used in girls' puberty rituals to signify blood since, as shown before, red tends to be quite a universal symbolism for blood. Among the Gumuz and Dat's in, red colour beads are used to avoid the evil eye, and have a protective character (Hernando 2017: 452). Hernando points out how beads and decoration are given to children as protective objects, but only girls continue wearing

them throughout their whole life, concluding that wearing bodily decorations establishes a distinction between men and women in these societies. It is particularly in adolescence that decoration and body ornamentation develop significantly within the Gumuz and Dats' in (Hernando 2017: 452). Bodily decorations on figurines from Neolithic Knossos focus on Female figurines, perhaps suggesting their use in puberty or coming of age rituals. In this sense, it may be significant that only a certain number of Female figurines show either painted or incised decoration.

Furthermore, as Hernando (2017) suggests for Gumuz and Dat's in girls, body ornamentation could have started at an early age. Nikolaidou's (2007) study of jewellery from the Neolithic site of Sitagroi, in Macedonia (Greece), has found that many shell bracelets and amulets were of a very small diameter and could only have belonged to children (Shackleton 2003). Similar small shell bracelets are documented at Dimini, perhaps belonging to children (Souvatzi 2008). This could mean that ornamentation played an important part in children's understanding of their bodies and their status in society, as well as the addition of garments, body painting or tattooing. Following these ethnographical examples, bodily decoration might have only been applied to women who reached prepubescent or adolescent age in Neolithic Knossos. Colour alone, not accompanying incised decorations, is present on only two figurines (1927-3260 and AE.731, Figs. 6.4, 6.6), perhaps representing prepubescent individuals or individuals entering adolescence given the small size, the gesture (covering small breasts) (see Chapter 4.5.1.2) and the use of red colour if we interpret it as signifying blood or related to coming-of-age symbolism.

Figurines with incisions, permanent markings, perhaps indicating scarification or tattooing are more challenging to recognise in the assemblage. At Knossos, figurine 57/133 (Fig. 6.7), has three rows of incised parallel lines on both sides of its backbone, possibly representing permanent markings, lacerations, or scarification. The figurine is probably naked since the backbone is incised and its navel and two scars, perhaps left by broken breasts, are depicted on its front. Generally, incisions on the back representing clothing do not depict the backbone (59/44, 2719, Figs. 6.17a-b). An alternative interpretation may be that these parallel lines represent the rib-bones of an individual, perhaps an indication of older age (see Chapter 4.6).

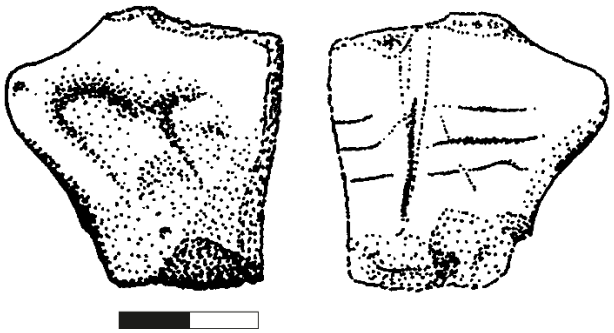

Figure 6.7. Front and back of figurine 57/133, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.94).

Another figurine from FN Knossos (unknown inv.no., Fig. 6.8) with its whole body covered in impressed dots perhaps depicts scarification. These dot-scars may represent the raised bumps associated with scarification practices since it would be difficult to affix tiny lumps of clay to it. For instance, at least three figurines from Pre-pottery Neolithic 'Ain Ghazal (*c*. 7600-6000 BC), in Jordan, contain possible scarification patterns over larger areas of their bodies (Fig. 6.9). The possible scarification marks resembling keloid scars on these figurines are made by cord-impressions (McAdam 1997), leaving negative marks on the clay, as on the figurine from Knossos. However, the figurine from FN Knossos has punctures of an irregular size and disposition, which do not follow a clear pattern, perhaps indicating a different interpretation to scarification. The lack of painting on them confutes the interpretation that they represent clothing. In contrast, the decoration on figurine 1938.662 (Fig. 6.20) seems to follow a pattern of parallel painted lines of dots in red-on-white, which corresponds better with an interpretation of attire.

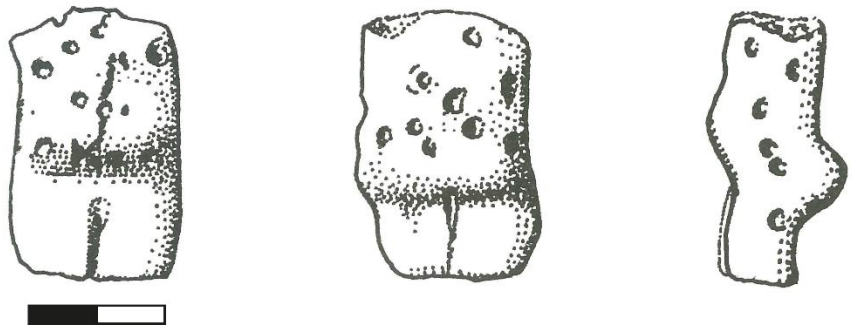

Figure 6.8. Front, back and side of figurine covered in impressed dots, FN Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.154).

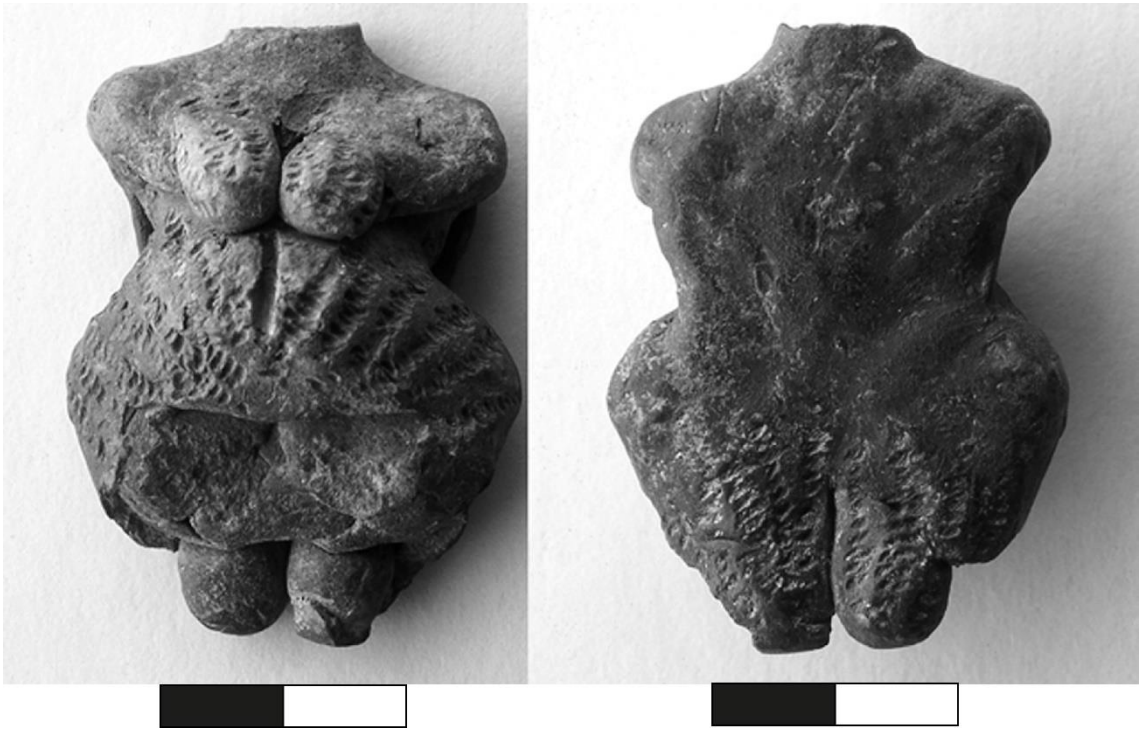

Figure 6.9. Figurine from Pre-Pottery Neolithic Ain Ghazal with corded impressions (after Rollefson 2008: fig.10).

Some facial markings made with incisions or painting may depict scarification or lacerations. For instance, 60/253 (Fig. 3.2) from EN Knossos has two incised lines on each side of the face. However, this figurine's incisions do not follow a symmetrical pattern. In Thessaly, facial markings made by incisions of parallel lines are known from figurines found at Sesklo, Tsani Magoula and Platia Magoula Zarkou. At Sesklo, an EN figurine has two parallel incisions at each side of the face (Fig. 6.10, 'unknown inv.no.').

Similarly, another figurine from MN Tsani (Fig. 6.11, 'unknown inv.no.') depicts a head with an elongated neck bearing two diagonal incisions on the cheeks at each side of the face. Both figurines have similar expressions with incised slit eyes. Likewise, the adult figurines from the MN/LN Platia Magoula Zarkou house model also present three diagonal and parallel incisions on the side of each cheek filled with red/brown colour paste (e.g., Fig. 4.19). Facial marks and other painted facial decorations appear in 20 figurines from Thessaly. For instance, figurine EAM.5936 from LN Sesklo depicts geometrical patterns on the face and body (Fig. 6.1). Fourteen marble and clay figurines from Dimini depict facial details and facial body painting (e.g., KM.4990/894; Fig. 6.30). Two painted acrolith heads from Tsangli and two from Rachmani depict facial details and decoration. Facial incisions and painting are also represented on three figurines from Zappeio 2, one from Sitochoro, and four from Platia Magoula Zarkou. Two of the examples from Zappeio 2 had painting marks on the cheeks: ML.THE.1122 and ML.KR.206 (Figs. 6.40-6.41). Facial markings are common on Cycladic figurines in the form of red stripes or dots, interpreted as marks of mourning by Hoffman (2002: 541). This interpretation is based on an ethnographical parallel for a similar practice of facial mourning laceration by modern Azeri women, and mourning figurines with painted facial striations deposited in graves from the LBA to the fifth century BC in Mainland Greece, the Cyclades and Crete. Conversely, Hendrix (2002: 420) considers them as possibly clan or age markings. Facial scarification is widely known in the ethnographic record as a symbol of group affiliation, for instance, among the Gumuz in the frontier between Ethiopia and Sudan (Hernando 2017: fig.2). In Nigeria, the Nri children underwent facial scarification during initiation rites performed by elders to reach adulthood (Ray 1987: 75). It is difficult to interpret facial markings in the figurines from Thessaly; some may be marks of mourning as in Cycladic figurines, this is perhaps the symbolism of the figurines from Sesklo, Tsani and the house model from Platia Magoula Zarkou.



Figure 6.10. Head and neck fragment of figurine, EN Sesklo (after Theocharis 1973a: fig.12).



Figure 6.11. Head and neck fragment of figurine, MN Tsani Magoula (Hourmouziadis 1973: pl.83)

Specific body marks on Neolithic figurines from Crete are difficult to classify as either tattooing/scarification, body painting or representing other ornamentation. However, strikingly, some incised lines, especially on the upper arm or shoulders, are similar in different figurines. The decoration always consists of parallel incised lines with white paste filling. Some of these figurines may represent ornaments on the dress, but

others perhaps depicted tattooing or scarification on Female bodies. The examples include figurines 1927-3260, 1938.660, 2719, 59/170, and 'unknown inv.no.' (Ucko 1968: fig.74) (Fig. 6.12).

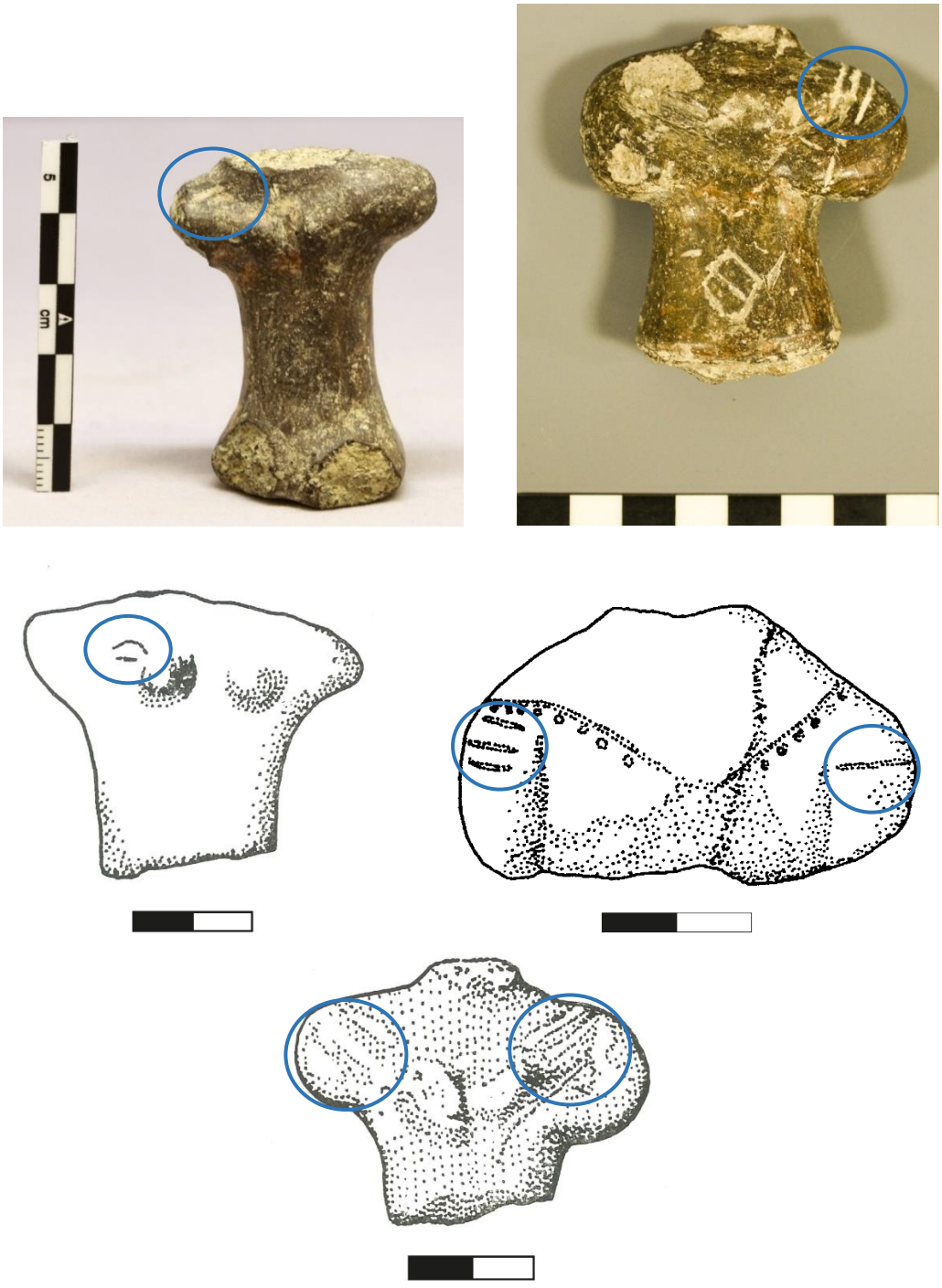

Figure 6.12. Figurines 1927-3260, 1938.660, 2719, 59/170, and 'unknown inv.no.' with parallel incisions on the arms or shoulders (photographs: the author; drawings after Ucko 1968: figs.47,13,74).

In our assemblage from Thessaly, examples of parallel incisions on the back, shoulders or arms appear in figurines ML.THE.1150 from Chara 1 (Fig. 6.13), M.41 from MN Tsangli (Fig. 4.39), ML.THE.1146 from Sitochoro 1 (Fig. 6.14) and the two adult Females from the MN/LN Platia Magoula Zarkou house model. However, the latter present incisions all over the body which corresponds better with an interpretation of attire. Figurines ML.THE.1150, M.41 and ML.THE.1146 show incisions localised in parts of the body and possibly represent naked bodies with indications of genitalia and breasts. Therefore, these markings may not represent attire but rather possible scarification or tattooing. At Sesklo, the EN/MN figurine EAM.5944 has two diagonal incisions at each side of the abdomen painted in purple colour (Fig. 6.15), either representing tattooing/scarification or a wound. Given their symmetrical pattern, the first interpretation is more plausible.



Figure 6.13. Back of Figurine ML.THE.1150 with incised decoration at back and on shoulders, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.212).



Figure 6.14. Figurine ML.THE.1146 with two parallel incisions on the left arm/shoulder, and six incisions on the back below waist level, Sitochoro 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.156)

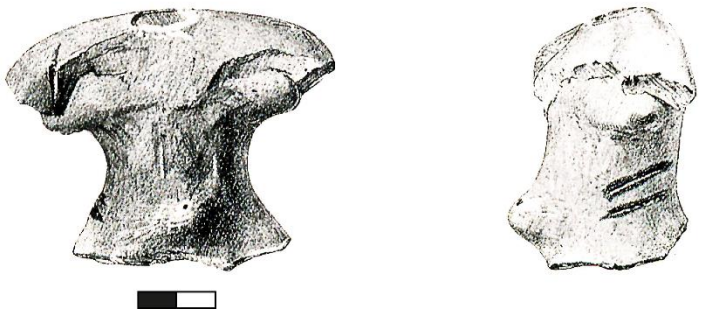

Figure 6.15. Figurine EAM.5944 with incisions on either side of the abdomen, EM-MN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.33,1).

6.4.4.2. Clothing

In Neolithic Knossos, complex decorative patterns covering most of the figurines' bodies may represent elements of attire. The ornamentation includes zigzag and parallel incised lines, sometimes accompanied by impressed dotted lines and generally painted with white or red paste. This decoration concentrates mainly on the shoulders,

arms, back, belly, hips, and legs. An example is the MN figurine AE.730 (Fig. 6.16), with incisions of concentric circles on the belly at the front and back, parallel lines on the legs, and zigzag lines at the back on the buttocks, plausibly depicting clothing. This decoration recalls the garment on the LN *kourotrophos* figurine EAM.P5937 from Sesklo (Fig. 4.36), which, although in painted motifs, depicts a spiral in the belly and roughly parallel lines on the legs. Other motifs perhaps representing parts of clothing are the incisions of several parallel and diagonal lines on the back not showing the backbone, indicating that the body was not naked, present in figurines 59/44 and 2719 from LN Knossos, both with white paste filling on the incisions (Figs. 6.17a-b). Another figurine (1934,0115.3, Fig. 6.18), with the lower torso and legs remaining, is richly ornated with incised zigzag, slanting and linear lines, impressed dotted lines, and a "railway track" motif formed of a long straight line crossed by a series of perpendicular lines on the back of the hips. All the decoration is filled with white and red-on-white paste. However, the red paste seems to be applied all over the figurine as traces of it are found that do not only fill incisions. Analysis of the images with D-Stretch confirms the wide application of red colour in this figurine (Fig. 6.19). The red pigment is especially visible on the top and bottom sides of the figurine. The incised and impressed motifs and the painting covering most of the remaining body suggest that this figurine was probably depicted wearing a richly ornated attire.



Figure 6.16. Front, back and sides of figurine AE.730 with incised decoration filled with white paste, MN Knossos (Photographs by the author).

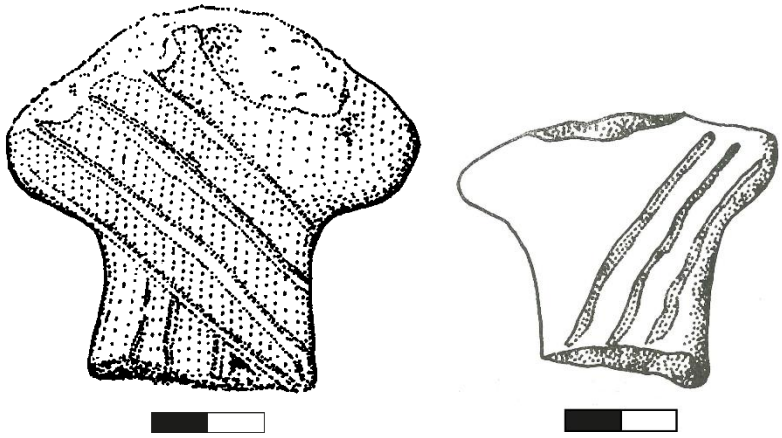

Figure 6.17a. (Left) Back of figurine 59/44 with four parallel incised diagonal lines and three parallel vertical lines below, LN II Knossos. b. (Right) Back of figurine 2719 with three parallel diagonal lines, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: figs.104, 117).









Figure 6.18. Right, left, back, top and bottom sides of figurine 1934,0115.3, LN Knossos (after ©The Trustees of the British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1934-0115-3; 10/09/2020)



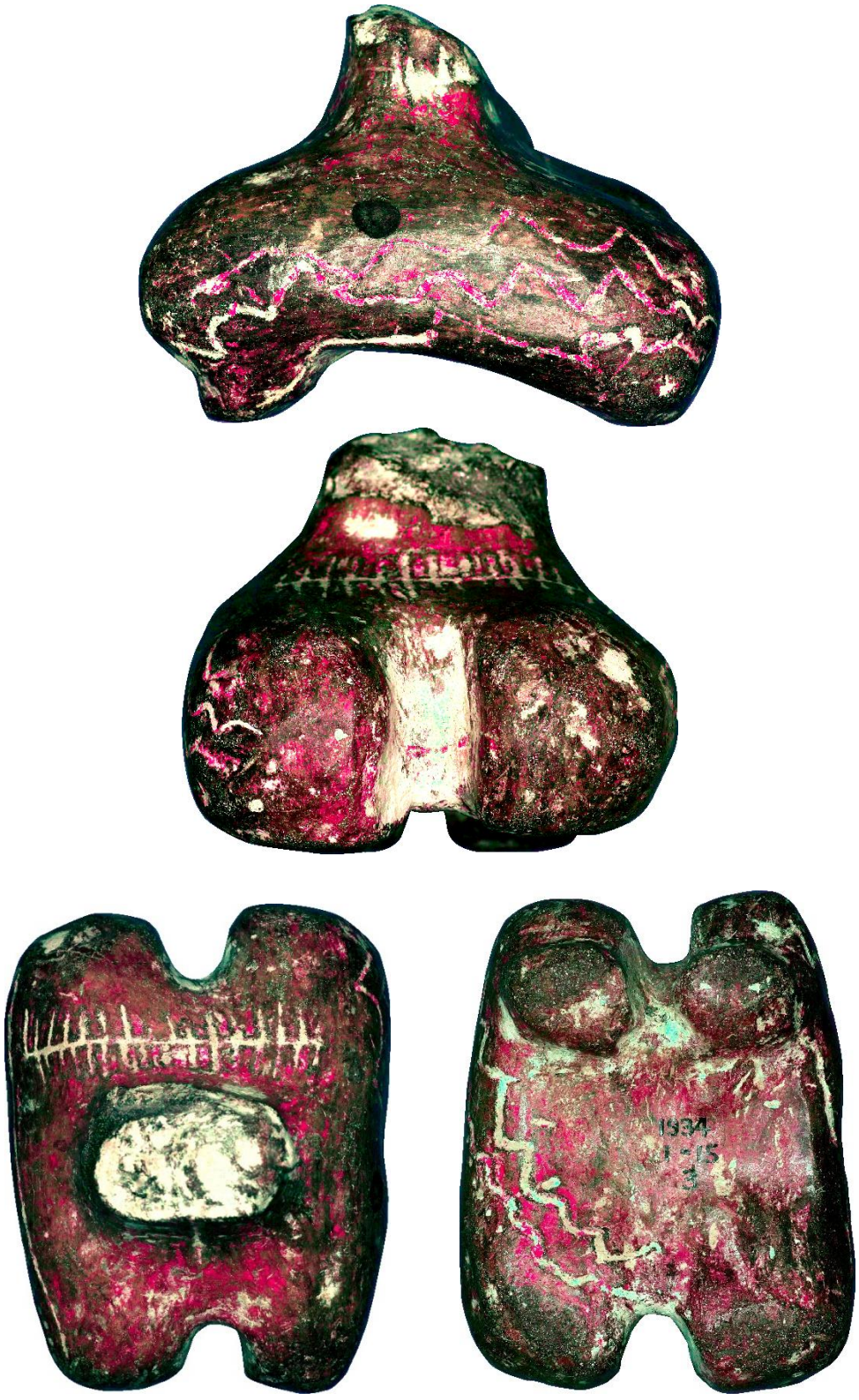

Figure 6.19. Right, left, back, top and bottom sides of figurine 1934,0115.3, LN Knossos, viewed with D-Stretch in LAB colourspace to enhance the red pigment (after ©The Trustees of the British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1934-0115-3; 10/09/2020).

Other motifs such as roughly parallel lines of impressed dots appear on the LN figurine 1938.662 (Fig. 6.20) from Knossos. The dotted decoration covers its remaining torso with white and red-on-white pigments applied to the impressions. Although white and red pigments are visible, enhancement with D-Stretch highlights the areas with most painting remaining at the back on the dotted decoration and the elbows. The pigments are more poorly preserved on the front but are faintly visible on the arms and some of the dots. The dots may depict beads sewn onto the garment. Parallels may be found in the Minoan 'Adorants' fresco from Thera (Fig. 6.21). In this fresco, the figure of a girl has a mantle covered in red dots, possibly representing carnelian shell beads sewed to it, probably to symbolise drops of blood which may be associated with menstruation-inducing rites (Gallou 2018: 69). A similar garment might also be represented on a figurine from Corinth with red painted dots covering the fragmented leg (MF.70-24, Talalay 1993). Nikolaidou (2007: 195) considers it very likely that Neolithic Aegean textiles were beaded or decorated with bone and shell *appliqués*, as has been attested in Neolithic and BA Europe and Anatolia (Barber 1991). Garments were probably quite ornate from the LN onwards. Perhaps many of these tiny beads were sewed onto clothing as Nikolaidou (2007: 195) suggested for figurines from Sitagroi, akin to figurine 1938.662 (Fig. 6.20).





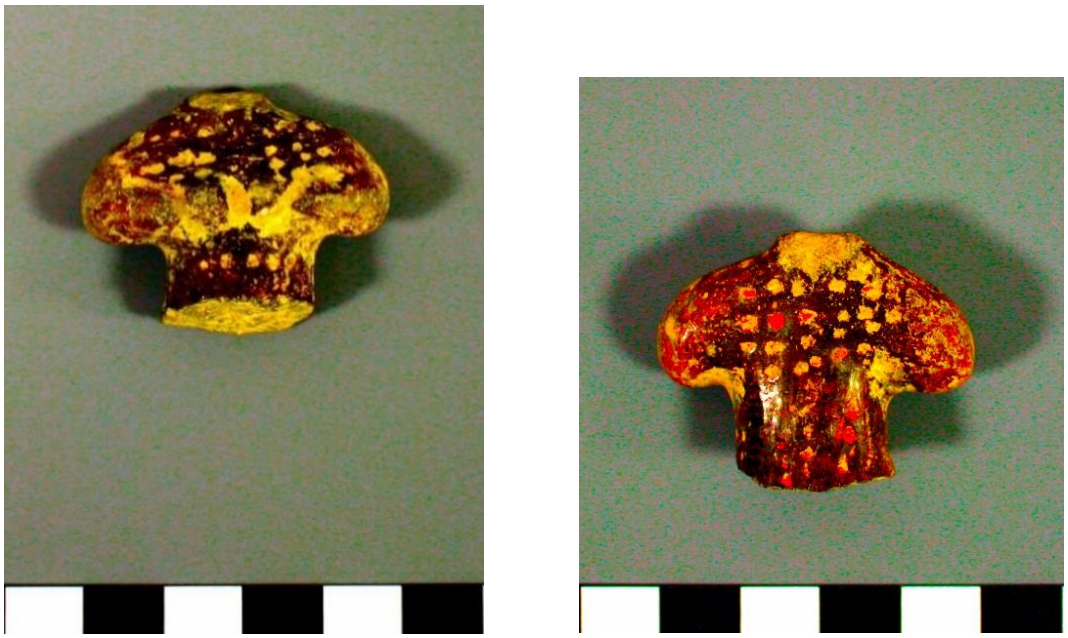

Figure 6.20. Figurine 1938.662 with dot-impressed decoration filled with white and red paste, possibly representing clothing, LN Knossos. (Bottom) Same figurine viewed with D-Stretch in LAB colourspace to enhance the red pigment (Photographs by the author)

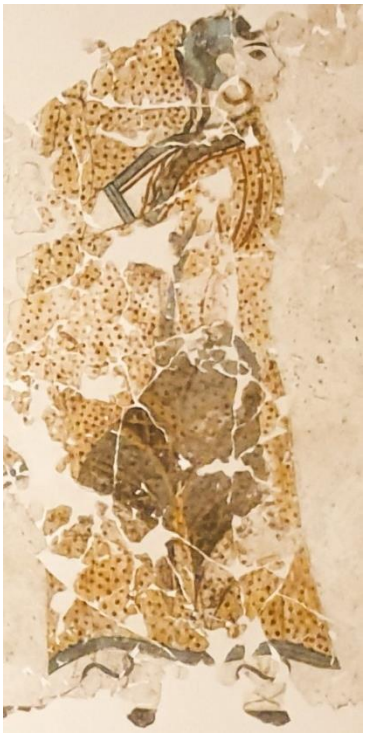

Figure 6.21. The 'Veiled Girl', part of the 'Adorants' fresco, Xeste 3, Akrotiri, Thera (©Jamie Heath, https://www.flickr.com/photos/mumblerjamie/49346891048/in/photolist-bCZbGd-2iRg3YZ-Ys8xmS-UHk4Gu-2ibBHum; 19/06/2021).

Other dot impressions appear in two LN II figurines from Knossos: 59/102 and 59/169 (Figs. 3.21, 3.32). The impressed dots focus on the neck and shoulder areas, perhaps as part of clothing ornamentation or jewellery. In Thessaly, similar dot impressions appear in a figurine from EN Sesklo (Fig. 6.22, 'unknown inv.no.') and ML.THE.1788 from Chara 1 (Fig. 6.23), both focus the decoration on the shoulders, perhaps indicating part of the ornamentation of their attire or body markings.

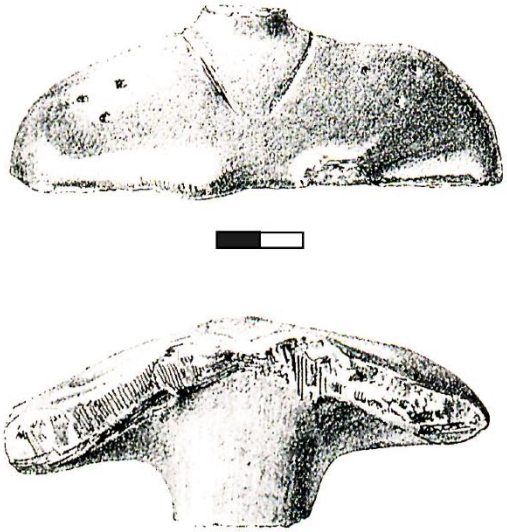

Figure 6.22. Figurine with three impressed dots on each shoulder in a triangular shape and two incised lines at each side of neck, EN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.33,3).



Figure 6.23. Figurine ML.THE.1788 with thirteen dot impressions on the right and eight on the left arm, Chara 1 (after Orphanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.689)

Figurine 1938.661 (Fig. 6.24) from Knossos is decorated with concentric lozenges on the back and a pattern of impressed triangles, hatched-lozenges, and lines on the shoulders. All the decorations have white and red-on-white paste filling. The concentric lozenges are a common design pattern, another figurine from Knossos bears a motif depicting a similar lozenge at the back hatched into three partitions, but unfortunately, this figurine is only partially published (unknown inv.no.; Mina 2009: fig.7).



Figure 6.24. Top and back side of figurine 1938.661 with two concentric lozenges and, on the shoulders, a combination of hatched-lozenges, triangles, and lines (Photographs by the author).

Chevrons or 'V' motifs occur more frequently than any other decorative pattern at Knossos and appear on LN I figurines 59/170, 59/138, and 'unknown inv.no.' (Ucko 1968: fig.90) (Fig. 6.25). In Crete, this motif also appears on the front of the Neolithic figurine from Ierapetra AMH.249 (Fig. 6.36a). Similarly, chevrons are typical in Neolithic Thessaly, occurring almost exclusively on the back and front of figurines. For instance, they are incised on the EN Female figurine previously illustrated from Sesklo (Fig. 6.22), on the Male figurine ML.THE.1285 from Zappeio 2 (Fig. 5.24) probably of EN/MN date; and painted on two LN figurines from Dimini (KM.5258/1159 and 'unknown inv.no.', Figs. 6.26-6.27). This type of decoration probably depicts decoration on clothing or jewellery, or the edge of the dress.

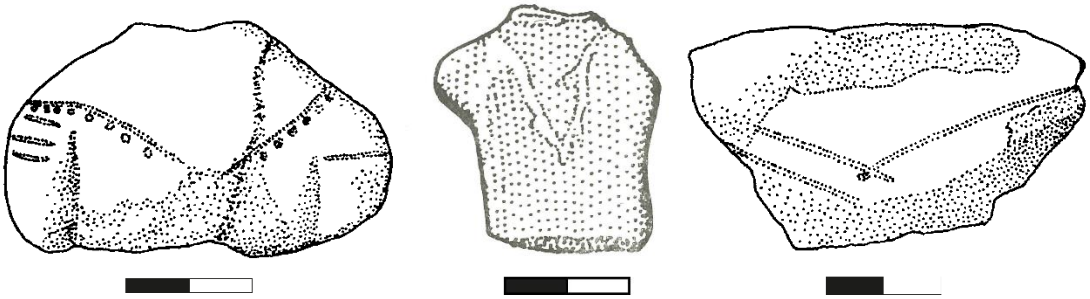

Figure 6.25. Figurines 59/170 (left), 'unknown inv.no.' (centre) and 59/138 (right) with different chevron motifs on the front and back, Neolithic Knossos (after Ucko 1968: figs.83, 90, 151).



Figure 6.26. Figurine KM.5258/1159, LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: pl.28c).



Figure 6.27. Figurine with 'unknown inv.no.', LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: pl.27c)

Figurine 2716 (Fig. 4.14) has decoration on the front consisting of two incised zigzag lines running down diagonally from the left shoulder to the right side at the hip level. At the back, two vertical zigzag lines are incised on each side of the backbone. On the

sides, some traces of other zigzag lines are preserved. White paste filled all the incisions. Figurine 2715 (Fig. 3.42) has different decoration patterns; on the back, the motifs are an incised line running from the left shoulder to the level of the right hip with impressed dots at the sides of the line. Also, at the back, three parallel lines of dots decorate the right shoulder. At the front, other incised lines are accompanied by lines of dots over the legs. Other dots impressed on the right arm continue on the right shoulder at the back. Incisions and impressions preserve traces of red-on-white pigments. Red colour is also visible on top of the arms, on the shoulders and elbows which suggest a similar decoration to 1938.662 (Fig. 6.20), perhaps showing a similarly ornate gown. Both figurines present complex motifs that cover most of their bodies and are more securely interpreted as depicting clothing. Similarly, the figurine from Ierapetra (Fig. 6.36a) is covered in lines of incisions filled with white paste, possibly representing a garment.

At Sesklo, in Thessaly, most figurines, at least in EN-MN phases, seem to be depicted naked. However, the EN I figurine (M.4311, Fig. 6.28) shows a decoration of incisions at the neck, chest, and waist which together with the general body shape ending at the bottom with the form of a skirt, possibly represent a dress. At the back, five incisions represent long hair. The other figurine with decoration covering most of their body is the LN *kourotrophos* from Sesklo (EAM.P5937, Fig. 4.36). The figurine's body and that of the child she is holding are entirely painted with geometric motifs consisting of roughly parallel lines on the legs and arms, a spiral on the belly and interwoven patterns of parallel, diagonal and crossed lines on the back. The painting is brown-on-buff style, while traces of red colour remain at places. This figurine's complex decoration patterns probably represent a long garment encompassing both the woman and the child.

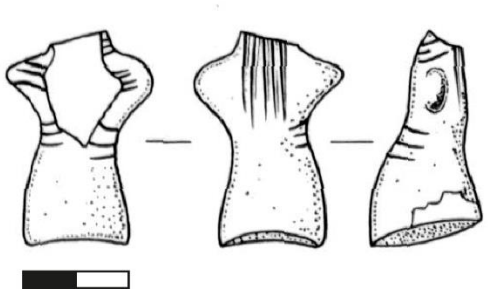

Figure 6.28. Figurine M.4311, EN I Seklo (after Wijnen 1981: fig.14,11)

At Dimini, the brown-on-buff painting style, consisting of dark brown colour on a light-coloured surface with a pale-yellow slip, is common and appears on eight clay figurines included in this study. However, Skafida's (1992) analysis indicates that 20 figurines are decorated, 15 of them in brown-on-buff style. The examples include the fragment of lower torso and legs with painted diagonal lines ('unknown inv.no.', Fig. 6.29) and KM.4990/894 (Fig. 6.30) with geometric painted lines. Another two figurines present similar motifs (KM.5258/1159 and 'unknown inv.no.'; Figs. 6.26, 6.33). The decoration covers the whole preserved body in all the examples, possibly representing clothing. Decoration also marks anatomical details such as the cheeks, the mouth, eyebrows, eyes and jaw, headdress, hair, and possibly jewellery. Other figurines such as KM.5012/916 present several holes at the top of the head, perhaps for attaching hair or a headdress (Figs. 6.31, 5.35b). Some decorative motifs are shared between clay and marble figurines. For instance, the LN marble Asexual figurine LG.2058/54 (Fig. 6.32) painted in black and red depicts a motif also present in clay figurines from LN Dimini (Fig. 6.31): two crossed lines on the chest and two parallel lines in the torso. The same motif appears on the head of the acrolith figurine ML.KR.10 from FN Rachmani, which is also painted in the red-on-white style (Fig. 3.65). In contrast, a Female and a Probably Female figurines from Dimini present different painted motifs in red-on-white consisting of parallel lines combined with a possible chevron on the chest and on the back (KM.5262/1162, KM.5258/1159, Figs. 6.33, 6.26). The two variations in the representations of motifs may indicate different ages or gendered personae wearing particular clothing styles. Acrolith figurines possibly bore details on the marble heads which may also differentiate genders by variations in decoration.

However, the unpublished state of most figurines from Dimini prevents further considerations on this matter. An acrolith figurine from Tsangli has textile imprints on the clay surface ('unknown inv.no.', Fig. 6.34), suggesting that perhaps some acroliths may have been originally clothed. This may explain why acrolith figurines were left unbaked.



Figure 6.29. Figurine of 'unknown inv.no.' with painted linear decoration, LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: pl.27a).



Figure 6.30. Figurine KM.4990/894 with painted decoration, LN Dimini (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.220).



Figure 6.31. Figurine KM.5012/916 with painted decoration and holes on the head, LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: pl.26d).



Figure 6.32. Marble figurine LG.2058/54 with painted decoration, LN Dimini (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.214).



Figure 6.33. Female figurine KM.5262/1162 with painted decoration, LN Dimini (after Skafida 1992: pl.28a).

A paradigmatic case in which different body marks, clothing, coiffure and perhaps jewellery are depicted is represented by the figurines found inside the house model from MN/LN Platia Magoula Zarkou (Fig. 3.61-3.62). Six figurines are decorated with incisions, five corresponding to the adults of the family. The three Female figurines are depicted wearing a garment ending in a cylindrical or conical skirt with engraved parallel lines in the lower part that possibly represent the lower hem (Gallis 1985: 21). Other garment parts are denoted by parallel incisions in the arms, back, chest and neck, although the former might also represent jewellery. The hair is rendered by zigzag incisions in two females, while the head is not preserved in the other. The two Probably Male figurines have similar incised decoration on the neck and along the legs on the lower part of the figurine representing their garments. Their hair is rendered in the same way with zigzag lines. The Females wear the same dress type, and the Males wear their own, which means that clothing is gendered. Finally, the small figurine accompanying the smaller couple, possibly depicting a child or baby (see Chapter 4.6.1), is covered in impressed dots in the head and lower part of the body, maybe depicting part of their clothing.



Figure 6.34. Acrolith clay body with textile imprints, Tsangli (after Marangou 2009: pl.XIIIb-c)

6.4.4.3. Hair and headdress

Hair and headdress are rarely depicted in Neolithic figurines from Crete. At Knossos, hair is rendered by incisions on the front or back of the head of three figurines (60/253, 60/252, 2726, Figs. 3.2, 3.8, 6.35) and of a figurine from Ierapetra (AMH.249, Fig. 6.36a) – the later represented with zigzag lines. The headdress is rendered as plastic decoration in at least two figurines, AMH.249 from Ierapetra and AMH.3275 from Knossos (Figs. 6.36a-b). Both figurines may show similar headdress or coiffure elements on the top of their heads. Another figurine from Knossos (2726, Fig. 6.35) features two holes on the head, perhaps used to attach a movable headdress since the hair is already represented with vertical incised lines at the front and back of the head.

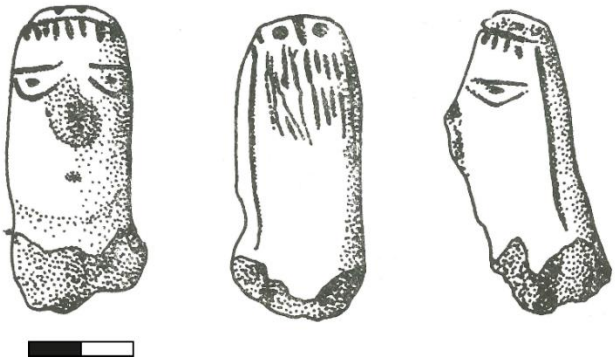

Figure 6.35. Figurine 2726 with two holes at the top of the head for the possible insertion of a headdress, Knossos (after Ucko 1968: fig.41).

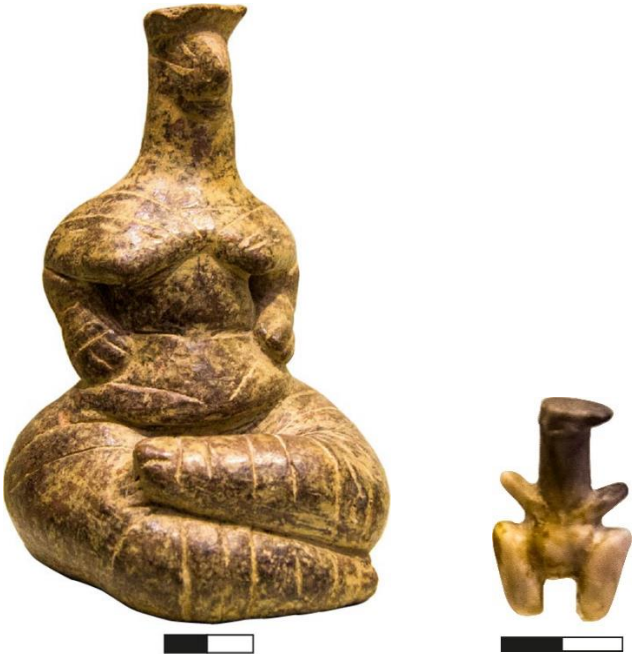

Figure 6.36a. (Left) Figurine AMH.249 with incisions and white paste filling possibly denoting clothing and plastic decoration showing a headdress, Ierapetra (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Steatopygous_Goddess,_clay,_Crete,_5300-3000_BC,_AMH,_144505.jpg; 26/07/2019). b. (Right) Partially burnt marble figurine AMH.3275 with a possibly similar headdress, Knossos (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_female_figurines,_5000%E2%80%933000_BC,_144520.jpg; 26/07/2019).

In Thessaly, hair and headdress are frequently modelled in figurines. Plastic decoration is the most common type of decoration used to model hair and headdress in Thessaly in 25 figurines of our assemblage. Thessalian Neolithic sculptors expressed an undeniable interest in depicting a wide variety of hair and headdresses in the EN-MN. Ten figurines from Sesklo have plastic depictions of the headdress, and most, eight, are of EN-MN dates. At Sesklo, most EN-MN figurines with a headdress present long hair (six), but another two depict some sort of a crown (EAM.5980, EAM.6071, Figs. 6.37-6.38). The coiffure may be quite elaborate, as the hair of the head fragment ML.TL.180 from Chara 1 (Fig. 6.39) is rendered with five applied clay strips incised both horizontally and vertically, falling from a central parting at the crown to chin level. Especially elaborate headdresses denoting long hair appear in the sites of the central plain of Thessaly: four in Zappeio 2 and five in Chara 1. The hairstyle was perhaps a way of expressing individual traits on figurines, together with facial features. For example, at Zappeio 2, two heads with plastic headdresses, ML.THE.1122 and ML.KR.206 have red painting on the cheeks and inside the incisions of the tresses (Figs. 6.40-6.41). The coiffure is always rendered in the same way with applied clay strips falling from a central crown generally partitioned with an incision. The clay strips are then incised or impressed to create a realistic and individualised hair rendering. The heads' construction is similar for all these figurines: oval face applied on a cylindrical neck, applied coffee-bean eyes and beak-like nose, sometimes with the modelling of the mouth (e.g., ML.THE.1034, ML.THE.1058, Figs. 6.42-6.43). Considering the similarities of hairstyle on EN-MN figurines from Sesklo, Tsangli and Tsani, with those of Chara 1, Zappeio 2 and Sitochoro 1, we can assume an EN-MN date for those figurines.



Figure 6.37. Figurine EAM.5980, MN Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.37,1)

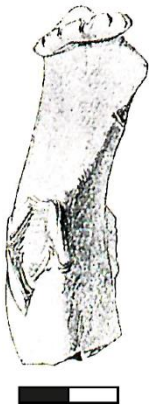

Figure 6.38. Figurine EAM.6071, Neolithic Sesklo (after Tsountas 1908: fig.34,5)



Figure 6.39. Figurine ML.TL.180 with plastic modelling of the hair, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.15)



Figure 6.40. Figurine ML.THE.1122 with plastic modelling of the hair, Zappeio 2 or 3. Traces of red paint on the cheeks (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.12).



Figure 6.41. Figurine ML.KR.206 with plastic modelling of the hair, red painting on right cheek and on the tresses, Zappeio 2 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.17)



Figure 6.42. Figurine ML.THE.1034 with plastic modelling of the hair, Zappeio 2 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.21).



Figure 6.43. Figurine ML.THE.1058 with plastic modelling of the hair, Chara 1 (after Gallis and Orphanidis 1996: fig.20).

However, applying long hair to the above examples was not the only stylistic expression of coiffure. A characteristic element in the construction of the head of EN-MN figurines from Thessaly is the modelling of a cylinder or conical shape at the top (e.g., Fig. 6.44). The top of the head is probably not a continuation of the neck but rather indicates how the hair was tied, perhaps representing a bun.



Figure 6.44. Head and neck fragments with 'unknown inv.no.', EN Sesklo (after Theocharis 1977: fig.100c; 1975b: fig.222).

Coiffure on Neolithic figurines from Thessaly is depicted in three ways. The first style described earlier is found on EN-MN figurines from central Thessaly and Sesklo and is what could be called 'conventional' hair, which consists of rendering hair by simply applying clay pellets or strips and modelling them to a natural representation; similarly, hair could also be depicted by incision either of parallel lines or slanting and zigzag lines at the back of the neck. This style appeared at Neolithic Knossos and in the MN/LN figurines from the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model. The second style of depicting hair or coiffure was the cylindrical or conical headdress protruding from the back of the head in EN-MN phases (Fig. 6.44). The diversity in hair/headdress depiction perhaps had meanings related to identity, age, gender or status in EN-MN phases. However, their occurrence in our assemblage is too small to allow us to interpret more accurately the differences in our selected case studies. Finally, a third style possibly involved the attachment of perishable materials to the head to denote either hair or headdress, as on three figurines from Dimini (KM.5012/916 and 'unknown inv.no.'; Figs. 6.31, 5.35b, Tsountas 1908: fig.226), Rachmani (ML.KR.31, Fig. 5.36) or Neolithic Knossos (2726, Fig. 6.35), if these holes were not meant for hanging the figurine.

6.4.4.4. Jewellery, accessories and objects added in clay

Jewellery was rarely represented in the figurines of the assemblage from Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. At Knossos, two incisions on the left arm of the LN clay Female

figurine 1938.660 perhaps represent a bracelet (Fig. 6.5). Similarly, the incisions on the chest of a figurine of unknown inv.no. from Knossos (Fig. 6.25, centre) may also be interpreted as a possible necklace. However, those are the only possible examples from Neolithic Crete. In Thessaly, the representation of jewellery in figurines is also rare. However, the archaeological evidence for Neolithic ornaments in the sites analysed is numerous and include complex ornaments, such as pierced stone, clay or bone beads, necklaces, shell bracelets, clay and stone studs and 'ear studs', some of them found together with figurines (see Chapter 3). The LN Female figurine M.2770 from Tsangli is a clear example of incisions depicting a necklace on its chest (Fig. 6.45). Perhaps KM.5012/916 from LN Dimini also represents jewellery painted around its neck at the front and back (Fig. 6.31). Another possible representation of a necklace are the incisions on the neck of figurine 6069 (Fig. 4.40) if it is not a beard. The four adult figurines from the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model have incisions along the neck. The Females have two parallel incisions, while the Probably Males have four, which could perhaps denote jewellery or otherwise be part of the dress (Figs. 3.61-3.62).



Figure 6.45. Female figurine M.2770 with incised decoration on the chest and neck, LN Tsangli (after Hourmouziadis 1973: fig.101).

Plastic modelling is used to form various objects attached to figurines or handled by them. At MN Tsangli, two figurines were found depicting individuals who are bent forwards and seem to be embracing a round and long object (Fig. 3.59). These figurines were found in a structured deposit in the MN House T at Tsangli with another four figurines and a wide range of finds (see Chapter 3.4.2.2); considering the context, the scene may represent an offering.

Other artefacts in the hands of figurines were also plastically modelled, as with some figurines from the central plain of Thessaly found on Zappeio 2, Chara 1 and Sitochoro 1. The Double-Sex figurine ML.THE.644 'sitting on a stool' holds a semilunar artefact on its right hand on top of its right leg. The object is partially broken, but the scar of its original form is still visible on the clay (Fig. 4.35). Figurine ML.THE.1070 from Chara 1 'sitting on a stool' wears a similar artefact on the right hand (Fig. 5.38). The Male figurine ML.THE.689 from Sitochoro 1 (Fig. 5.51) holds a semilunar object in his right hand with similar characteristics as those from Chara 1 and Zappeio 2. These objects seem to represent an everyday life artefact and are reminiscent of a sickle; this is especially clear in figurine ML.THE.689 (Fig. 5.51). Sickle blades have been found in the Aegean archaeological record, for instance, at the Macedonian Neolithic site of Makriyalos (Skourtopoulou 1999: 123) and in Thessaly, at least at Dimini and Sesklo (Souvatzi 2008: 132). In iconography, an exceptional comparison may be drawn with the so-called 'Sickle God' from the site of Szegvár-Tűzköves (Hungary) of the LN Tisza culture (late 5th to mid-4th millennium BC), which represents a seated figurine holding a sickle over its right shoulder with its right hand (Fig. 6.46). The association of sickle blades with Male and Double-sex figurines perhaps indicates a relationship between this object and male identities and status.



Figure 6.46. Figurine from Szegvár-Tűzköves of a seated individual holding a sickle (after Borić 2019: fig.49.6a).

6.5. Decoration and painting in pottery and clay figurines

The Neolithic Aegean figures have been traditionally treated as a separate category of material culture by scholars, which differs from other categories of artefacts such as pottery. As such, the relationship of decoration and colour between pottery and figurines has been largely neglected, particularly as regards Neolithic Crete. Talalay (1993: 33) has pointed out the similarity between pottery and figurines at Franchthi cave, which led her to suggest a degree of organisation and control over the production process from obtaining the raw material, the firing methods and style. A knowledge of pottery making was probably needed to model clay figurines since both require the use of similar techniques and decorations.

One of the problems of comparing decoration between figurines and pottery vessels lies in the scarcity of contextualised material (i.e., material with known stratigraphical

associations). At Knossos, EN pottery (Strata IX-VIII) was characterised by monochrome wares and a scarcity of decorative motifs. The surface is burnished or polished, and incised decoration is almost absent (Tomkins 2007b: 21). In the EN-MN, few examples of clay figurines bear any decoration, making it difficult to compare them with pottery material. In LN I (Strata VIA-V), incised decoration is common in ceramic vessels. However, there is also a series of new incised motifs without filling: diagonal lines, cross-hatching, ladder, chevrons and 'barbed wire', which will dominate the incised repertoire in LN II (Tomkins 2007b: 27-30). LN I saw the appearance for the first time of the chevron motif on figurines 59/138 and 59/170 (Fig. 6.25), although in the latter accompanied by incised dots and other incised lines on the arms and traces of red and white paint. LN II (Strata IV-IIIB) pottery is dominated by incised decoration with a great variety of decorative motifs: 'barbed wire', 'herringbone', tree, rows of chevrons, diagonal lines, zigzag lines (single, double, triple), hatched-lozenges and, less frequently, the vertical ladder. Other decoration is rare and restricted to triangles, bands and the 'chessboard' motif. However, a new type of dotted decoration without incised lines bordering it appears in this period (Tomkins 2007b: 30-32). The decoration present in the figurines that are stratified seems to partially match that of pottery: rows of dots without bordering incisions (59/102, 59/169, Figs. 3.21, 3.32), hatched-lozenges (59/169, Fig. 3.32), incised diagonal parallel lines crossed with parallel lines (59/44, Fig. 3.17) with white or red paste filling in some incisions. Some figurines with unsecure dates from Knossos may belong to this period since their decoration seems to match that of the pottery vessels: e.g., figurine 1938.662 (Fig. 6.20) with dotted decoration without bordering incised lines, figurine 1938.661 (Fig. 6.24) with incised triangles, hatched-lozenges and a double lozenge, figurine 1938.660 (Fig. 6.5) with a hatched-lozenge at the belly, white paste filling and red painting, and figurine 2719 (6.17b) with three diagonal incisions at the back running from the top right shoulder to the bottom left with white paste filling. LN incisions on pottery and figurines were frequently filled with white and red paste (Evans 1964: 210, Furness 1953).



Figure 6.47. Ceramic vessel with incised diagonal lines matching decoration of some LN figurines, LN Knossos (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_pottery_from_Knossos,_4500-3000_BC,_AMH,_144488.jpg; 16/04/2021)

In Thessaly, the similarities between pottery decoration and figurines are closer for painted motifs than any other decoration type. Incised decoration is scarce in figurines. In contrast, red-on-white and white-on-red painted pottery styles are widely attested in figurines and shared across the same periods and even archaeological contexts.

Nine figurines were decorated in the red-on-white pottery style (Table 6.4). The decorative patterns are linear and geometric, reminiscent of the linear style of the MN pottery only in the use of the line and not in the arrangement of the motifs on the surface of the figurine (Hourmouziadis 1973: 100). Similarly, numerous figurines from MN and LN phases at Tsangli, particularly in Str.III-IV, are characterised by the ceramic red-on-white style (Wace and Thompson 1912), corresponding with decorated pottery of the same levels. In Str.III (MN), five figurines were decorated in red-on-white (M.2765, M.2759c, M.2751; Wace and Thompson 1912: figs.75a, 75c-75d), including two fragments of anthropomorphic vases in the same decorative style. The latter are a

phallus-shaped figure, possibly part of a vase attachment, and a hollow foot (Wace and Thompson 1912: figs.76j-k). Two other figurines in red-on-white style were found in Str.IV (MN) ('unknown inv.no.', Wace and Thompson 1912: figs.72, 77d), one of them in House T, where complete vessels in the same decoration style were found. At Tsani Magoula, a figurine is decorated in white-on-red pottery style. In Str.IC (MN), a figurine was decorated in this style and placed in a structured deposit together with complete bell-shaped mugs decorated in the same style (Wace and Thompson 1912: figs.91c, 86a-b). The anthropomorphic vases found in Str.II (MN) (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.91b) – consisting of a hollow foot and a very small leg and a hollow figurine – further emphasise the link between figurines and pottery.

At Rachmani, a figurine found in Str.I (MN) is also painted on the red-on-white ware style (Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.26m). The same sharing of painted decoration between pottery and figurines continues in Str.III when the heads of acrolith figurines were painted red and brown-on-light in the pottery style of the vases found in the same FN deposit in House Q. Acroliths and marble figurines were mostly painted on red colour and only occasionally black or brown.

At Dimini, clay figurines are decorated in the typical Dimini Ware style (brown-on-buff) (Souvatzi 2008: 221). Eight figurines from Dimini in our assemblage have painted decoration in brown-on-buff style. The decorative style and designs on the decorated figurines strongly recall those on pottery. Furthermore, the heads of the more naturalistic figurines are almost identical to the plastic or painted heads occurring on the fruit-stands and deep bowls: for instance, the painted deep bowl (brown-on-buff) from Dimini with double handles with painted human or animal faces and designs probably imitating textile patterns (Fig. 6.48). Similar handles of pottery vessels, like NAMA.5933, depict human faces similar to those on figurines (Fig. 6.49). Eleven spindle-whorls have incised patterns identical to those found on the incised pots (Malakasioti 1982). Also at Dimini, several pottery vessels have been found to depict human faces or bodies (Tsountas 1908: pl.23) that are decorated following the same linear patterns shared with pottery and figurines.



Figure 6.48. Pottery vessel with painted decoration and anthropomorphic head-handles, Dimini (after Souvatzi 2012: fig.4).



Figure 6.49. Vessel handles NAMA.5933 with anthropomorphic heads, LN Dimini (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Neolithic_clay_figurine,_NAMA_5933,_191117.jpg; 13/08/2020)

Talalay (1993: 35) mentions that MN, LN and FN figurines at Franchthi often shared attributes with local pottery of the same period, including clay fabric, surface treatment and colour. She also states that figurines and pottery share the same decorative patterns and designs (Talalay 1993: 35). This link between pottery and figurine decoration may show that ceramic vessels were conceived as representing the human form, which may explain the presence in other regions of Neolithic Greece and

the Balkans of pottery vessels with breasts, human faces, feet and arms (Bersani 2019; Naumov 2008). This sharing of motifs between pottery, figurines and anthropomorphic vessels appears at Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Dimini or Sesklo, indicating a close symbolic meaning that links pottery with the human form. Figurines from different regions of Neolithic Greece have been considered to depict elaborately decorated garments (Sarri 2018: 168-170). Some of the decoration on these figures also shows similarities with the MN and LN pottery decoration. Not all the patterns on the pottery of the Greek Neolithic were inspired by woven artefacts. However, some, especially those that are symmetrical and have repetitive designs, seem to have a textile origin, especially in the MN-LN. Linear patterns are sometimes arranged in areas of the vessel or the figurines while at others cover the entire surface (Sarri 2018: 165). Equally, figurines showing elaborate design patterns that match those in pottery might represent textile patterns or woven prototypes (Elster 1992; Gimbutas 1986; Nikolaidou 2007; Sarri 2018; Marangou 2020).

There may be depictions of fabric and clothing on figurines in the Aegean Neolithic, but there are no finds of preserved textiles to compare. Archaeological evidence for textile production includes textile tools such as spindle whorls, clay shuttles, needles, and possibly stamp-seals; textile imprints on pottery and figurines; and possible textile patterns in pottery and figurines representing clothing. The widely shared repetition of specific patterns between figurines representing clothed individuals and pottery across different sites in Neolithic Greece and the Balkans may be evidence that textiles were represented on both. One of these patterns may be the lozenge which appears on MN pottery vessels and figurines from Thessaly and Crete in figurines that are perhaps of LN date (e.g., 1938.661, Fig. 6.24). The symmetrical lozenge decoration is also typical of the painted decoration of MN Urfinis ware from the Peloponnese (e.g., no.2134, Fig. 6.50). The study of weaving patterns in pottery (Sarri 2018) has recognised possible weaving and tailoring techniques present in the vessel decoration such as band weaving, connecting double-stitched seam and faggot bundle insertion.

In Thessaly, Neolithic garments were not made of large pieces of fabric, but of small pieces well-fitted to the body with features like seams, sleeves, necklines (represented by chevrons), aprons, belts or fringes (Sarri 2018). Stripes and angle patterns are

noticeable in clothed figurines, especially on the legs, e.g., the *kourotrophos* EAM.P5937 from LN Sesklo (Fig. 4.36) or AE.730 (Fig. 6.16) from MN Knossos which may show either parts of garments or trousers. Both figurines are also represented with spiral and concentric circles in the belly area which suggests similar clothing. Spirals and a concentric circle intertwined with other geometric decoration also appears in the LN brown-on-buff ware of Dimini, similar to that of the *kourotrophos* figurine. For instance, in the Dimini bowl NAMA.5920 (Fig. 6.51). The cross-shaped or 'X' shown in the figurines from LN Dimini KM.4990/894 and LG.2058/54 (Figs. 6.30, 6.32) and perhaps in the acrolith head LM.KR.10 (Fig. 3.65) represents straps arranged like an 'X' on the torso, an accessory probably made of fabric or leather to keep the clothes tight to the body. Crossed stripes, perhaps of fabric, are also represented in the previously illustrated Dimini pot (Fig. 6.48) and in NAMA.5922 (Fig. 6.52), also from LN Dimini.



Figure 6.50. Painted Urfirnis cup inv.no.2134, MN Asea, Arcadia (after Papathanassopoulos 1996a: fig.136).



Figure 6.51. Decorated bowl with bands, stepped patterns and spirals, NAMA.5920, LN Dimini (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c8/Ancient_Greece_Neolithic_Pottery_-_28171028800.jpg; 4/1/2022)



Figure 6.52. Pottery vessel NAMA.5922, LN Dimini (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f1/Clay_vase_with_polychrome_decoration%2C_Dimini%2C_Magnesia%2C_Late_or_Final_Neolithic_%285300-3300_BC%29.jpg; 4/01/2022)

Sarri and Mokdad (2019) carried out an interesting experimental project that replicated Neolithic textiles following patterns known from the fine decorated wares from several sites of the Neolithic Aegean. Sarri and Mokdad (2019: 89) considered that the patterns in pottery show either an inspiration from possible textile patterns or exact transfers of textile patterns onto the ceramic surfaces. Their experimental work consisted of creating small-sized tapestry samples (20x20cm) trying different Neolithic pottery decorative patterns. The results showed that it was technically easy to create such patterns copying the designs seen on pottery in woven prototypes.

At Knossos, Neolithic attire seems to be made of a piece or pieces of cloth wrapped around the body. This might be the case of figurines showing linear patterns across the back or front (Figs. 6.16-6.17, 6.24-6.25).

The decorative patterns on both pottery and figurines were especially ornate during the LN, perhaps reflecting an expansion of ornamentation in the garments of the same period. Most ornate Neolithic figurines are Female. Therefore, the dress was conceivably gendered. The display of such ornate and colourful patterns like on the LN *Kourotrophos* figurine from Sesklo is striking, perhaps reflecting the status of the individual. Similarly, although rendered with incised decoration, the elaborate dress represented in the figurines from the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model may be a display of status, also showing different garments for Male, Females and children. Figurines, thus, may have represented transient notions of gender, age, status, group affiliation, and family prestige but also acted as learning tools about ideals of beauty and propriety.

6.6. Conclusions

The different approaches to the study of colour from a symbolic, linguistic or materialistic view show the importance of studying both the colour of the materials selected to make figurines and the applied colours that imbued them with further meanings. However, the symbolic meaning of the colours is culturally specific, and we cannot in every instance interpret them as related to bodily fluids. The range of colours

in the materials used is limited to the availability of marble, shell, bone, steatite or slate to achieve mainly white, and less frequently, green and black. Figurines in clay had a surface treatment of mostly dark burnish hues in Crete, and light clay surface colour in Thessaly. This perhaps conditioned the colours applied to the surface, although in both regions are mainly red, red-on-white, and white. However, in Thessaly, a wider range of colours is applied to figurines, especially brown and pink.

The archaeological evidence of specific contexts from MN House T at Tsangli and FN House Q at Rachmani suggests relationships in the structured deposits of figurines with ochre powder, bone tools and flint blades. These associations perhaps suggest their use in rituals that implied bodily modification: tattooing/scarification or body painting and shaving. This evidence may be compared to the Cycladic funerary body modification rituals, where similar tools, figurines and powdered pigments have been found. Fernvale or Naggu tattooing kits also show a parallel to the possible use of bone points, which appear commonly in all the Neolithic sites in the present study. Also, the figurine 1905.1136a.1 from MN Knossos, which was found together with ochre powder, may have implied the painting of the figurine and perhaps that of the human body. However, given the lack of more contextual information, the assumption is that the ochre was used to decorate the figurine.

Further evidence of tattooing/scarification and body painting may be found in figurines. Tattooing or scarification may be shown in very few examples of figurines from Crete and Thessaly with incisions or impressions. Two figurines' heads, one from EN Sesklo, and another from MN Tsani Magoula, may represent scarification or mourning lacerations considering the facial incisions on both figurines. Analogous marks are painted in red on the cheeks of figurines from Zappeio 2 and Sitochoro 1 and in brown on the adult figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou, perhaps indicating a similar meaning. Other incised or impressed body markings in figurines from Crete and Thessaly, which occupy specific body areas, especially on the shoulders or arms, perhaps indicate scarification or decoration of parts of the dress. Body painting is evidenced in figurines AE.731 and 1927-3260 from Knossos, where no other incised or impressed decoration accompanies the pigments.

Complex patterns of painted, incised and impressed decorative motifs, which cover most of the bodies of figurines from Neolithic Knossos or Thessaly, may be interpreted as representations of garments. This decoration increases significantly on Female figurines during the LN in Crete and Thessaly. The richly ornated examples from LN Knossos include Female figurines with impressed dots, incised lines and geometric motifs with white and red-on-white paste filling (e.g., 1938.662 and 1934,0115.3). In Thessaly, red-on-white is used primarily on EN-MN decoration, while LN decorations at Dimini and Sesklo are in the brown-on-buff style, with linear motifs covering most of the figurines' bodies.

Other decorative elements visible in the figurines are especially the hair and headdress. This aspect perhaps had little importance in Crete considering the scarcity of such representations but was a significant part of figurine decoration in EN-MN Thessaly. The types of hair or headdress represented in EN-MN Thessaly were elaborated long hair or the hair tied in a sort of bun. In the MN/LN, hair is schematically represented with incisions or painting in the Platia Magoula Zarkou figurines and Dimini. However, at Dimini, a few figurines have holes on their heads that could be used to attach perishable materials indicating headdress or hair. Jewellery is depicted in a few figurines, evidenced by incised necklaces, bracelets, sewn-on beads, or adornments attached to clothing. Other objects of everyday life are also represented in figurines, like the possible depiction of sickle blades held by a Male figurine from Sitochoro 1 and two Double-sex figurines from Zappeio 2 and Chara 1, and an offering being carried by two MN figurines from Tsangli.

Motifs shared between figurines and pottery vessels seem to be influenced by weaving patterns that link both clay objects in a similar symbolic conception of the human bodies. Such a link strengthens with the appearance of anthropomorphic vessels and pots which depict human faces or add parts of the human body such as feet or heads in the same decoration styles of the figurines from Thessaly. Overall, figurines show Neolithic aesthetics in clothing and body ornamentation, possibly playing a role in Neolithic communities related to social roles, status, notions of gender, age and identity.

CHAPTER VII. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF NEOLITHIC FIGURINES FROM CRETE AND THESSALY

7.1. Introduction

This thesis has focused on answering research questions related to understanding the uses and meanings of figurines by looking at the contexts of deposition, age, sex, gender and decoration. For this purpose, a new methodology was developed to sex and age figurines. Archaeological approaches from the literature were also applied to identify structured deposition (Richards and Thomas 1984) and analyse the presence of ritualised activities in Neolithic figurine contexts more rigorously.

This chapter will summarise the results of the analysis in chapters 3-6, linking figurine context, age, sex, gender and decoration in Neolithic Crete and the selected case studies from Neolithic Thessaly. The summary of key findings will provide the basis for the following section with the possible interpretations and suggestions regarding figurine uses and meaning in the Neolithic of Crete and Thessaly, according to the parameters analysed in the thesis. Finally, the last sections consider the implications and limitations of the results and avenues for future work.

7.2. Summary of key findings

7.2.1. Discussion of case studies

7.2.1.1. Crete

Context

At Neolithic Knossos, most figurines are contextually associated with stone and bone tools, beads and other clay objects such as spindle whorls, clay shuttles, miniature vessels and in two contexts (MN and LN II) with bowls with a missing base. No

apparent difference in the deposited objects is noticeable with respect to the figurine's sex. The objects accompanying Female, Probably Female, Asexual, Male and Probably Male figurines are similar. An odd deposit is MN Pit A, where two fragmented marble figurines (Asexual and Male) were found with a whole bowl, remains of in situ burning and, on the overlying deposit, bowls with their base missing. A bowl with its base missing was also found in the LN II deposit in A14 together with a Female, two Probably Females, a Probably Male, and three N.I. figurines with only the base remaining, two animal figurines, a miniature pot and a stone axe. In chapter 3.4.1.1, my contextual analysis showed that figurines were not mere discards and were probably subject to structured deposition, possibly as a result of ritualised events. At Neolithic Phaistos, the figurines found in securely dated FN contexts were mainly associated with miniature vases. Bowls and other vessels, triton and *pectunculus* shells were also found with figurines. At least two of the contexts with figurines were possibly structured deposits. All four figurines found in the Neolithic Gerani cave appeared in MN levels with abundant pottery, bone and stone tools, including obsidian blades. At Spelaio Pelekiton, the phallic figurine from LN levels appeared with bone tools, spindle-whorls, obsidian and flint blades, animal bones and shells. The lack of contextual information does not allow for a more precise interpretation of their use. Both caves were possibly used as seasonal habitations of pastoralists or for stabling animals and ritual purposes.

Age

Studying the context of figurines from Knossos, primarily from J. Evans' excavations (1964), has allowed me to identify age differences at Knossos. I showed that the association of larger sexed figurines (Male or Female) with smaller Asexual and figurines with ambiguous sexual traits (Probably Female or Probably Male) represented differences in age-stages between adults, elderly, children, prepubescent and adolescents. My interpretation focused on specific contexts where groups of figurines appear together from the MN-LN II. I compared this sample to similar figurines lacking contextual information found at Neolithic Knossos. The low number of figurines found at other Cretan sites has not allowed an accurate analysis of age. Age differentiation in figurines suggests that identity was constructed based on age

categories and other factors such as gender, which is also supported by the differential treatment of children and adult burials in EN/FN Knossos. Child burials were found inside the houses, while adult bones were disarticulated and subject to secondary treatment.

Sex and gender

Chapter 5.2 shows that figurines' sex from Neolithic Crete is meaningfully correlated with manufacturing materials, chronology, site distribution, anatomical features, gesture, and posture. Although the percentage of Female and Asexual figurines is similar, my analysis showed that the materials used determined some of their features, such as the absence or presence of breasts, the standing, sitting, squatting or kneeling posture and the arm-positions. Most Female figurines were modelled in clay, while Asexual figurines were modelled both in clay and hard materials, the latter being slightly more numerous. The materials conditioned the sexual attributes depicted in figurines since breasts appear in clay figurines and sexual triangles and genitalia mostly in those made of hard materials.

Decoration and colour

Bodily decorations were examined in Chapter 6. My results indicate that small Female and Probably Female figurines from Knossos are decorated with impressions, mostly of red dots, perhaps depicting beads sewn to the dress. Impressed decoration perhaps denotes a dress characteristic of young girls or adolescents. Traces of red and red-on-while paint are also visible in other Female and Probably Female figurines with 'hands to the chest touching/covering their breasts' posture, perhaps showing similarly-aged or younger girls. Therefore, bodily decorations on Knossos figurines may depict a change in the Females' age status, perhaps entering the adolescence and adult life-stages or even representing ornate gowns used in special ceremonies. More rarely, decorations may also indicate tattooing/scarification or body painting. Colour and decoration are clearly gendered as they are mostly reserved for Female and Probably Female figurines, while only four Asexual figurines preserve traces of decoration.

7.2.1.2. Thessaly

Context

At Sesklo, contextual information is scarce. In 'Preceramic' levels, pits dug into the strata were found but the function and contents of these structures is uncertain, which perhaps included figurines, bone, stone stools, shells and ornaments. In EN levels, figurines have stratigraphical associations with pottery, bone, flint and obsidian tools, polished, grinding and pounding tools, 'ear studs' and beads. In the MN, figurines are found inside houses. For instance, in House 14 (Sesklo B), figurines were associated with stone slabs and complete vessels, a clay table, spindle whorls, polished and chipped stone tools, and clay 'sling-bullets' suggesting a structured deposit. MN House A had remains in each of the four floors, including figurines, pottery, clay and stone seals, spindle whorls, two painted basins, a painted clay table, and tools in different materials. Little is known of LN contexts with figurines. However, in the acropolis, pits filled with figurines, pottery including a whole painted bowl, carbonised cereals, stone axes and chisels, obsidian and flint blades, and seals again suggest structured deposits.

At Tsangli, contextual information for artefacts associated with figurines is lacking, except for MN House T. Six figurines, including two holding a rounded object, were found in a deposit in House T with grinding and polished stone tools, bone tools, spindle whorls, and 20 complete pottery vessels, one containing a quantity of red ochre. House T was destroyed by fire and the deposition may be contemporaneous with the destruction as Wace and Thompson (1912) mention that at least one of the vases was burnt and changed colour. At LN Tsani Magoula, a figurine was found in a possible structured deposit from level 1C, together with complete bell-shaped mugs. At Platia Magoula Zarkou, a house model with nine figurines was found in a pit dug in the destruction layer of a MN house before the floor of the new LN house was built. The pit was dug either to mark the end of the MN house or as part of the foundations of the LN house. At the early LN cemetery, another figurine was found with a white flint placed above a group of three cremation burials in pots.

At late LN Dimini, figurines were found inside and outside houses or structures, along the walls of the enclosures and near the entrances. Most deposits of figurines are

associated with hearths and, less frequently, are found near the walls of Houses and Buildings, perhaps suggesting an original placement on benches. The figurines deposited near hearths are contextually associated with spindle-whorls, stone beads, polished and chipped stone tools, bone tools, Spondylus shell ornaments, 'pit-stands', whole pottery vessels including Dimini Bowls and miniature Dimini Bowls and, frequently, remains of ashes, charred food or animal bones. This evidence suggests that these contexts are structured deposits possibly associated with offerings and ritual consumption. The figurines not associated with features appear along the long walls or in the corners inside houses, or outside in the courtyard area, at times near the entrances of Buildings or Houses.

At FN Rachmani, at least seven figurines were found in House Q (Str.III). The figurines were possibly found in a pit, a structured deposit, together with a group of complete vases, a variety of stone tools including axes, a mace, mortars, grinding tools, polishers, quern-stones, and flint knives, antler hammers, bone points and scrapers, a fragment of worked antler and an ox horn, 19 spindle whorls, lumps of terracotta, and fragments of 'pit-stands'. Inside the vases, there were food remains and a lump of red ochre. The figurines from Zappeio 2, Chara 1, Sitochoro 1 and Nees Karyes lack contextual information but show characteristics of EN-MN examples from Thessaly.

Age

Figurines showing possible age differences were found at Platia Magoula Zarkou, Sesklo, Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Zappeio 2, Sitochoro 1 and Chara 1. The house model from Platia Magoula Zarkou is exceptional as the nine figurines display different age-stages. The figurines depict two larger adults, perhaps the oldest couple of the household or grandparents, a smaller couple of young adults with two possible children next to them, and three other figurines possibly representing the children of one couple, an adolescent or young girl and two juvenile or children. This conclusion was reached by comparing size, sex, gender, decoration, postures and gestures of the figurines (see Chapter 4.6).

At EN Sesklo, most figurines depict adult women with emphasised sexual traits. An Asexual figurine perhaps represented a child. In the EN-MN phases, Male figurines are

represented in the 'sitting on a stool' posture with paunches and sagging chests, suggesting they represent older adults or elderly individuals. Similarly, the figurine from Zappeio 2 with breasts and a phallus initially considered to be Double-sex may be reinterpreted as an individual of old age, considering the wrinkles in the stomach area and that the small breasts may represent a sagging chest. In the LN phase, the *kourotrophos* figurine clearly depicts a mother holding a child, the latter modelled as Asexual. Furthermore, the LN figurine EAM.5952 depicts pregnancy. At Sitochoro 1, three Female figurines present pubic hair, a sign of sexual maturity. Lastly, the small Asexual figurine EAM.5962 perhaps represented a child.

At MN Tsangli, three figurines found in the structured deposit from House Q belong to the same scene, two hold a rounded object and a third is slightly smaller, perhaps indicating age differentiation. Figurine M41 may be an elderly woman, considering the wide body with protruding belly and fat folds. At MN Tsani Magoula, sexual traits on two figurines indicated a Female and a Male adult; the first has a vulva and pubic hair and the latter a phallus. Finally, at Chara 1, two Female figures with paunches and wide bodies similar to M41 from Tsangli may show older adult women. Three other examples show figurines with the 'arms to the chest' gesture, perhaps covering/touching their breasts, with sexual traits ambiguously depicted or absent, and may depict young or prepubescent girls.

Burials in Thessaly also show age differentiation. At LN Dimini, eight child burials were found inside Houses. At the Platia Magoula Zarkou cemetery, infants, juveniles or young adults and adults were found in the cremation burials. At FN Rachmani, two subadult burials were found inside pots. The information on burials, although scarce, suggests a differentiation between the treatment of adults and children, supported by the evidence from Knossos and other Neolithic sites from Macedonia and the Peloponnese.

Sex and gender

Akin to Crete, in Thessaly, the percentage of Asexual figurines is similar to Females. However, the percentages vary across the sites. Sesklo and Tsangli have a higher number of Female figurines than Asexual, while at Dimini and Rachmani, Asexual

figurines are predominant. This may be explained by the phases the sites were occupied. In the EN-MN, most figurines are Female, but in the LN-FN, there are more acroliths and Asexual schematic figurines than Females. Another difference compared to Crete is the presence of Double-sex figurines which always depict individuals sitting on a stool with a phallus and breasts. Although Double-sex figurines lack contextual data, they may be assigned to the EN-MN phases considering that most Male figurines sitting on a stool were found in those phases. As in Crete, the materials employed are related to the sex depicted since Female, Probably Female, Male, Probably Male and Double-sex figurines are predominantly made of clay. Asexual are also made of clay but they predominate in hard materials and acroliths as detailed depictions are more difficult to carve. As in Crete, arm-positions and postures are clearly gendered which is even more evident in Thessaly.

Decoration and colour

Painting is common in the LN-FN phases at Dimini, Tsangli and Rachmani, appearing in figurines of clay and hard materials. The most complex patterns of painted decorations probably represent attire and woven patterns, but paint was also used to depict facial details and bodily decoration, especially on marble figurines. Incised decoration is more common in EN-MN figurines from Sesklo, Tsangli and Chara 1, and in MN/LN Platia Magoula Zarkou. Plastic decoration is used to render hair and headdress mainly in the EN-MN phases. The elaborate headdresses from Thessaly perhaps had meanings related to age, gender or identity differentiations. Decoration in Thessaly is also gendered. Most ornamentations focus on Female bodies, while Asexual figurines appear to be decorated in higher numbers than in Crete.

In Thessaly, figurines document possible scarification or tattooing, clothing, headdress and coiffure and, less frequently, jewellery and other attached objects. Complex painted decoration in clay figurines correlates to similar patterns in pottery examples, perhaps suggesting a relationship of both materials with woven prototypes.

7.3. Interpretations of figurines

7.3.1. Ritual practices involving figurines: fragmentation, foundation deposits, ritualised food consumption, rites of abandonment and rites of passage

Symbolic and ritual practices in the Greek Neolithic have traditionally been considered by relying on an *a priori* designation of some artefacts as ritual, particularly figurines (Gimbutas 1974; 1982; 1989a-b; Renfrew 1985) or 'pit-stands' (Tsountas 1908). However, objects and contexts acquire their social and symbolic meaning in relation to each other. As Bradley (2005: 119-120) points out, ritual is a form of action which occurs in a variety of settings and scales, including the domestic sphere which permeates everyday life. Indeed, rituals and symbolism in Neolithic Greece are found in everyday contexts of houses, settlements, caves and burials. The occurrence of ritualised events in the domestic sphere in contexts from Neolithic Greece has sometimes been neglected. For instance, the excavators of Dikili Tash I (Treuil and Tisoni 2000: 214-215) argue that a structured deposit inside a house contained a normal 'utilitarian' set of items to be expected from a house. The domestic context, however, does not negate the interpretation of an assemblage as ritual. On the contrary, it emphasises the importance of the household as the social and ritual unit. As we have seen from the figurines' contexts in different Neolithic sites from Crete and Thessaly, they repeatedly appear with everyday 'utilitarian' objects, for instance, spindle-whorls, polished and chipped stone tools, storage and cooking pots as in ritual contexts at sites such as Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Last 2006: 201-204) or Vinča (Vasič 1936: 50-52).

Symbolic and ritual practices involving figurines are evidenced in both Neolithic Crete and Thessaly, and include deliberate fragmentation, structured deposits, possible rites of abandonment and closure, offerings and foundation deposits, ritual feasting and food consumption, rites of passage and a link with the realm of the ancestors.

Deliberate fragmentation

The practice of fragmentation involves deliberate acts of breakage, exchange and deposition of material items (Chapman 2000b: 6-9). It is unclear whether the figurines

from Neolithic Thessaly and Crete were deliberately fragmented. In several instances, we find possible signs of fragmentation of figurines in ritual contexts. For instance, two figurines from MN Pit A at Knossos, associated with a bowl, have the head and a leg missing (see Chapter 3.4.1.1). The overlying deposits (C26-C27) had even more definite evidence of deliberate fragmentation with bowls missing their base. The practice of depositing bowls without their base also appears in later contexts associated with figurines. In the LN II context A14 at Knossos, seven figurines were found, five with only the base and part of the waist remaining together with a miniature pot and a bowl with its base missing in what seems to be a fragmentation pattern involving the figurines and the bowl. At FN Phaistos, figurine 115 (see Appendix 1) has marks of cuts and strokes in the broken area, perhaps also suggesting deliberate fragmentation.

At Thessaly the evidence for deliberate fragmentation is less clear. Three figurines' heads found together in an EN context at Sesklo, or the several fragments of only legs and feet found at Platia Magoula Zarkou, Tsangli, Tsani and Rachmani are more speculative examples given the lack of further contextual information. However, at LN Dimini, the structured deposits inside houses contained figurines and broken objects (see Table 3.7), including crushed pots smashed in place in H23 (phase H18), the inclusion of potsherds in H2, and large parts of coarse vessels in S1. Other objects subject to deliberate fragmentation at Dimini are the *Spondylus* shell rings with nine instances of re-fits (Chapman and Gaydarska 2007: 160-168; Chapman *et al.* 2011). However, data is not available to understand if the figurines placed in structured deposits at Dimini were subject to deliberate fragmentation.

Foundation deposits

Another line of evidence involving ritual behaviour relates to the building of houses. Foundation deposits consist of a variety of whole or broken archaeological materials, child or animal burials and figurines associated with structural parts of buildings or with layers previous to the construction of buildings. A common feature of Neolithic foundation deposits is their association with infants or children buried in small pits under the houses. The burial of neonates and young children were events probably preceding house foundation as is attested in Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Whitehouse and Hodder 2010: 129). At Knossos, an IN child burial pit was cut into the bedrock, and a

cluster of six burials including a foetus, neonates and children appeared below the foundation of 'House E' in Str.IX (EN) (See Chapter 4.7). The deposition of six children before the building of EN 'House E' implies the involvement of a larger group than the inhabitants of the house. The inhabitants were probably a small group to produce a cluster of children, a foetus and neonate burials at the time of the house foundation. The deposition near a hearth of a large pot containing the bones of a child in the LN/FN House B perhaps also functioned as a foundation offering. At LN Dimini, six child burials were uncovered under five houses. Following Chapman (2000a: 68), the ideas underlying foundation deposits of child burials are the link between people at the end of their life-cycle, regeneration and fertility to structures and the cohesion of social relationships in newly created households at the start of their life-cycle. In tell sites, children buried in pits as foundation deposits symbolised the reincorporation ancestors-to-be in the ancestral deposits of the tell (Chapman 2000a: 68). Foundation deposits may signify asking the ancestors for permission to build a house, especially if the previous house was intentionally destroyed. Another possible example of a foundation offering is the deposit in a pit of the house model with figurines at Platia Magoula Zarkou preceding the construction of a LN house. However, considering that the house model was deposited in the destruction layer of a MN house, it is more plausible that its deposition is associated with the destruction events.

At LN Dimini, other than the child burials, at least four foundation deposits were found under the floors or embedded in the walls, facilities or post holes of the houses or structures and consist of a range of materials such as dog bones or complete artefacts. The figurines found next to the enclosures, especially the deposits near the west entrance to the inner enclosure, between the walls of the first and second enclosures, between the third and fourth enclosures and especially the accumulation in the western entrance, outside the fourth enclosure in the northern side and north-eastern side (Fig. 3.64), were perhaps foundation deposits. However, the evidence not as conclusive as the figurines were not embedded in the walls or exactly under them but accumulated especially near entrances or next to the walls. Strikingly, these deposits comprise a wider variety of figurine types than the deposits inside houses, including

acroliths, clay schematic ambiguous or asexual, asexual anchor and cross-shape, and animal figurines (for typologies of Dimini figurines, see Skafida 1992).

Rites of abandonment

Two different rites of abandonment may be evidenced involving the deposition of figurines: a) the cleaning and emptying of houses for subsequent habitation and b) the final abandonment and intentional burning of houses. The presence of empty and clean houses in Neolithic contexts occurs, for instance, throughout the successive LN house phases at Knossos excavated by J. Evans (1964) and may suggest that the items were removed and deliberately deposited elsewhere, perhaps as a symbolic sealing after the building fell out of use (Souvatzi 2008: 201). Evidence for the scouring clean of floors and features removing items at abandonment has been documented, for instance, at Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Twiss *et al.* 2008: 52). Similarly, leaving large numbers of objects in specific houses from EN Sesklo and LN Dimini might also be deliberate. For the Neolithic of southeast Europe, Chapman (1999; 2000a: 105-106, 224-225) has proposed that concentrations of objects on floors exceeding the amount normally expected for a house might represent deliberate and careful placing by more than one household as a commemorative practice of the last act in the life of a house. Thus, the high number of archaeological finds abandoned in houses may represent deliberate depositions symbolising the household or the community rather than the belongings of a single house. This practice might also include the final deliberate burning of the house. In many settlements, the burning of houses occurred at the end of their use or prior to abandonment, while in others, episodes of rebuilding took place afterwards.

The practice of house burning has been documented archaeologically, for instance, at Neolithic Çatalhöyük (Cessford and Near 2005; Twiss *et al.* 2008; Tringham 2013) in Neolithic and Copper Age Central and Eastern Europe (Tringham and Krstic 1990; Tringham *et al.* 1992; Russell 1994; Stevanović 1997; Chapman 1999) and in ethnographic contexts (LaMotta and Schiffer 1999: 23-24; Tringham 1995). Tringham *et al.* (1992) found in the excavations of the Vinča site of Opovo (*c.* 4700-4500 *cal.* BC) that most of the houses were burnt separately and the fire reached high temperatures over 1000°C, probably implying the use of fuel, leading them to suggest deliberate

burning. Stefanović (1997) continued the study of burnt houses at Opovo and established a set of criteria to identify deliberate burning. Chapman (1999: 116-119) summarised and further developed the criteria to differentiate deliberate from accidental burning: 1) the firing of the perimeter walls of a house, 2) presence of 'high spots' with high temperatures in a particular area of the house, 3) no traces of burnt areas between houses indicating separate firings, 4) high firing temperatures that exceed those of accidental fires, 5) different daub burnt temperature for each separate house; 6) the adding of extra fuel to reach the total combustion of the house; 7) the formality in the spatial layout of the house interior that does not match with the expected domestic occupation debris, e.g., the structured positioning of objects in fixed fittings, 8) ritual deposits inside the house that were not typical occupation debris, e.g. placement of burials, 9) a large quantity of objects in the burnt structure exceeding the quantity of a normal household. Chapman (1999: 123) drew special attention to the importance of the assemblages deposited prior to the destruction of the house, which included complete objects and fragments, representing a type of structured deposit.

In Neolithic Greece, the destruction of houses by fire has been widely documented. However, it is not clear whether these fires were intentional or accidental. Fire destruction has been documented at EN houses 'E' (Str.IX) and 'D' (Str.VIII) at Knossos. The firing of the houses is evidenced by the 'hard-fire' of their mudbrick walls and traces of clay roof with impressions. The cleaning of the floors which were devoid of any materials before the destructions (Evans 1964: 144-149) and the deposition of a whole pot on House E before its destruction likely points towards deliberate burning (Tomkins 2007a: 190). At EN-MN Sesklo, many buildings were destroyed by fire at the end of both periods. However, these fires covered most of the settlement. EN Sesklo was subsequently reinhabited, but the fire destruction at the end of the MN was followed by the abandonment of the site for about 500 years before its reoccupation in the LN. The site's abandonment may point to hostile destruction of the settlement rather than an accident considering it was not reinhabited afterwards.

At Platia Magoula Zarkou, there is also evidence of the destruction by fire of the MN house where the house model with nine figurines was deposited. This deposition is

possibly related to an intentional destruction of the house, linking the ancestors with perhaps its real inhabitants and the building of a new household afterwards. An intensive fire also destroyed house T from late MN Tsangli. This is attested by the remains of carbonised wood in the post-holes, the many fragments of sun-dried bricks baked hard, the clay platform turned to brick due to the fire and other traces of burnt material and fire action (Wace and Thompson 1912: 116). The deposition of a large quantity of objects in the burnt structure (see Chapter 3.4.2.2) included figurines, a large number of whole pots of which one contained a quantity of red ochre, stone and bone tools, and spindle whorls which clearly exceed the habitation debris of a normal household. This deposit may be interpreted as deliberately placed before the destruction by fire, which may suggest its intentionality following Chapman's criteria 8 and 9. Two of the figurines are carrying an object, possibly symbolising the act of offering, which suggests that the structured deposit represented a ritual offering. Another example is the FN House Q at Rachmani, which was destroyed by fire. The structured deposit in House Q was placed in the north end, while the rest of the house was empty of finds. The finds were deposited prior to the destruction of the house and included figurines, complete vessels and miniature pots with food still inside, ochre, tools in different materials and pit-stands (see Chapter 3.4.2.6). This context suggests the intentional placing of an offering deposit followed by the deliberate firing of the house. The presence of the pigments probably suggests their use in the ritual events that led to the structured deposition, perhaps symbolising blood (see Chapter 6.2).

At MN Tsani Magoula, Wace and Thompson (1912: 135) mention evidence in each successive layer of the excavation of burning that possibly destroyed the wattle-and-daub houses. However, the lack of contextual data prevents us from establishing its accidental or intentional nature. At LN Dimini, the evidence shows many houses with extensive evidence of burning, including an abundance of superstructure debris and a high number of material remains (see Chapter 3.4.2.5). The burning of houses was not followed by the abandonment or violent destruction of the site, but instead, burnt houses seem to be isolated episodes (Souvatzi 2008: 145). An example is H23, the entire house was destroyed by fire with a large amount of organic material also burnt (Souvatzi 2008: 152). The structured deposit placed near the hearth in H23 before its

destruction (Phase H17) contained fire traces, a figurine and several other artefacts (see Table 3.7). More materials, including a figurine, were found on a flat stone slab in the same phase. More examples of fire traces in Dimini houses and structures with structured deposits that included figurines were found in H2, S1, and H13 (Table 3.7). The structured deposits in H23 and H13 also contained charred or carbonised organic material. Considering that the houses destroyed by fire at Dimini were not reinhabited afterwards and the quantity of objects deposited as possible offerings, it is possible that they were deliberately burnt before their abandonment. The finding of a child's bones in H9 mixed with fallen superstructure material also suggests its ritual deposition before the abandonment of the structure (Souvatzi 2008: 145).

Other sites with evidence of fire destruction are Makri and Dikili Tash in Macedonia (Andreou *et al*. 2001: 314) and three phases from Neolithic Servia (Mould and Wardle 2000). At Palioskala, in Thessaly, a structure had a deposit of three anthropomorphic figurines including an acrolith, three zoomorphic clay figurines, two spindle-whorls, 15 obsidian and flint tools and debitage, four grinding stones, ground stone tools and an abundance of storage pottery suggesting a structured deposit. Noteworthy, much of the material was found broken and displaced, covered by burnt clay pieces from the roof with wood impressions, and by rubble from the fallen superstructure of the stone walls (Toufexis 2006). The quantity and heavy fragmentation of the material and the burning of the building may point to a symbolic ritual closure involving structured deposition and perhaps deliberate burning (Souvatzi 2008: 196).

Tringham *et al.* (1992: 382) first suggested that deliberately burnt houses might have symbolically marked the end of a domestic cycle with the death of the household head. Chapman (1999: 121) supports this view and considers that the assemblages found were deposited during a dramatic rite of passage, perhaps to commemorate the death of a community leader. At sites such as Neolithic Çatalhöyük, there is evidence of burning houses after placing a dead body (Whitehouse and Hodder 2010). However, no such evidence is available at the mentioned sites of Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. The assemblages deposited in House T at Tsangli, House Q at Rachmani, the house model at Platia Magoula Zarkou, and several houses at LN Dimini and the preceding or subsequent fire destructions may represent a similar rite of passage following the

death of an important individual in the household and symbolically marking the end of its life cycle. Only in the case of building H9 at LN Dimini is there similar evidence of the placement of a child's bones before the house's abandonment. As regards the deliberate burning of houses, Chapman (1999: 122) suggests that the deposition of large quantities of materials must have been an important offering to be accepted by the ancestors, a destruction event that was probably rare considering the effort involved. The deliberate deposition of artefacts may commemorate or sanctify new periods of ownership or rebuilding and are used to bring about the transition (Hughes 2014: 29).

Other burning practices involve deposits in pits. For instance, at Knossos, the deposition of the figurines and bowls in the MN Pit A was followed by burning, evidenced by the presence of hearths and ashes. Fire marked the end of the pit's use life. Chapman (2000a: 83) has analysed Balkan Neolithic and Copper Age deposits in pits with burnt daub, ash and charcoal, interpreting them as transformative acts of rupture signifying a breaking with the old and the sanctification of the new. Pit-digging is also linked with the ancestors as it involves the removal of past cultural material and the filling of the pit with new material placed in a deposit connected to the past, an 'exchange with the ancestors' (Chapman 1999: 122). If this is the case, then the pit with the deposition of the house model with figurines at Platia Magoula Zarkou may have served to connect the new house with the ancestors, to show them respect, ask for permission and secure the future of the inhabitants in the house to-be-built.

Feasting, ritualised food consumption and deposition

Feasting refers to ceremonial commensality (Halstead 2004: 152) or a 'public ritual activity centred around the communal consumption of food and drink' (Dietler 1991: 67). Feasting may have played a significant role in Neolithic societies in Greece. Pit A from MN Knossos (C27; Str.VIII) contained a fill of ash and earth in its deepest layer together with a whole bowl and two marble figurines (see Chapter 3.4.1.1). The adjacent Pit B contained another whole bowl and 'a large number' of animal bones (Evans 1964: 39.2; Tomkins 2007a: 189). These contexts post-date the EN House D and pre-date the construction of MN House C (Tomkins 2007a: 189). However, the excavation exposure does not clarify whether the pits were situated in an open area or

inside a structure, perhaps House C. The overlying deposits (contexts C25a and C26) contained at least five vessels with their bases missing. If both houses were deliberately burnt as suggested in the previous section, perhaps Pits A and B may be related to the destruction of House D and the construction of the new MN House C. Their contents perhaps suggest an event of feasting, ritualised food consumption or drinking considering the large number of bones and broken vessels. The ritual ended with the 'killing' of the objects by deliberate fragmentation and deposition. The heads and legs of the figurines were perhaps kept as mementoes or deposited elsewhere, while the bases of the vessels were possibly used for drinking or food consumption. Unfortunately, the bone remains have not yet been studied. At the LN site of Makriyalos in Macedonia, there is also evidence of larger-scale feasting in Pit 212 with the deposition of figurines. The pit yielded the remains of hundreds of domestic animals and several hundred large size bowls and small cups, some with zoomorphic handles, suggesting the symbolic and social importance of meat in commensality (Halstead 2012: 30). The ceramic assemblage suggests that large bowls were used to collectively present or share the food/drinks, while small vessels were used to serve and consume it in more individual acts of consumption (Pappa *et al.* 2004: 24).

At Knossos, the MN deposit in A20 (Str.VII) also included the deposition of two bowls with a figurine fragment. In LN I C23 (Str.VI) a figurine fragment was found with a bowl and a cup. These contexts suggest that earlier deposits of figurines at Knossos were associated with the consumption of food or drinks, though on a much lesser scale than pits A and B.

At MN Tsangli, the structured deposit in House T contained a large number of materials, including figurines and 20 complete vessels, again suggesting a context of ritualised drinking or food consumption before the destruction of the structure. Similarly, the structured deposit in FN House Q at Rachmani contained whole vessels that preserved food remains, including figs, peas, and lentils, a little of wheat and one oyster shell, and a lump of red ochre. These food remains were part of ritual consumption and ritual offerings. The offerings may be intended to appease the ancestors of the house if my previous interpretation is correct, and these houses were burnt after the death of an important individual within the household. A MN deposit

from Tsani Magoula also contained two complete bell-shaped mugs together with a figurine, perhaps suggesting a similar drinking or food consumption context.

At LN Dimini, the contexts with deposition of food associated with figurines are H23 (Phase H18), H13, H22 and consisted of grains, in two instances carbonised. Numerous contexts also preserved whole vessels or remains of their impressions on the floor (H23, S1, H15, H22) and 'pit-stands' associated with ashes (H23 and H11), all in contexts with figurines. The presence of carbonised grains may represent offerings. Halstead suggests (2012: 27) the main mode of subsistence in Neolithic Greece relied on grain, cereals and pulses, which would have made them valuable offerings. However, some grain may result from storage burnt with the houses and associated hearths. The deposition of whole vessels and pit-stands suggests ritualised food consumption.

At FN Phaistos, the perhaps deliberately-fragmented figurine in Room 28 was found near miniature vessels and a bowl (see Chapter 3.4.1.2). Similarly, figurine F1864 was found alongside miniature vases and other vessels. Miniature vessels are not uncommon in structured deposits in our case studies. At Knossos, miniature pots were associated with figurines in Pit A, LN II context A14, FN B7, and with figurine 2715 of unknown date. At Rachmani, miniature vessels and figurines were found in the deposit of House Q and context S1 at LN Dimini. The function of miniature vessels is unsure, but in all the contexts mentioned, they are associated with other larger vessels, which suggests that they were part of the pottery assemblage. Possibly food was shared from a communal vessel using smaller or miniature pots for its consumption (Tomkins 2007a: 185). Miniature pots are also attested in association with burial contexts. For instance, in the EN cremation burials from Souphli magoula, the pyres had remains of one or more pots smashed on them at the moment of burning, indicating ritual fragmentation. The deposition on them of a miniature pot (Gallis 1979: 72) suggests that these pots were associated with particular rituals and beliefs and may have a votive function. Similarly, at Platia Magoula Zarkou, the large pots containing cremated human remains were also accompanied by smaller pots (Gallis 1979: 73), perhaps as part of offerings of food or drink to the dead.

The evidence for food offerings in house destruction contexts is not restricted to Neolithic Thessaly. The Gulmeniţa levels of Harsova and Bordusani tells (Romania) had remains of 'large quantities of domestic residues' found above the destruction levels of unburnt houses and included pottery, animal bones, shells, fishbones and large quantities of fish scales (Chapman 1999: 120). Burnt houses, for instance, at Opovo, had food remains comprising animal bone (Russell 1994: 179). In the Neolithic and Copper Age Balkans, there is evidence of the deposition in pits of animal bones with other associated objects at the Criş site of Gradinile-Izlaz in Oltenia, at the Starčevo site of Batka-Perlez and at Anza II, the possible remains of feasting (Chapman 2000a: 70).

Food offerings, consumption and deposition of food and containers together with other objects, including figurines, are associated with abandonment ritual events at least at Rachmani House Q, Tsangli House T, Dimini deposit H23 (Phase 17) and perhaps in Pits A and B at MN Knossos. If my interpretation concerning the deliberate burning of houses is correct at those sites, then these deposits may be part of the ritual events that included the offering of food and perhaps also its consumption, and the deposition of other objects. Chapman (1999: 121) suggests that the deposits in deliberately burnt houses may be regarded as 'mortuary sets' in some circumstances, even if no body is found in the house. The evidence suggests that practices of commensality and group offering went beyond the household level, for instance, with the deposition of 20 whole vessels at MN House T in Tsangli, or the large number of bones and whole vessels in Pits A and B from MN Knossos, which emphasised equality and collective cohesion (Halstead 2012: 21). Few deposits have been found in our case studies that seem to result from feasts or ritual food consumption, suggesting that these events occurred infrequently. The care taken in the closure of houses with the deposition of large quantities of material culture suggests an elaborate ritual with intense focus, an exchange of sufficient significance to be accepted by the ancestors (Chapman 1999: 122), which were perhaps thought to reside in the houses. As Hamilakis suggests that for the BA Aegean (1998: 117), eating and drinking in a mortuary context have great mnemonic power as 'the emotions and sensory stimulations generated by food are combined with those generated by the embodied

experience of death'. In this context, feasting may also signify 'killing' the memory of the social relations with the deceased (Hamilakis 1998: 117). The consumption of objects or their 'killing' may be part of erasing that memory (Hamilakis 1998: 117, 122). Hamilakis (1998: 126) also interprets that a big funerary feast would perpetuate the associated memories related to the generosity of the host or the emotional experience, increasing social competition.

Rites of passage

What would be the role of figurines in the contexts of house foundation, abandonment, feasting, commensality and ritual offering? In the deposit in House T at Tsangli, the three complete figurines are Asexual and very schematic and were found with fragments of two figurines. At Rachmani in House Q, most figurines are Asexual: at least five acroliths and a 'two-headed' figurine; a fragment of a leg is N.I. At Dimini in H11, H13, H22, and S1, according to Skafida (1992: fig.1; Fig. 3.64), the figurines are Asexual schematic and acroliths, and more varied in H25. There are only three animal figurines (in H23 and H13). The figurines in these deposits may be used in funeral rites of passage but probably not as substitutes for the dead in the case of the intentional burning of houses, as the number of figurines in these deposits tends to be too high for a single burial. Instead, they could represent the ancestors who lived in the house or previous houses, the family (e.g., the figurines in the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model), members of the community assisting the ritual, or perhaps were simple votive offerings. The following section will explore the possible relationship of these figurine types with the ancestors.

The deposits from Neolithic Knossos differ from those of Thessaly. LN I-II structured depositions were made in the same area over successive periods of time, suggesting recurring events involving the deposition of figurines with other archaeological materials. Furthermore, these deposits included the presence of small Asexual figurines and larger Females, small Female figurines or Probably Females, which I interpreted (see Chapter 4.5) as representing age-stages from children to adults. Children were perhaps understood as gender-neutral at an early age and attained a differentiated gender at a later stage in childhood. Age identities may have been expressed in figurines with physiologically differentiated sexual attributes from

ambiguity in early ages to a clearer representation of sex in adulthood. Postures, gestures, ornaments and decoration indicated age and gender. Items of costume may be considered as potential media for life-cycle transitions and a medium for materialising properly socialised embodied persons (Joyce 2000: 474) and may potentially be used as age indicators. The use of figurines depicting life-cycle stages in transition rituals has been suggested in anthropological and historical contexts, especially female-focused transition rituals in Mesoamerica (Lesure 1997; Serra Puche and Durand 1998; Guillén 1999; Joyce 2000). In her study of Chalcatzingo figurines of the Cantera phase (700-500 BC), Guillén (1993: 213) suggests that figurines depicted stages of the life course in which females predominated, followed by children and a small percentage of males. Female figurines depict age-stages based on physiology, clothing and adornment, from prepubescent girls, to young and adults but old women are absent. The objects contextually associated with them consist mainly of stone tools, pottery vessels and animal figurines (Guillén 1993: 217). In Knossos contexts, especially in LN I-II deposits, figurines frequently appear together with polished and chipped stone tools and, from LN II also with bone tools, spindle whorls, animal figurines and pottery (see Tables 3.5-3.6). As I have shown (see Chapter 4.5), figurines from Neolithic Knossos and especially those of LN I-II represented age-stages, particularly of women's bodies. Therefore, figurines may have been used in rituals associated with age-grades or rites of passage associated with puberty, marriage, childcare, and other transitions in women's life. If life-cycle rituals were mostly focused on female transitions, it may explain why in LN I-II phases, most figurines are Females, followed by Asexual, the latter possibly representing children and individuals of young age. Rituals associated with life-transition events include the exchange of food and feasting (Joyce 2000: 477; Sahlins 1972: 187), perhaps explaining the deposition of pottery in Knossos contexts, e.g., the deposition of a bowl with a missing base and a miniature pot in LN II context A14 or the MN deposits in pits A and B. The decorations on Female bodies from Neolithic Knossos (see Chapter 6.4.4.2) suggest especially ornate costumes perhaps worn in special ceremonies or rites of passage which varied according to gender and age.

7.3.2. Interpretations of Asexual and Double-sex figurines

How should we interpret figurines from Neolithic Greece lacking indication of sex? Do they represent another gender, i.e., a third gender, children or a general idea of a human being? Or do they really represent a binary male or female gender? The evidence regarding size, arm-position, posture, anatomical details and decoration of Asexual figurines reflects an intentional differentiation from female-related categories. I have previously interpreted Asexual figurines from Neolithic Knossos, including those made of clay and some in hard materials (especially in LN I-II deposits) as representations of young individuals, perhaps children (see Chapter 4.5). Most Asexual figurines at Knossos seem to be representations of younger age-stages. However, the statistical analysis of sex in figurines from Neolithic Crete presented in Chapter 5.2 suggests that sexual attributes are depicted differently according to raw material. Female clay figurines in the assemblage mostly show breasts except for two clay figurines depicting female genitalia. Conversely, in hard materials, figurines have indications of the genitalia and sexual triangle rather than breasts, suggesting that other figurines of unidentified sex and with incisions in the groin area may similarly represent females.

In contrast, Asexual figurines from Neolithic Thessaly may be interpreted in different ways. In Chapter 4.6, I interpreted Asexual figurines from Thessaly of small size with absence or ambiguity of sexual traits as individuals of young age and children. However, other figurines, especially those from the LN-FN phases at Sesklo, Dimini or Rachmani, are schematic and lack sexual attributes, showing only a general anthropomorphic body shape. Perhaps some of these figurines were intentionally portrayed ungendered. Figurines that lack sexual attributes and other general details such as facial or even anatomical details might represent the idea of a generic human being. Sex and gender in LN-FN Asexual figurines were perhaps signalled by other attributes such as body shape or even head shape, painting, attached hair or headdress if the perforated holes were not meant for attachment, or by adding other objects, perhaps of perishable materials. For instance, an acrolith body from Tsangli shows textile imprints (Fig. 6.34). Therefore, some acrolith figurines may have been

covered with textiles or clothes (Marangou 2009: 89-90) which could serve to gender their bodies. An exceptional example of figurines that acquired their gender by adding objects are the figurines from FN Aegina-Kolonna (Greece), in which asexual figurines were turned into males by adding removable pointed caps in clay, that were only modelled permanently in definite male figurines (Alram-Stern 2016). However, some figurines, especially those featureless examples in clay, marble and acroliths from LN and FN Thessaly, were possibly intended to be devoid of sexual traits and details. An ethnographic example of figurines with a possible similar meaning are Nkisi figurines from Western Equatorial Africa that were also designed without sexual attributes and adopted different sex or genders depending on the occasion of their use (Greub 1988: 38-50). As such, sex would be specific to the context of use, and the figurine users may have known the intended gender as part of the process.

Another possibility is that some of these figurines were part of ancestor rituals, a context where gender representation might have been unimportant. Historical parallels from Mesoamerican imagery (Marcus 1998) suggest that the depiction of details in figurines was intentionally avoided as ancestors were considered to have lost their personality and, therefore, their particular individual attributes. Marcus (1998: 17-18) mentions, using ethnographic parallels from Asia, Africa and Formative Oaxaca, that figurines used in ancestor rituals are represented faceless and by no means individualised or unique. 'Ancestors do not behave in death as they did in life, and they do not maintain their individual traits' (Marcus 1998: 18). This shows that the lack of sexual attributes in a figurine is not always due to gender, i.e., sexless figurines do not necessarily represent a third gender or belong to one of the binary genders. Rather, specific Asexual figurines may have been intended to keep their generic human form and ambiguity, which could change depending on their specific use on a certain occasion. Continuing with the example from ancestor rituals, Newell (1979: 20) suggests that the generic forms of figurines used in such rituals did not matter as the precise ancestor was called upon by their name, imbuing the object with the spirit of the ancestor. This example may help us understand that the generic human form in some of the figurines from Crete and especially from Thessaly was intentionally ambiguous. Their gender was changeable or perhaps non-existent depending on the

ritual or occasion of their use, without the need to physically change the figurine. The representation of ancestors may also explain why figurines from House T at Tsangli, House Q at Rachmani and deposits in burnt houses at Dimini mostly comprise Asexual schematic figurines in clay, hard materials or acroliths. At those sites with evidence of deliberately burnt houses, ancestor rituals may have taken place, especially if, as suggested, the destruction was associated with the death of an important individual of the household as a rite of passage of the dead. Chapman (1999: 120) considers that house burning perhaps represents 'an exchange between the living and the ancestors in which the living destroy their material culture in return for continued good relations with the ancestral relations of the household or the whole community'. Further evidence that figurines were related to the ancestors in Neolithic Greece is found in burials, for instance, the Asexual clay figurine found at the LN Platia Magoula Zarkou cemetery and the schematic clay figurines from the FN Kephala cemetery on the island of Kea. The significance of the ancestors and associated rituals may be reinforced at tell settlements, which 'are based upon the principle of living where one's ancestors have lived' (Chapman 1999: 122). The tendency in Thessaly from the LN phases in sites such as Sesklo, Dimini, or Rachmani towards more schematic Asexual figurines in stone, clay and acroliths may relate to the increasing significance of the ancestors considering the evidence of building and rebuilding houses at tell settlements.

Double-sex figurines are scarce in Neolithic Thessaly (2% of the assemblage). The fact that these figurines share with Male figurines the sitting on a stool posture and in two examples also the 'hands to the thighs' gesture may signify that they embodied a similar concept to Males. The breasts of double-sex figurines from Thessaly are represented with small applied clay pellets and then flattened, except for ML.THE.68 from Nees Karyes (Sarliki) (Fig. 5.41), which is the only one with modelled rounded breasts. This way of depicting breasts is unlike the anatomical modelling observed in Females which are shaped in pendulous or rounded form. Overall, except for the figurine from Sarliki, in most Double-sex figurines, breasts are less emphasised, i.e., much less voluminous than the breasts on clearly Females from EN-MN phases in our assemblage. Unfortunately, we lack precise contextual comparisons from the same period and site, although at Zappeio and Chara 1, examples of Female figurines show

more emphasised breasts, e.g., figurines ML.THE.1795 (Ophanidis and Gallis 2011: fig.555) and ML.THE.1203 (Fig. 5.40). This may be interpreted in different ways. First, some Double-sex figurines were perhaps intended to represent Males, some of them showing signs of old age (see Chapter 4.6.2). However, figurine ML.THE.1070 from Chara 1 is shown with the right hand touching the right breast, a posture that is only used for Female and Probably Female figurines. Similarly, the figurine from Sarliki has more emphasised breasts. Therefore, we may hypothesise that some of these figurines subsume traits of both genders.

In Greece, other known figurines that perhaps represent both sexes have been found in Neolithic Makri, near Alexandroupolis in Thrace (Efstratiou and Kallindzi 1994). The excavators argue that two figurines are hermaphrodites (Efstratiou and Kallindzi 1994: figs.31-32). However, even if it is a slightly ambiguous representation, one of the figurines (Efstratiou and Kallindzi 1994: fig.31) shows clear male genitalia and tiny breasts that, along with the body shape, suggest a Male figure rather than a hermaphrodite. On the other hand, the other figurine (Efstratiou and Kallindzi 1994: fig.32) shows a clear representation of breasts more emphasised than the previous figurine and with exaggerated buttocks indicative of a Female body. The bulge that has been interpreted as a penis may be interpreted as a clothing accessory and thus, this figurine would be Female.

Unfortunately, no other figurines depicting sexual attributes of Male and Female sexes have been found in other regions of Neolithic Greece, including the islands, the Peloponnese or Macedonia. However, in the Balkans, ambiguous figurines argued to represent both sexes are known from the Karanovo II, Early Trypolje (Movsha 1969: 17), Vinča (Gimbutas 1982: fig.111), Cucuteni B2 (Marangou 2009: pl.XIa) and Cycladic cultures (Marangou 1992: 189). In Cyprus, Chalcolithic picrolite and cruciform figurines have been regarded as ambiguous given the mixture of phallic, elongated head and neck and female sexual attributes (Knapp and Meskell 1997) (Fig. 7.1). While the white limestone figurine from Sotira–Arkolies may be perceived as depicting both male and female genitalia, depending on the perspective from which we observe it (Swiny and Swiny 1983: 56-59) (Fig. 7.2), other picrolite figurines simply represent an elongated neck with no phallic resemblance.

Double-sex figurines could be interpreted as depicting intersex individuals. EN-MN imagery in Thessaly, the phases when Double-sex figurines were most probably made, depicts individuals showing particular details such as ageing traits in Male figurines, or even deformities including hunchbacks (e.g., ML.THE.1074; Fig. 4.34) and perhaps individuals with the Down Syndrome (Hourmouziadis 1973: pl.87a). However, considering that a very small percentage of the population is intersex, and these figurines appear to cluster around particular sites in the central plain of Thessaly, it is not plausible that all of them depict intersex individuals. A different interpretation might be exemplified by Mircea Eliade's (1964: 257) conception of shamans as gender-crossers who are often believed to be dual-sexed or sexless, given their supernatural qualities. Thus, the scarcity of this type of figurine could mean that they represent special social or gender roles in the communities in which they have been found, such as the shamans described by Eliade. In certain societies with more flexible attitudes towards sex and gender, gender-crossers may have special abilities such as being a shaman, abilities to curse or heal, or head of a household (Hamilton 2000: 23). This may explain the scarcity of Double-sex figurines and their concentration in a restricted area of neighbouring sites. At the same time, the Male figurines found at EN-MN sites from Thessaly that are represented in a similar way may play a similar role to Double-sex figurines but were assigned a male gender role. Perhaps, as I argued in Chapter 4.6.2, figurines sitting on a stool may embody individuals of particularly high status. A parallel from coastal Chiapas (Lesure 1997) (1550-800 BC) shows that figurines of elders are depicted as fat and seated, emphasising their inactive role for work while their associated social role is as ritual practitioners. These figurines are usually males, although a few are female (Lesure 1997: 243). Chapman (2003: 39) suggests that at Neolithic and Copper Age tell sites, gerontocratic family leaders dominated ritual practices. In this context, age and gender were important in community status and organisation, and the enforcement of age-stage rituals was essential to maintain such divisions.

The Probably Male figurines found in the Platia Magoula Zarkou house model were represented schematically in the same posture with a four-legged body even though they were lying on the ground which means that the stool had become a symbol or a

concept. Likewise, the *kourotrophos* figurine from LN Sesklo was sitting on a stool, which probably signified the high status of this woman and her child. Some Double-sex figurines sitting on a stool may represent women with a position of high status or prestige or perhaps associated to a gender role assigned to males like ritual practitioners or head of a household.



Figure 7.1. Figurine interpreted by Knapp and Meskell (1997) as mixing phallic neck and female sexual traits, Lemba Lakkous, Cyprus (after http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/DA/DA.nsf/0/365DF92E4DAE38CEC22571A90035EFB3/$file/Lemba-Lakkous-Lady.jpg?OpenElement; 30/05/2019)

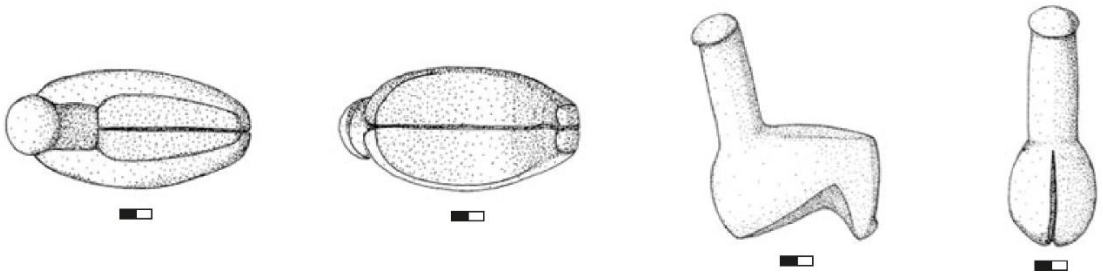

Figure 7.2. Neolithic figurine depicting male and female genitalia depending on the perspective, LN Sotira Arkolies, Cyprus (after Knapp and Meskell 1997: fig.2)

7.4. Implications in the study of Neolithic anthropomorphic figurines

The thesis results show the importance of the contextual approach to the study of figurines to understand the meanings and practices in which they were embedded. Using a methodology to identify structured deposition proved key to consider the ritual activities associated with figurines that included feasting, food consumption and drinking, house foundation and abandonment, rites of passage and deliberate fragmentation. Previous scholars such as Renfrew (1985), who have tried to establish a methodology to recognise ritual in Aegean Prehistory, have failed to acknowledge the difficulties of identifying ritual in the Neolithic when no special structures or buildings clearly dedicated to cult existed or are difficult to recognise. Instead, rituals occurred associated with everyday features in the households or outside in open-air deposits. My results build on existing evidence from ritual practices in the Neolithic and Copper Age Balkans, together with the evidence encountered in Neolithic Greece, particularly in Neolithic Thessaly. Both regions seemingly show close cultural similarities in the contexts of figurines and involved rituals.

My interpretations of figurines challenge assumptions that they depict gods or goddesses (Gimbutas 1974; 1982; 1989a-b), as they probably reflected real human bodies of Neolithic persons of different ages and genders. While previous scholarship has focused on the predominance of Female figurines in Neolithic Greece (Gimbutas 1982; Kokkinidou and Nikolaidou 1997; Mina 2008b), my results demonstrate that

there are similar percentages of Female and Asexual figurines. My results emphasise the importance of recognising Asexual and ambiguous categories (Probably Female/Probably Male) and have provided new insights into age and gender identities, and the possible meanings and uses of figurines. Relatively recent gender approaches to the study of figurines such as Knapp and Meskell (1997), Talalay (2000), Hamilton (2000) and Marangou (2009) have discussed the importance of gender fluidity and ambiguity in figurines. However, there was a lack of research and analysis of a large corpus of figurines that offered multifunctional interpretations of Asexual, ambiguously sexed and Double-sex figurines from an intersectional perspective that did not only contemplate gender.

The practical implications of my dissertation are the methodologies I have developed for the analysis of age, sex and gender. These methodologies included the analysis of previously overlooked aspects of the figurines such as size, gesture or posture. These methodologies were developed from the analysis of figurines in my case studies, but they are widely applicable and useful in other contexts and sites from Neolithic Greece that I did not analyse. The application of a methodology to recognise structured deposition first developed by Richards and Thomas (1984) has also proved useful for understanding Neolithic ritual deposits in the regions of Crete and Thessaly. A more widespread methodological recognition of structured deposition would greatly benefit future discussions of ritual practices at other Neolithic sites in Greece.

CHAPTER VIII. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has proposed innovative ways of studying anthropomorphic figurines, and applied them to offer new directions for understanding age, sex, gender and ritual practices in Neolithic societies of Greece, particularly in Crete and Thessaly.

My research has generated new perspectives building on the methodological and theoretical approaches developed for this study. Part of my analysis of the two corpora of figurines from Thessaly and Crete included the compilation of all contextual information available from their excavations, especially focusing on the data of associated objects and structures. This allowed me to find meaningful patterns of intentional and structured depositions of assemblages containing figurines in the archaeological record. For my analysis of age, it was necessary to develop a methodology that explained the different age-stages depicted in figurines through size, sexual development, gesture, posture and decoration. Similarly, my study of sex and gender required developing an enhanced methodology that considered wider categories of sex than previous studies, especially focusing on acknowledging ambiguous (Probably Female/Probably Male), Asexual and Double-sex categories, largely overlooked by previous interpretations. My methodology also considered parameters that included not only the sexual attributes of figurines but also their raw materials, postures and gestures, which had not been previously analysed. Once patterns emerged from the application of my methodology to the corpus of figurines, a step forward was testing those patterns in figurines initially classified as Non-Identifiable sex. Anthropomorphic figurines have traditionally been studied as a special category of artefacts devoid of relationships with their archaeological context and associated objects. My work revealed the importance of correlating and comparing the results from my figurine analysis with other types of available evidence, including archaeological and cultural contexts, artefacts deposited together with figurines and burial data. This allowed me to draw a more comprehensive picture of age, sex, gender, ritual practices, and social organisation in the prehistoric Aegean. These conscious choices have resulted in a critical review of earlier methodologies and approaches that divorced figurines from their context of use, and the study of gender

without considering age as a significant factor in shaping identities of prehistoric societies, particularly overlooked in figurine studies of Neolithic Greece.

Starting with the discussion of Neolithic figurines and their archaeological context, my intention was to move away from studies that considered figurines as isolated objects with inherent ritual meaning based on circular arguments (e.g., Gimbutas 1982). However, acknowledging the importance of contexts and associated artefacts found with figurines has proved useful for understanding intentional and structured deposits and the meanings of figurines in those assemblages. The significance of adopting a methodology to evaluate structured deposits by differentiating intentional from other deposits such as refuse or discards has been key to finding meaningful patterns of figurine deposition and use across different sites from Neolithic Greece. Although the contextual information is sparse from some Neolithic sites, I have been able to recognise structured deposits at the sites of Knossos, Phaistos, Sesklo, Tsangli, Tsani Magoula, Dimini and Rachmani. The caves of Gerani and Spelaio Pelekiton have only been published summarily, and further studies are needed to evaluate the nature and purpose of their occupation. However, perhaps it comprised seasonal animal stabling and ritual use, although domestic usage cannot be ruled out. In turn, identifying contexts of structured deposition has allowed me to interpret the ritual practices in which figurines were embedded, building on a methodological approach and not the mere preconception of figurines as ritual.

The study of age-stages in figurines revealed the importance of an intersectional approach that considers that sex and gender were not the only structuring principles in Neolithic societies. Age-differences were analysed for Neolithic Crete and Thessaly. The results identified age-stages starting from children, juveniles, prepubescent, young individuals and adolescents, adults and old age or elderly through the presence of different sizes, sex, gender, posture, gesture and decoration. This analysis, together with a contextual approach, revealed the deposition of small Asexual with larger Female, small Female, Probably Female and Probably Male figurines at LN I-II Knossos, which I have interpreted as representing different age-stages. In Thessaly, the identification of children was challenging given the lack of contextual information. However, the house model with nine figurines from Platia Magoula Zarkou is a definite

example of different age-stages from children to adults depicted in figurines, perhaps representing a family. The elderly is a category largely forgotten in age studies of the Prehistoric Aegean; they were identified in figurines with sagging breasts/chest, paunches and broad bodies and through the analysis of posture and gesture. This representation of elders as fat and seated, especially in the case of males, does not suggest activity and instead emphasises that their role in Neolithic society lay elsewhere, perhaps associated with a position of status or prestige in ritual practice.

The emphasis in my thesis was also on the recognition and discussion of other represented categories of sex and gender (Asexual, ambiguously sexed and Double-sex), for which a more in-depth study was needed for Neolithic Greece. As opposed to the overemphasised predominance of female representations, my study suggested that Asexual figurines are equally important in number, sharing similar percentages with Females in Crete and Thessaly. The results reveal that in Crete, Asexual figurines, especially those in clay, represented children and individuals of young age. In contrast, those modelled in hard materials may have been ungendered and others gendered with ambiguous incisions that perhaps conveyed sex. In Thessaly, the raw materials determine even more the sex represented, with most Asexual figurines in hard materials and acroliths and Females in clay. My analysis suggests that raw material selection was essential for sex depiction. The body comportment displaying gesture and posture in figurine bodies is also related to sex and gender, with postures like 'sitting on a stool' associated with Males or gestures like 'arms to the chest' linked with Females in Thessaly. My analysis of decoration and colour has produced similar results, associating ornamentation mostly with Female bodies. However, in Thessaly, there is a higher number of Asexual and Male figurines with painting than in Crete.

With this data I have suggested multifunctional possibilities for interpreting Asexual figurines: 1) child representations; 2) fluid depictions that may change gender according to the occasion of use (e.g., with perishable attachments or clothing); 3) ungendered beings (e.g., ancestors) or simple representations of a human shape. The interpretations I have put forward for Double-sex figurines suggest that specific examples may actually represent Males as their posture and gesture is shared in both figurines, or that this category represents individuals, perhaps females, playing a Male

gender role or a role associated with a third gender in the sites where those figurines were found. The possibility that Double-sex figurines depicted intersex individuals should not be excluded entirely, although it cannot explain all the examples.

Finally, my contextual analysis of structured deposits where figurines and other artefacts were found is a significant contribution to understanding their associated ritual practices in Neolithic communities. Comparing the archaeological data of Neolithic Thessaly and Crete with the Neolithic and Copper Age Balkans and the Near East, patterned correlations between the regions show that practices such as foundation deposits, deliberate fragmentation, house abandonment rituals (cleaning and deliberate burning) with ritual offering and deposition, and feasting, or ritual drinking and food consumption are shared. I have stressed the similarities between the Neolithic and Copper Age Balkans and the Thessalian cultural context, and they should be explored further in future works. However, Neolithic Crete shows examples of diversified practices that involved the deposition in successive events of figurines with other artefacts. I have suggested a relationship with rites of passage linked to life-cycle transitions.

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Appendix 1: Figurines from Neolithic Crete

N.	Inv.no./Bibliography	Date	Site	Context	Material	Height	Sex	Posture	Gesture	Decoration	Painting
1	60/250	EN	Knossos	AC.24a, Str. IX	Clay	2.54	Female	-	stumps downward projection	No	No
2	60/253	EN	Knossos	AC.22, Str. VIII	Clay	3.81	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
3	60/251	EN	Knossos	AC. 22, Str. VIII	Marble	6.4	NI	-	-	No	No
4	59/153	MN	Knossos	C27 Pit A, Str. VIII	Marble	2.54	Asexual	Squatting	-	No	No
5	59/160	MN	Knossos	C27 Pit A, Str. VIII	Marble	9.2	Male	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to the chest	No	No
6	60/252	MN	Knossos	A.20, Str. VII	Clay	2.8	NI	-	-	No	No
7	59/138	LN I	Knossos	C.23, Str. VI a	Clay	3.5	Female	-	-	Incisions	No
8	59/150	LN I	Knossos	A.14a, Str. V	Clay	-	NI	-	lateral stumps?	No	No
9	59/170	LN I	Knossos	A.14b, Str. V	Clay	3.81	NI	-	-	Incisions, painting	Red, white
10	60/174	LN I	Knossos	A.15a, Str. V	Marble	-	NI	-	-	No	No
11	L3273	LN I	Knossos	A.15a, Str. V	Slate	2.85	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
12	60/183	LN I	Knossos	A.15a, Str. V	Steatite	2.3	Asexual	Sitting	Triangular stumps	No	No
13	O431	LN I	Knossos	AC7, Str. V	Shell	3.3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
14	60/196	LN I	Knossos	AC7, Str. V	Clay	2.8	Female	Sitting	Rounded stumps	No	No
15	60/191	LN I	Knossos	A15c, Str. V	Steatite	2.3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps?	No	No
16	L3271	LN I	Knossos	A16, Str. V	Marble	5.8	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
17	59/44	LN II	Knossos	A9, Str. IV	Clay	6.6	Female	-	Arms to chest, under breasts	Incisions, painting	White
18	59/45	LN II	Knossos	A9, Str. IV	Clay	4.57	Female	-	Arms to chest, under breasts	No	No
19	59/46	LN II	Knossos	A9, Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
20	59/77	LN II	Knossos	A9, Str. IV	Clay	5.3	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Rounded stumps	No	No
21	59/155	LN II	Knossos	A9, Str. IV	Clay	3	NI	-	-	No	No
22	59/83	LN II	Knossos	A9b, Str. IV	Clay	5.3	NI	-	-	No	No
23	59/84	LN II	Knossos	A9b, Str. IV	Clay	3.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Stumps	No	No
24	59/102	LN II	Knossos	A11, Str. IV	Clay	4.3	Female	-	Rounded stumps	Impressions	No
25	59/111	LN II	Knossos	A11, Str. IV	Clay	3.6	NI	-	-	No	No
26	59/115	LN II	Knossos	A11, Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
27	59/116	LN II	Knossos	A11, Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Incisions, impressions	No
28	59/121	LN II	Knossos	A11, Str. IV	Clay	3.8	Asexual	Sitting	Stumps	No	No
29	59/119	LN II	Knossos	A12, Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
30	59/122	LN II	Knossos	A12, Str. IV	Clay	4	Female	Sitting	Rounded stumps	No	No
31	59/129	LN II	Knossos	A13, Str. IV	Clay	4	Female	-	Rounded stumps	No	No
32	59/134	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	2.3	NI	Sitting	-	No	No
33	59/135	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	3	Probably Female	Sitting	-	No	No
34	59/136	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	2.8	Probably Female	Sitting	-	No	No
35	59/142	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	2.3	NI	Sitting	-	No	No

36	59/143	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	3.3	Probably Male	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
37	59/144	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	3	NI	Sitting	-	No	No
38	59/169	LN II	Knossos	A14, Str. IV	Clay	3.8	Female	-	-	Incisions, impressions	No
39	59/40	LN II	Knossos	C16, Str. IV	Rib-bone	4	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	vertically elongated stumps	No	No
40	59/100	LN II	Knossos	B16, Str. III	Clay	4	NI	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	-	Impressions	No
41	60/222	FN	Knossos	XY2a, Str. III	Clay	7.1	NI	Sitting	Triangular stumps	No	No
42	58/56	FN	Knossos	C9a, Str. II	Clay	2.5	NI	-	-	No	No
43	60/232	FN	Knossos	F. Ext. III, Str. II	Clay	4	Male	Sitting/Standing	-	No	No
44	57/133	FN	Knossos	B7, Str. II	Clay	4	NI	-	Arm to chest	Insicions	No
45	57/95	FN	Knossos	A3, Str. II	Clay	2.3	NI	-	-	Grooves, incisions	No
46	57/110	FN	Knossos	A4, Str. II	Clay	1.5	NI	-	-	pointillé	No
47	59/9	FN	Knossos	C8, Str. II	Clay	6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	Impressions	No
48	57/139	FN	Knossos	C2, Str. I	Clay	5	NI	-	-	Impressions	No
49	57/111	FN	Knossos	A1, Str. I	Clay	1	NI	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	-	No	No
50	D.IV.1	Neolithic	Knossos	Test pit D.IV.1	Clay	2.5	NI	Sitting	-	No	No
51	F.I.77	Neolithic	Knossos	3cm below surface	Clay	2.5	NI	Sitting	-	No	No
52	1927-3261	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.8	Male	Sitting/Standing	-	No	No
53	1927-3260	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	5	Probably Female	Sitting	Arms to chest touching breasts	Painting	Red-on-white
54	2726	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	6.4	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
55	2725	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3	Probably Male	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
56	2723	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.3	Female	-	Triangular stumps	No	No
57	2722	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.8	Asexual	Kneeling	Rounded stumps	No	No
58	2721	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4.8	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
59	2720	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4.6	NI	-	Arms to chest	No	No
60	2719	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4.8	Female	-	Triangular stumps	Incisions, painting	White
61	2718	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4.3	Female	Kneeling	Rounded stumps	No	No
62	2717	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4.3	Female	Sitting	Rounded stumps	No	No
63	2716	LN	Knossos	Under LN settlement	Clay	9.5	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest, triangular stumps	Incisions, painting	White
64	2715	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	5.6	Probably Female	Squatting	Arms to chest touching breasts	Incisions, impressions, painting	Red, white
65	AE.731	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3	Probably Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Painting	Red-on-white
66	AE.730	MN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.8	NI	Sitting	-	Incisions, painting	White
67	AE.729	MN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.6	Female	Kneeling	-	No	No
68	1938.666.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Steatite	2.5	Female	Sitting	Arms to chest	No	No
69	1938.665.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Steatite	2.5	Female	Squatting	-	No	No
70	1938.664.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
71	1938.662.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	2.8	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Impressions, painting	Red-on-white

72	1938.661.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	2.8	Female	-	Rounded stumps	Incisions, impressions, painting	Red-on-white
73	1938.660.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	6.9	Female	-	Arms to chest below breasts	Incisions, painting	Red, white
74	1938.659.	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	5	NI	Sitting	Arms to chest?	No	No
75	1938.658.	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	5.6	Asexual	Kneeling	Arms to chest	No	No
76	09.408.	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	5.6	Female	Sitting, legs crossed	Arms to chest	No	No
77	1941.200.	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	No arms	No	No
78	1941.160.	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	2	NI	Kneeling	-	No	No
79	G100	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	4.3	Probably Female	Sitting	Arms to chest	No	No
80	2724	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3.6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Round stumps	No	No
81	105	Neolithic	Knossos	Test pit, West Court	Marble	5.3	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
82	102	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	2.8	NI	-	Arms to chest	No	No
83	Evans 1928: fig.3bb	FN	Knossos	House A, Central Court	Clay	4	NI	-	-	No	No
84	1934,0115.3	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	4	Probably Female	Squatting	-	Incisions, impressions, painting	Red, red-on-white
85	Mosso 1910: fig.98	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3	NI	-	-	No	No
86	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,12	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	Squatting	-	No	No
87	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,10	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	Female	-	Arms to chest, below breasts	Incisions, painting	White
88	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,9	Neolithic	Knossos	Surface find	Clay	-	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
89	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,6	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	Arms to chest	No	No
90	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,4	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	Asexual	Sitting	Rounded stump	No	No
91	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,2	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	Triangular stumps	No	No
92	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,3	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	Triangular stumps	No	No
93	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,11	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	Asexual	-	Triangular stumps	No	No
94	Hutchinson 1938: pl.32,13	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	Triangular stump	Incisions	No
95	Evans 1921: Type 4	LN	Knossos	Under LN settlement	Marble	-	Asexual	Sitting	Arms to chest	Incision	No
96	Evans 1928: fig.3cc	FN	Knossos	House B, Central Court	Clay	4	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Impressions	No
97	G408	LN	Knossos	Under LN settlement	Marble	3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
98	Evans 1901: Type 3	LN	Knossos	Under LN settlement	Marble	-	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Rounded stumps	No	No
99	Evans 1901: Type 2	LN	Knossos	Under LN settlement	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Rounded stumps	No	No
100	1934,0115.2	LN	Knossos	East slope	Clay	3	Female	Sitting	Arms to chest, below breasts	No	No
101	Evans 1928: fig.3aa	FN	Knossos	House B, Central Court	Clay	4.6	NI	-	-	No	No
102	Ucko 1968: fig.162	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Stone	2.8	NI	-	Rounded stumps	No	No
103	G104	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	5	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	No arms	No	No
104	G103	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	5.7	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Rounded stumps	No	No
105	G101	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	4.1	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
106	G99	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	6.3	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Folded arms (incisions)	No	No
107	6704	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	3	Female	Sitting	Rounded stumps	No	No

108	Mosso 1910: fig.87	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Stone	-	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Rounded stumps	No	No
109	3275	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	3.1	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
110	18717	LN	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	5.2	Male	Sitting on a stool	Protruding outward of the body	No	No
111	Fraser 1970-71: fig.51	LN	Knossos	Sounding X, 1.5 m deposit	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
112	1905.1136a.7	MN	Knossos	Unknown	Marble	4	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest	Painting	Yellow
113	AMH.249	Neolithic	Ierapetra	Surface find	Clay	14.2	Female	Sitting, legs crossed	Arms to the sides at waist level	Incisions, painting, plastic	White
114	F1864	FN	Phaistos	From depth 1.05 m	Clay	8.4	Probably Female	Standing	-	No	No
115	Mosso 1908a: pl.1,2,3	FN	Phaistos	Room 28	Clay	5.8	Female	Standing	Rounded stumps	No	No
116	F6331	FN	Phaistos	Str. III, trench II	Marble	3	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
117	1934,0115.4	Neolithic	Gortyna	Unknown	Breccia	6	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
118	1938.663.	Neolithic	Central Crete	Unknown	Shell	5.3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
119	L276	MN	Gerani cave	Corridor	Stone	4	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Extended outwards horizontally	No	No
120	P1556	MN	Gerani cave	Corridor	Clay	7.6	Probably Male	Standing, differentiated legs	Triangular stumps	No	No
121	L19	MN	Gerani cave	Corridor	Stone	5.4	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Lateral rounded stumps	No	No
122	L.62/L722	MN	Gerani cave	Corridor	Stone	5.8	Asexual	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
123	7730	Neolithic	Spelaio Pelekitor	Unknown	Stone	30	Male	-	-	No	No
124	G184	Neolithic	Unknown	Unknown	Marble	6.9	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to abdomen	No	No
125	1389	Neolithic	Mesara plain	Unknown	Shell	6.6	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Extended outwards horizontally	No	No
126	Mina 2009: fig.7	Neolithic	Knossos	Unknown	Clay	-	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Incisions, painting	Black
127	Pernier 1935: fig.48	Neolithic?	Phaistos	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No

Appendix 2: Figurines from Neolithic Thessaly

N.	Inv.no./bibliography	Date	Site	Context	Material	Height	Sex	Posture	Gesture	Decoration	Painting
1	M.4311	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	3.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Incisions	No
2	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 12	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4	Female	Sitting	-	No	No
3	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 15	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	3.2	Asexual	Sitting	No arms	No	No
4	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 17	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	3	NI	-	-	No	No
5	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 19	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	Arm-stumps	No	No
6	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 26	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	4.92	NI	-	-	No	No
7	Wijnen 1981: fig. 14, 29	EN I	Sesklo	Stratum C, Sector C	Stone	7.8	Asexual	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	Arms to abdomen	No	No
8	Theocharis 1977: fig. 100b	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
9	Theocharis 1977: fig. 100c	EN I	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
10	Tsountas 1908: fig. 32, 1	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Plastic	No
11	Tsountas 1908: fig. 32, 2	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.3	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest touching breasts	No	No
12	EAM.5940	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.8	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to chest touching breasts	No	No
13	EAM.5942	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	3	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	No	No
14	EAM.5943	EN/MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Female	-	-	No	No
15	Tsountas 1908: fig. 32, 6	EN/MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.8	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
16	EAM.5944	EN/MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.6	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Incisions, painting	Purple
17	EAM.5945	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.1	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arms to the crotch	No	No
18	Tsountas 1908: fig. 33, 3	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	9.4	Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Incisions, impressions	No
19	EAM.5947	EN/MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.5	Probably Male	Sitting on a stool	-	Plastic	No
20	EAM.5948	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6	Female	-	Arms to abdomen	Incisions	No
21	EAM.5949	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.7	Female	Sitting	-	No	No
22	Tsountas 1908: fig. 33, 7	EN/MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.5	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
23	EAM.5951	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.5	Female	-	Arm-stumps	No	No
24	EAM.5952	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	No	No
25	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 3	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.2	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
26	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 4	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.7	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
27	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 5	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	7	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
28	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 6	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
29	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 7	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	7	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
30	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 8	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4	NI	-	-	Incisions, painting	Red
31	Tsountas 1908: fig. 34, 9	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.8	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
32	EAM.5962	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
33	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 1	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
34	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 2	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.5	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
35	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35,3	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6	Asexual	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No

36	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 4	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
37	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 5	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.3	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
38	Tsountas 1908: fig. 227	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
39	Tsountas 1908: fig. 228	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
40	EAM.5936	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	25	NI	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	Painting	Red, black
41	EAM.5980	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Slate	4.3	Asexual	Standing, differentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Plastic	No
42	EAM.5981	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	6	Probably Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
43	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 3	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	7.3	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
44	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 4	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	7.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
45	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 5	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Stone	8.2	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
46	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 6	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	7.3	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
47	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 8	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	-	NI	-	-	No	No
48	Theocharis 1962: fig. 13a	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	-	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
49	Theocharis 1973: fig. 12a	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
50	Theocharis 1973: fig. 12b	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	Probably Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	No	No
51	Theocharis 1973: fig. 12c	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
52	Theocharis 1973: fig. 12d	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
53	Theocharis 1976: fig. 113	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
54	BE.4667	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	5.1	Male	Sitting on a stool	-	Painting	Red
55	M.5109	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	6.5	Male	Sitting on a stool	Hands to thighs	No	No
56	M.5510	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	3	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
57	Theocharis 1973: fig. 222	Neolithic	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	2.6	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
58	M.4340/4318	MN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Male	Sitting on a stool	Hands to thighs	No	No
59	Houmourziadis 1973: fig. 71b	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Marble	-	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	No arms	No	No
60	M.2406	EN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
61	EAM.P5937	LN	Sesklo	Unknown	Clay	16.5	Female	Sitting on a stool	Arms holding a child	Painting	Brown-on-buff
62	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 6	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	8.3	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Painting	Red-on-white
63	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 7	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	9	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
64	Tsountas 1908: fig. 35, 8	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	8	Female	-	Arm-stumps	Incisions, painting	Red
65	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 1	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Acrolith	7.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
66	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 2	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Acrolith	11	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
67	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 3	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Acrolith	8.2	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
68	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 4	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Acrolith	6.5	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
69	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 5	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Acrolith	6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
70	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 6	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	5.6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No

71	Tsountas 1908: fig. 36, 7	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	7.5	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Painting	Red
72	Skafida 1994: pl. 27a	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
73	Tsountas 1908: fig. 226	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	10.5	NI	-	-	Impressions, painting	Red
74	Tsountas 1908: fig. 229	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	Painting	White
75	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 7	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	4.4	NI	-	-	Painting	Red
76	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 8	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	3.3	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest	No	No
77	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 9	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	8.4	NI	-	Arm-stumps	No	No
78	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 10	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	13.5	NI	-	-	Painting	Red
79	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 11	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	4.7	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
80	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 12	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	11.7	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
81	Tsountas 1908: fig. 37, 13	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	6	NI	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	No	No
82	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 1	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	10.5	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
83	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 2	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	7.4	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
84	EAM.5994	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	23.2	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Painting	Red
85	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 4	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Stone	10.5	NI	-	-	Painting	Red
86	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 5	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	-	NI	-	-	No	No
87	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 6	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	3.5	NI	-	-	No	No
88	Tsountas 1908: fig. 38, 7	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	5	NI	-	-	No	No
89	BE.7844	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	6.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
90	LG.2058/54	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Marble	10.6	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Painting	Black, red
91	Skafida 1994: pl. 25c	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	Female	-	-	No	No
92	KM.4990/894	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	4.1	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
93	KM.5012/915	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
94	Skafida 1994: pl. 27b	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
95	Skafida 1994: pl. 27c	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
96	KM.5262/1162	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	Female	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
97	Skafida 1994: pl. 28b	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
98	KM.5258/1159	LN II	Dimini	Unknown	Clay	-	Probably Female	-	-	Painting	Brown-on-buff
99	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 71a	MN	Tsangli	Str. I	Clay	-	Probably Female	Sitting, legs crossed	-	No	No
100	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77h	MN	Tsangli	Str. II	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
101	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77g	MN	Tsangli	Str. II	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
102	M.2430	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Male	Sitting on a stool	Hands to thighs	Incisions	No
103	M.2751	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Probably Male	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
104	M.2765	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Female	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
105	M.2759c	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Female	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
106	M.2776a	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Female	-	Arms to chest, below breasts	No	No

107	M.2757	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	Female	-	Arms to chest, below breasts	No	No
108	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 76c	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
109	M41	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	4	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest, below breasts	Incisions	No
110	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 76j	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
111	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 76k	MN	Tsangli	Str. III	Clay	-	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Painting	Red-on-white
112	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 69h	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV, House T	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	Incisions, plastic	No
113	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 69j	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV, House T	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms holding an object	Plastic	No
114	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 69k	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV, House T	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
115	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 72	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV, House T	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
116	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77a	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV	Clay	-	Female	-	-	No	No
117	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77c	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV	Clay	-	Probably Male	Sitting	No arms	No	No
118	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 77d	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Painting	Red-on-white
119	EAM.6069	MN	Tsangli	Str. IV	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
120	MB.M.2767	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	6.3	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
121	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.75b	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	-	Female	-	Left arm below breast, right arm upwards	Painting	White
122	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig.76f	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
123	M.2770	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	-	Female	-	-	Incisions	No
124	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 76g	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
125	M.2771	LN I	Tsangli	Str. V	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
126	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 74b	Neolithic	Tsangli	Unknown	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
127	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 74a	Neolithic	Tsangli	Unknown	Marble	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
128	10.673	LN I	Tsangli	Str. VII	Clay	-	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest, below breasts	No	No
129	M.2755	LN I	Tsangli	Str. VI	Clay	-	NI	-	-	No	No
130	Wace and Thompson 1912: 91d	MN	Tsani Magoula	Str. Ib	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Plastic, painting	White
131	Wace and Thompson 1912: 91a	MN	Tsani Magoula	Str. Ib	Clay	-	NI	-	-	Incisions	No
132	Wace and Thompson 1912: 91c	MN	Tsani Magoula	Str. Ic	Clay	-	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Painting	White-on-red
133	M.2763	MN	Tsani Magoula	Str. II	Clay	-	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
134	M.5108	MN	Tsani Magoula	Unknown	Clay	-	Male	Sitting on a stool	Hand to knee	No	No
135	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 26m	MN	Rachmani	Str. I	Clay	-	Probably Male	Sitting on a stool	Hand to knee	Painting	Red-on-white
136	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 26n	FN	Rachmani	Str. IV	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
137	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 26o	FN	Rachmani	Str. IV	Clay	-	Asexual	Sitting	Arm-stumps	No	No
138	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 25c	FN	Rachmani	Str. III, House Q	Acrolith	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
139	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 25d	FN	Rachmani	Str. IV	Acrolith	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	No	No
140	MB.2748a	FN	Rachmani	Str. III, House Q	Acrolith	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arm-stumps	Painting	Brown-on-buff
141	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 28t	FN	Rachmani	Str. III, House Q	Clay	-	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No

142	Wace and Thompson 1912: fig. 27h	FN	Rachmani	Str. IV	Stone	-	Asexual	Standing?, undifferentiated legs	No arms	No	No
143	ML.THE.535	MN?	Rachmani	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Probably Female	Sitting, legs to the right side	-	Painting	Brown, white
144	ML.THE.1387	MN?	Rachmani	Unknown	Stone	4.2	Probably Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	No	No
145	ML.KR.31	Neolithic	Rachmani	Unknown	Clay	4.4	NI	-	-	Impressions	No
146	ML.KR.329	Neolithic	Rachmani	Unknown	Clay	6	NI	-	-	No	No
147	ML.THE.1886	Neolithic	Rachmani	Unknown	Clay	6	NI	-	-	Painting	Brown
148	ML.KR.10	FN	Rachmani	Str. III, House Q	Acrolith	8.3	NI	-	-	Painting	Red, black
149	ML.THE.644	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	6.7	Double-sex	Sitting on a stool	Hands to thighs	Plastic	No
150	ML.THE.1285	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Male	Sitting on a stool	-	Incisions	No
151	ML.THE.1245	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	3.6	Probably Male	-	-	Painting	Brown
152	ML.THE.650	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	4.6	NI	-	-	Painting	Red
153	ML.THE.1190	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	3	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Incisions	No
154	ML.THE.1795	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	8.4	Female	-	-	Painting	Brown
155	ML.THE.1158	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	5.1	Probably Male	Sitting on a stool	-	No	No
156	ML.KR.206	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	8.6	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions, painting	Yellow, red
157	ML.THE.1122	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	5.1	NI	-	-	Plastic, impressions, painting	Red
158	ML.THE.1034	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	3.8	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions	No
159	ML.THE.648	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	7	Female	Flat base	Arms to chest, below breasts	No	No
160	ML.THE.1221	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	3	Female	-	Arm to chest, below breast	Incisions	No
161	ML.THE.696	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	7.5	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions, painting	Brown, pink
162	ML.THE.2725	EN/MN	Zappeio 2	Unknown	Clay	6.1	NI	-	-	No	No
163	ML.THE.446	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	2.1	Probably Female	Sitting, legs crossed	-	Painting	Brown, pink, white
164	ML.KAR.432	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.4	NI	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Painting	Brown
165	ML.KAR.376	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5	Asexual	Flat base	-	Painting	Red
166	ML.THE.690	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.5	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions	No
167	ML.TL.180	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.3	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions	No
168	ML.THE.1058	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.5	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions	No
169	ML.THE.1070	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5.35	Double-sex	Sitting on a stool	Arm to chest, touching breast, and sternum area	Painting, plastic	White
170	ML.THE.1282	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5.6	NI	-	Hand to thigh	Painting	Brown
171	ML.THE.1062	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.4	Female	Legs drawn up	Hands to knees	Painting	White
172	ML.THE.1125	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5.5	Female	Sitting	Arms to abdomen	Incisions, painting	White
173	ML.THE.726	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.25	Female	Flat base	Arms to abdomen	Painting	Pink
174	ML.THE.1128	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.5	Probably Female	-	Arms to chest touching breasts	Incisions	No
175	ML.THE.1100	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.4	Probably Female	-	Arms to the chest, below breasts	Painting, incisions	Brown
176	ML.THE.1788	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.4	Probably Female	-	Arms to chest, touching breasts?	Incisions, impressions	No
177	ML.THE.1215	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	1.8	NI	-	Arms to chest	Incisions	No

178	ML.THE.1227	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5.8	NI	-	-	Painting	Red
179	ML.THE.2758	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	4.6	Female	-	-	Painting	Red
180	ML.THE.1203	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	8.1	Female	-	Left arm below breast, right arm upwards	Painting	Brown
181	ML.THE.1184	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.2	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
182	ML.THE.1341	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	5.3	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
183	ML.KAR.279	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Clay	3.4	NI	-	-	Plastic	No
184	ML.THE.1396	EN/MN	Chara 1	Unknown	Marble	3.5	Asexual	-	-	Incisions	No
185	ML.THE.68	EN/MN	Nees Karyes	Unknown	Clay	4	Double-sex	Sitting on a stool	Hands to thighs	Painting	Red
186	ML.THE.1267	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	5	Female	Sitting	-	Painting	Red, white
187	ML.THE.1305	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	3.6	Female	-	-	No	No
188	ML.THE.2740	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	6.1	NI	-	-	Painting, plastic	Red, Brown
189	ML.THE.1892	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	5.3	NI	-	-	Painting, incisions	Grey, Brown
190	ML.THE.689	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	5.4	Male	Standing, differentiated legs	Hand to the side resting on the hip	Plastic	No
191	ML.THE.1146	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	9.3	Female	Standing, differentiated legs	-	Incisions	No
192	ML.THE.1142	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	4.8	Asexual	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Hands to the side resting on the hips	Painting	Red
193	ML.KR.328	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	4	Asexual	Flat base	Arm-stumps	No	No
194	ML.THE.1286	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	5.3	NI	-	-	Plastic, incisions, painting	Red
195	ML.THE.2718	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	3.5	NI	-	Hand to thigh?	Painting	Red
196	ML.THE.1164	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	2.5	Female	Flat base	Arms to abdomen	No	No
197	ML.THE.1661	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	4.6	Female	-	Arms to abdomen	Painting	Brown
198	ML.THE.2731	Neolithic	Sitochoro 1	Unknown	Clay	3.2	Female	Flat base	No arms	Incisions	No
199	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 1	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	7.25	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest, below breasts	Incisions, painting	Brown
200	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 2	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	-	Probably Male	Sitting on a stool	No arms	Incisions, painting	Brown
201	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 3	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	-	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	Arms to chest, below breasts	Incisions, painting	Brown
202	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 4	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	-	Probably Male	Sitting on a stool	No arms	Incisions, painting	Brown
203	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 5	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	2.5	Asexual	Flat base	No arms	Impressions	No
204	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 6	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	-	Asexual	-	No arms	Incisions	No
205	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 7	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	-	Female	Standing, undifferentiated legs	-	Incisions	No
206	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 8	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	3	Asexual	Flat base	No arms	No	No
207	ML.PMZ.619: fig. 9	MN/LN	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Destruction layer of MN house	Clay	2.5	Asexual	Flat base	No arms	No	No
208	Gallis 1979: fig.16	LN I	Platia Magoula Zarkou	Platia Magoula Cremation burials	Clay	-	Asexual	Flat base	No arms	No	No