

Classification

The catalogue includes sixty terracottas, presented according to presumed origins from two major areas: South Italy and Sicily. Within these two major groups, the objects have been further subdivided by the specific contexts they suggest and are generally organized by their typological classes.

Each catalogue entry begins with a brief description of the terracotta fabric and the decoration. The fabric has been analyzed using a macroscopic examination aimed at identifying the consistency and chromatic characteristics, defined with reference to the Munsell color charts. However, this examination method has intrinsic limitations, since a single type of clay can take on different colorings or nuances in different sections of an individual piece, depending on the temperature and duration of the firing process and the conditions of the kiln. More importantly, there is a high level of subjectivity involved in this form of visual analysis.¹ As regards decoration, the presence of white clay slip or diluted clay has been reported, and in cases where the piece has been subjected to a technical examination, the presence and type of pigments have been noted.

Measurements are given in centimeters and in general are the maximum height (H), width (W), and depth (D); in some cases, other significant dimensions are also included.

The “Condition” section provides information about the piece’s state of conservation and technique of manufacture. Further analyses have been carried out by the Antiquities Conservation Department on several of the terracottas with the intention of determining the presence of polychrome pigments, the nature of potential anomalies or prior restorations, as well as the technique of manufacture. In such cases, the results are shown in appendices at the end of the catalogue entry.

Under the heading “Provenance,” the object’s collection history prior to acquisition by the J. Paul Getty Museum is given.

The object “Bibliography” section lists both publications devoted to the piece in question and those in which the piece is only mentioned. Citations that are mentioned several times in the catalogue and notes are cited with an abbreviation; the full references are in the general “Bibliography.”

The body of each catalogue entry consists of an iconographic description and a critical commentary with the pertinent comparisons, dating hypotheses, and possible origins. The

suggested dating is based, where possible, on comparisons with materials from excavation contexts or, more frequently, through references to stylistic and iconographical analogies.²

Notes

1. *Munsell Soil Color Charts*, rev. ed. (New York, 1992). For concerns that have been raised about the use of color charts, see N. Cuomo di Caprio, *La ceramica in archeologia: Antiche tecniche di lavorazione e moderni metodi d'indagine* (Rome, 1985), p. 175, and M. BARRA BAGNASCO 1986, p. 106. Only an accurate archaeometric analysis can definitively identify differences in the structure and mineral composition of the fabric.
2. The chronology, based on stylistic considerations, always pertains to the creation of the prototype: because molds were used for the serial production of pieces, iconographical and typological models could persist over a very long period.