A136. Dis-Eur-Czech Republic-Moravia-Střelice-Venus-Figurine**-**Ceramics, stage Ia

 

Fig. 1. Czech Republic-Moravia-Střelice-Venus-Figurine**-**Ceramics, stage Ia

Case no. 1

### Formal Label: Czech Republic, Moravia, Střelice, Venus, Figurine

**Display Description:**

### Accession Number: A136

### LC Classification: GN772

Date or Time Horizon: 4,700-4,300 BCE 6,450-6,850 years (Moravian Painted Ceramics, stage Ia)

Geographical Area: Czech Republic, Moravia, Střelice-Bukovina

**Photo of site:** after http://www.lands-of-venuses.eu/v-w-images/10-strelice/strelice-004a-bukovina-site.jpg

 

Cultural Affiliation: Neolithic

Medium: Fired clay.

Dimensions: original, H 22 cm (8.7 in).

Weight:

Condition: Resin replica of original.

Provenance: Czech Republic, Moravia, Střelice Museum.

**Discussion:** Střelice Moravian ceramic figurines, such as this one, were located in the context of habitations (notably near hearths, see Sázelová 2008) in settled areas in large reoccupied sites near agricultural resources (Čižmář et alii 2008), which near this site is still being farmed today. A very conservative figural grammar (Humpolová and Podborský 2013) was evidently sustained for many generations based on C14 data (Kuča 2012, 2011). The characteristic Střelice cap-like head is probably definitive.

The emphasis on small breasts and a large pelvis suggest that this figurine is associated with a general social and medical anxiety for safe childbirth. Figurines incorporating indications of these anxieties may have accompanied the instructions (perhaps incorporated in rituals) by women midwives who had expertise in the care of pregnant mothers and the practice and art of delivering babies safely.In Neolithic communities it is important to have many children as the farm-work required many hands. Midwives still perform the same tasks to assist their communal sisters in pregnancy and childbirth. Indeed, a similar anxiety to have many children is noticeable today among traditional farming families in many parts of the world, especially in Africa, India, and South America, especially where opposition to abortion and family planning, notably espoused by Islam, Catholicism and Protestant Christian Fundamentalism are dominant. It is provocative to think that Neolithic communities may have had similar religious strictures.

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