### NEW A138 Dis-Eur-Czech Republic-Moravia-Střelice- Figurine-Female-Venus-Ceramic

### CASE 1 FOURTH FROM RIGHT SECOND-TO-BOTTOM SHELF

Fig. 1. Czech Republic-Moravia-Střelice-Figurine-Female-Venus-Ceramic

### ****Formal Label:**** Czech Republic-Moravia-Střelice- Figurine-Female-Venus-Ceramic

**Display Description:** 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). This particular figurine is unique in that it has a Janus head: two faces point forward and backward. However, both sides of the figurine are distinguished by the fact that on one side the breasts of the individual are merely points in the clay, whereas on the other side there are actually beginning breasts protruding. Since this figurine is not broken it may have been placed outside a habitation in a ritual area when the houses were ritually burned and the household was moved and figurines inside were ritually broken.

### ****Accession Number**:** A 138

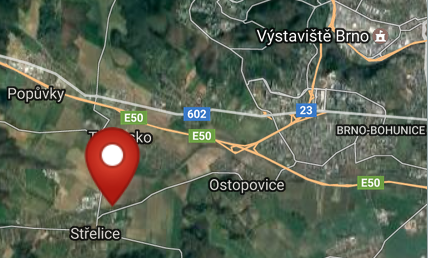
### LC Classification: GN772

**Date or Time Horizon:** 4,850 BCE-4,450 BCE

**Geographical Area:** Czech Republic, Moravia,Střelice

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**Maps**; **GPS Coordinates:** 49.15694 16.50889;40° 26' 46" N 79° 58' 56" W

Figs 2-3. Maps of Střelice from http://latitude.to/img/latitude-logo.svg

**Cultural Affiliation:** Neolithic

**Medium:** Fired clay.

**Dimensions:**

**Weight:**

**Condition: Resin replica of original.**

**Provenance:** Czech Republic, Moravia,Střelice Museum.

**Discussion:**

The emphasis on small breasts and a large pelvis suggest that this figurine is associated with a general social and health anxiety for a 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.Hence, we may speculate that this may have been a pedagogical figurine showing the state before and after puberty (or pregnancy) as the two sides represent either before and after puberty or pregnancy. On both sides, the womb and pelvic area is shown to be expanded and both arms of the figurine are placed holding this area as though to protect it. This figurine was originally coated with red ochre or cinnabar. Usually red is a sign of life as it is the color of blood, and remnants of red are still visible in crevasses. A hole in the top of the figurine suggests it may have held herbs or medicinal flowers that were used in promoting pregnancy or in help with menses.

In Neolithic communities it was 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.

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