

Çatalhöyük Figurines Report--2014

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Recorded finds from 2014

This year we recorded 68 figurines (Table 10.1). Ten came from the 2014 excavations, while the rest were returns from previous years. As is the norm at Çatalhöyük zoomorphic figurines were the most numerous with horn fragments dominating, followed by abbreviated forms and finally anthropomorphic examples. We also recorded a phallus (Trench 5, West Mound).

20969.x3. NORTH. Zoomorphic figurine. Small quad-ruped with elongated torso and disproportionately large head. There is a possible fingerprint on under-side near rear legs. Pinched, flat ears which stick out from the head and the right ear is broken. Both left legs have been squashed and all legs are pointed. The rear legs are smaller and straighter. The underneath of the front legs is arched.

Figurine form	Count	Examples
Zoomorphic	44	20969.x3, 30625.H1
Abbreviated	17	999913.H1, 30571.H1
Anthropomorphic	5	30783.x1, 30242.x1
Phallic	1	31210.x2
Non-diagnostic	1	
Total	68	

Table 10.1. Summary of figurines analyzed in 2014. neck. This example is somewhat schematic but has a broad neck not unlike other examples of cattle figurines.

The figurine is broken through the head, torso and tail. There is evidence of a possible fingerprint.

999913.H1 REC. Abbreviated figure. This is a complete example with pointed nose or beak and triangular head, intentionally flattened and on an ovoid base.

30571.H1. NORTH. Abbreviated figure. This is a nearly complete example with a pinched, pointed nose. Ears are present as well as a folded head element.

30783.x1. TPC. Anthropomorphic figure. The bodily features include geometric breasts, a large, delineated back and stomach and non-differentiated head. The figurine was made without detailing legs. It is broken at the left arm. The arms would have been disproportionate to body.

30242.x1 TPC Anthropomorphic figure. This is a torso with a defined belly and a sway back. It is broken at the legs, arms and the head.

31210.x2. WEST. (Figure 10.1) Phallic figurine. This small phallus is flattened with holes poked into the fabric, darkened on the surface underneath, nail impressions. The tip has a gouge likely formed by a finger. Grass impressions and finger-shaped impression on the base. This figurine is free-standing.

30625.H1. SOUTH. Zoomorphic figurine. This is a very blocky and rectangular quadruped with a curved



Figure 10.1. Phallic figurine 31210.x2 (Photo: Jason Quinlan).

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Ongoing research

Human-animal relations (Der)

In addition to working with the figurines team to record figurines from the 2014 excavations, as well as those excavated but not yet recorded from previous years, Lindsay Der continued work on her dissertation project. Aside from data cleaning densities for relevant units in the excavation database, Der began exploratory data analysis on the changing relationship between people and animals during the Neolithic at Çatalhöyük. As much of the house elaboration at the site centers on wild animals, her analyses utilize both quantitative and qualitative datasets inclusive of the faunal remains, plastered faunal installations, zoomorphic figurines, stamp seals, wall paintings, and plastered reliefs.

Der has identified forty houses with faunal remains from the North (including the former 4040 Area), South, BACH, TP, and TPC Areas of the Neolithic East Mound. She then grouped the houses into three time periods which roughly mark before (Group 1), during (Group 2), and after the introduction of domesticated cattle to the site (Group 3) (Table 10.1). Twenty-seven of these houses were excavated between 2003 and 2013 and thus have total volume deposits recorded as well as units digitized in GIS. Data analysis this season focused on B.1, B.3, B.49, B.52, B.59, B.77, and B.82, all of which are houses from Level North G and which belong to Group 2. Given that there appears to be a pre-occupation with horns, both in the zoomorphic figurines and in the faunal remains and plastered faunal installations, such as bucrania, she focused on identifying any potential relationship between the real and the figur- al.

Zoomorphic Building Area Level Group Fauna figurines

5	North	North F	1	X	X
118	South	South H	1	X	X
18	South	South J	1	X	X
23	South	South J	1	X	X
2	South	South K	1	X	X
17	South	South K	1	X	X
6	South	South L	1	X	X
43	South	South L	1	X	X
8	South	South M	1	X	X
24	South	South M	1	X	
40	South	South M	1	X	X
104	South	South M	1	X	
3	BACH	BACH G	2	X	X

1	North	North G	2	X	X
49	North	North G	2	X	X
52	North	North G	2	X	X
59	North	North G	2	X	X
82	North	North G	2	X	
77	North	North G	2	X	X
76	South	South O	2	X	X
76	South	South O	2	X	X
79	South	South O	2	X	X
80	South	South O	2	X	X
87	South	South O	2	X	X
96	South	South O	2	X	X
97	South	South O	2	X	X
55	North	North H	3	X	
57	North	North H	3	X	X
58	North	North H	3	X	X
47	North	North J	3	X	X
75	South	South P	3	X	X
370	South	South P	3	X	X
53	South	South Q	3	X	X
65	South	South Q	3	X	X
68	South	South Q	3	X	X
42	South	South R	3	X	X
56	South	South R	3	X	X
74	TP	TP N	3	X	X

95	TP	TP O	3	X	X
73	TP	TP P	3	X	X
95	TP	TP P	3	X	X
122	TPC	TPC Unstratified Neolithic	3	X	

Table 10.1. House groupings based on the introduction of domesticated cattle at Çatalhöyük (Group 1 = Levels North F, South G through M; Group 2 = Levels North G, BACH G, South O; Group 3 = Levels North H through J, South P through T, TP, TPC).

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Revisiting the human figurines (Nakamura & Meskell)

Over the past ten years, we have become more familiar with various figurine conventions and have been able to provide some finer-grained analyses of certain subgroups. As the corpus expanded, Martin & Meskell (2012) noted that figurine makers depicted not simply generic zoomorphs/quadrupeds, but specific species; we also noted that abbreviated figurines constitute a spectrum that can range from more animal-like figures to more human-like figures, showing details such as facial features, the suggestion of limbs and decoration (Nakamura & Meskell 2006: 229). Likewise, much of the human figurine corpus, while remaining fairly diverse and idiosyncratic, also clusters into some common types or bodily tropes. This season we began a new project of body mapping, developing terminology for certain postures and arrangements with the human remains team (Chris Knüsel and Scott Haddow).

Previously, we used body mapping to explore the non/represented sexual and sexualized traits of human figurines (Nakamura & Meskell 2009). This kind of analysis is useful as it takes seriously various bodily configurations such as posture, the presence or absence of certain traits, as well as their attenuation or exaggeration as materializations of the human body that distill, emphasize, and forge a specific set of choices and preoccupations; such mapping allows the investigation of various

perceptions of the human body and its features as particular sites of social attention and production (Nakamura & Meskell 2009: 206). Our new mapping project extends this kind of analysis to all depicted sub-cranial bodily features and postures. We developed a terminology to describe the features commonly depicted:

headless (intentional) head/neck stub elongated neck shoulder/upper limb stubs upper limbs

upper limbless flexed upper limbs upper limbs extended outward upper limbs extended along side lower limbs undifferentiated lower limbs lower limb stubs

lower limbs extended lower limbs flexed at knee and hip lower limbs flexed,

crossed feet hands fingers stomach navel buttocks breasts reclined

In the future, some of our work will focus on a quantitative analysis of various correlations and non-correlations between various traits to see if certain body types emerge and also possibly include an analysis of facial traits. Some preliminary observations, however, reveal a few possible lines of further investigation. First, there is a range of depicting what we have previously called bodily excess and abundance (Nakamura & Meskell 2009). These anthropomorphic figures range from simple three-dimensional outlines (Figure 10.2a) to more detailed but ambiguously sexed bodies (Figure 10.2b) to well-delineated robust female bodies (Figure 10.2c). Also, most figurines with dowel holds in the neck region (n=13) appear to be seated or have a trunk/lower limbs suggested by a thick base rather than delineated legs. Fourteen of the twenty heads we have recorded appear to be human and show a range of details, many with ears, facial features and different hair-styles or head garments (Figure 10.3). Although all twenty heads (or fragments with heads) have been categorized as 'anthropomorphic', the remaining heads have a more animal like appearance. Some appear to have broad blunt snout-like noses with wide cheeks and high ears (e.g., 5021.D1, 5043.x1,

19385.x3), while others appear to have narrow faces, very large protruding beak-like noses, and intriguingly, dowel holes (e.g., 4121.H6, 12501.H1).

A few people have noted that certain figurines classified as anthropomorphic, in fact appear more animal-like given the character and positioning of certain features (mostly cranial, but some sub-cranial). This input has led us to more specifically define attributes that we take to define definitively human bodies; these include: a bipedal posture, and the presence, depiction and placement of gross anatomical features (breasts, stomachs, buttocks, navels, ears, eyes, fingers, etc.) that evoke specifically human bodies.



Figure 10.2. Human figurine form: (2a) simple outlines: 11874.x1, 5843.x2; (2b) generically abundant forms: 11324.x3, 11848.x1; (2c) abundant female forms: 14183.x17, 14522.x8.

Reviewing the current human figurines with these criteria in mind, we identified 67 human figurines out of 871 figurines that have been assigned to a level (South K-T; North F-J) or that have been identified as Neolithic in the TP and IST Areas. Although the numbers of figurines per level are uneven, it appears that from Level South K to North I/South R, the percentage of anthropomorphic figurines in the figurine

corpus hovers between 9-12%, but experiences a large drop during Levels North G-H/South N-Q when the percentage drops to 2-3%. In 4040 J/South S-T, it appears that the percentage of human figurines jumps up to 19% and maintains at 15-25% through the Neo-lithic TP/IST levels (Figure 10.4). Zoomorphic figurines consistently constitute the bulk of the corpus, while at Level North I/South R, anthropomorphic forms overtake abbreviated forms (Figure 10.5).

While it is difficult to interpret this pattern, there may be an increasing concern for delineating more detailed the human bodies in later levels. If abbreviated figurines present pared-down, generic forms of human and animal bodies, then the greater number of anthropomorphic forms depicted with limbs and other features could suggest a specific attention to particularly human features and embodiments. One development is particularly intriguing. A variety of human forms persist from early to late levels, but we find a new or increased attention to the depiction of feet, hands and fingers beginning in Level North I. Large midden areas in this level have produced nine possible examples of feet and hands, a few with delineated fingers. One example also comes from Level South S and two from TP. Since most of the examples come from midden Sp.279 in the North Area, it is possible that these occurrences represent a local (or in-

dividual?) preoccupation. In future studies, we hope to more substantively address some of these potentially emergent patterns.

Figure 10.3. Examples of human heads (left to right) 10500.H2, 13352.H1, 13143.x4, 13142.x3, 12988.H4, 8628.x1.



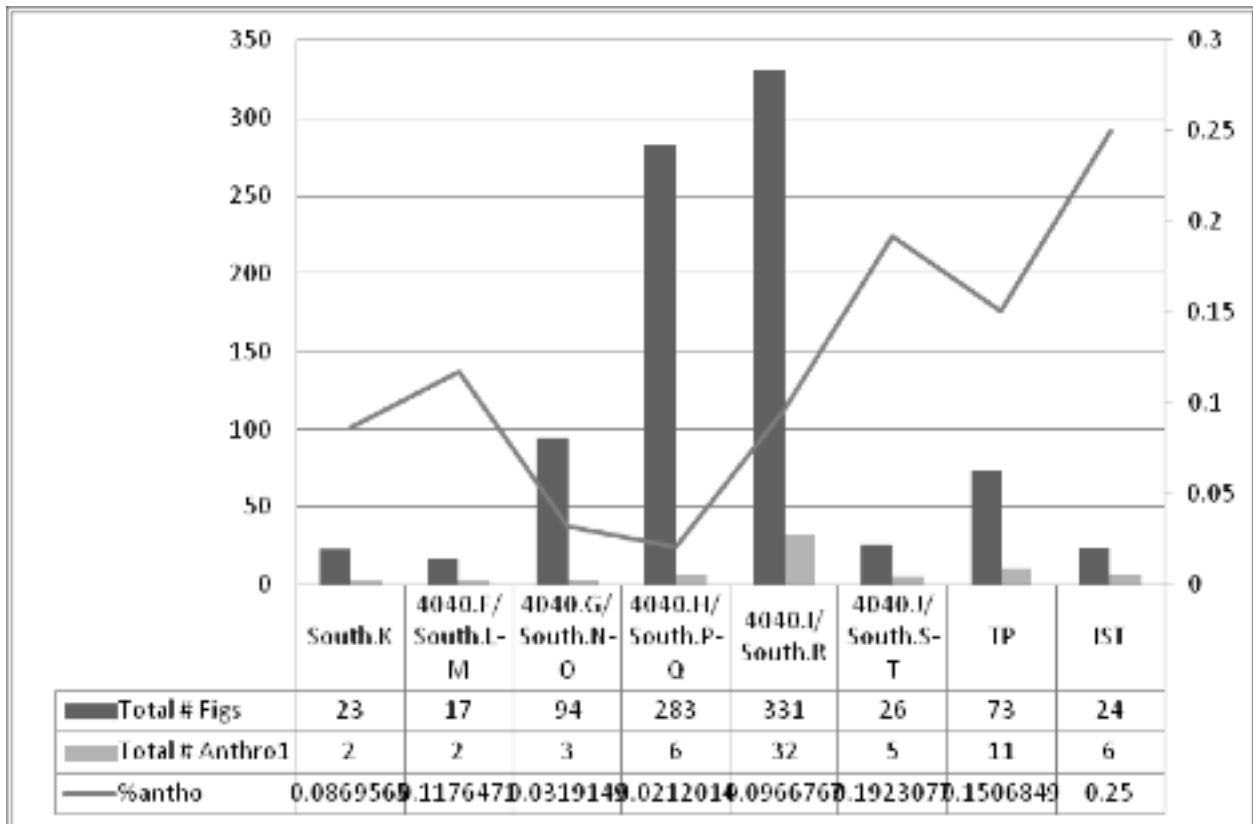


Figure 10.4. Human figurines: percentage of total figurines by level.

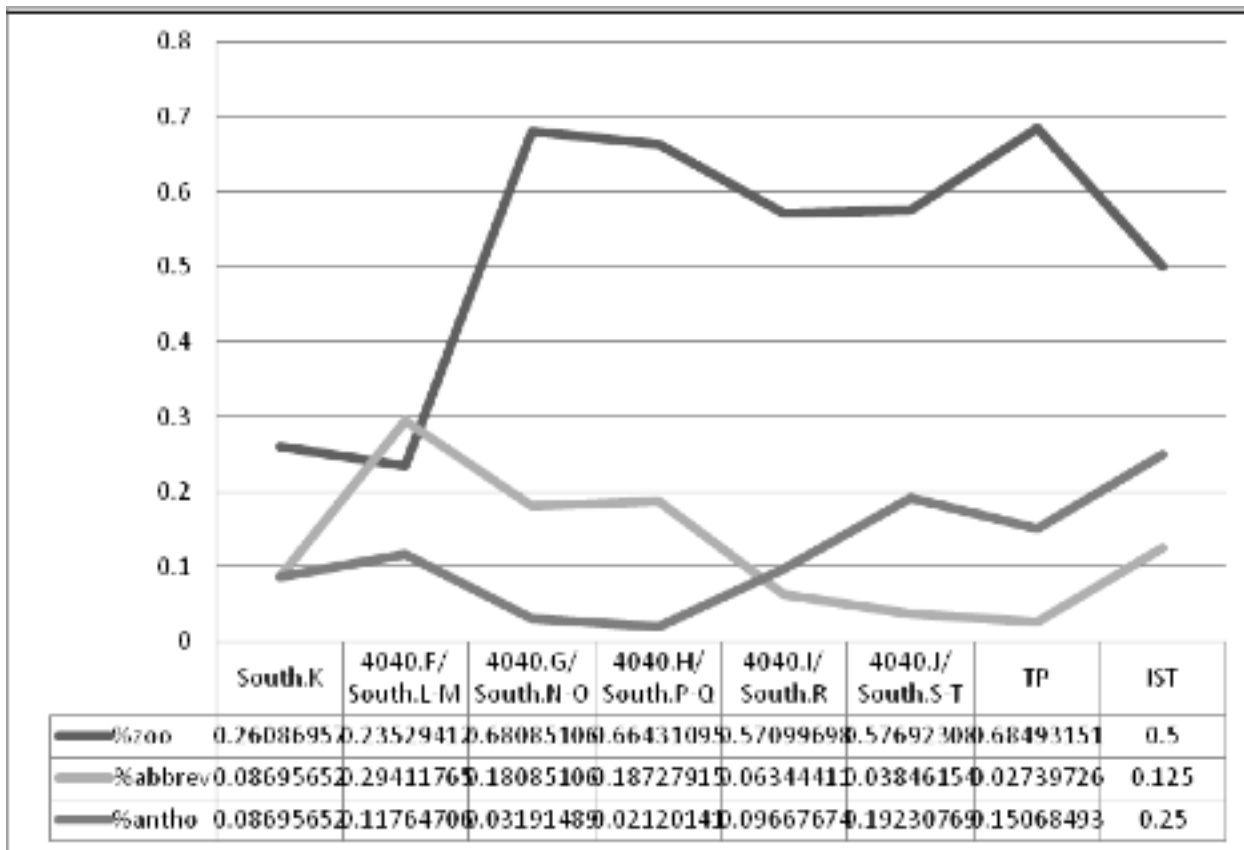


Figure 10.5. Figurine types compared: percentage of zoomorphic, abbreviated and anthropomorphic figurines by level.