Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt

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http://www.britishmuseum.org/naukratis

Ptolemaic and Roman figures, models and coffin-fittings in terracotta

Ross Thomas
1. Introduction

The Ptolemaic and Roman terracotta figures from Naukratis comprise a large and varied group of artefacts, including figures, figure vases, models and coffin fittings spanning the period from the end of the 4th century BC through to the 7th century AD, reflecting the continued significance of the settlement into the Roman and Byzantine periods. With well over 900 examples known, they account for over half the total number of locally produced figurines known from Naukratis (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures).

Ptolemaic and Roman figures from Naukratis have long required systematic analysis, having been published highly selectively in outdated and frequently confused literature. Many of the pieces from the Egypt Exploration Fund’s excavations conducted at Naukratis by Petrie and Gardner have been published in a British Museum catalogue by Bailey. Researchers publishing Naukratis pieces in museum collections have been hindered by the total assemblage’s dispersal and (apparent) lack of contextual information, leading to many opting for a broad ‘Greco-Roman’ date. A more refined chronology is possible today because recent excavations have revealed a variety of close parallels within well-dated stratigraphic sequences. In addition, the excavations by Leonard at Naukratis produced a small catalogue of Ptolemaic pieces from stratified contexts that help with the dating of some of the figures produced at the site.

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1 The term ‘model’ is used here to describe a miniature version of an object produced in terracotta, for example model swords and their fitting scabbards were produced at Naukratis (see British Museum 1886.0401.1537; Fig. 36). Models of different objects could have been used for other purposes in varying contexts. All images in this chapter, unless otherwise indicated, are © Trustees of the British Museum.

2 Thomas 2014b. Limestone figures are not treated here as they are not part of this largely local industry. For limestone figures see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures, which discusses in full this older Memphite industry (and a local Naukratis Late Period terracotta industry), which overlaps with the beginning of the Ptolemaic period and the coroplastic industries considered here.

3 In the original site publications the later Ptolemaic and Roman material was often conflated (Petrie 1886a, 13, 45; Gardner 1888, 25–9; Gutch 1898–9, 69–70; Edgar 1905, 128–9). Stratigraphy allowed for a more refined chronology for the few pieces excavated in the 1970s and 80s (Coulsou 1996, 139–42; Leonard 1997, 286–8; Leonard 2001, 164–73).

4 114 of the c. 900 figures, models, fittings and moulds discussed here were published in Bailey’s British Museum catalogue, where an extensive bibliography is available (Bailey 2008). Of the whole Naukratis corpus, the British Museum has most types and some of the best preserved examples, duplicated in other collections. This chapter is not a replacement for that work, but a supplement to it. It is intended as an introduction to the whole corpus from Naukratis, incorporating additional Naukratis pieces not available to Bailey during his research and information on the contexts within which they were found. It also assesses the general patterns that emerge from this data. Parallels for individual pieces are discussed in the relevant catalogue entries.

5 Higgins 1967, 46, 93; 1954, 404; Török 1995, 19; Dunand 1990; Hamdorf, Knauss and Lettmier 2014. See Bailey 2006, 261–4; 2008, 3–5 for discussion of dating issues and extensive, if incomplete, research into Naukratis contexts. Ultimately the reliance on unstratified or unprovenanced pieces published from museum collections has resulted in the use of unreliable dates by researchers. For a useful synthesis on animal figurines, including a substantial, if incomplete, list of Naukratis figurines, see Boutantin 2014, 555–7, 578.


7 Leonard 1997, 286–8; Leonard 2001, 164–73; see also Coulsou 1996, 139–46. Unpublished pieces from this fieldwork are preserved in the W.D.E. Coulson Archive at the University of
The 4th century BC saw an explosion in local production. The vast majority of Ptolemaic, and subsequent Roman, figures found at Naukratis at this point were now locally produced, with small quantities of Greek (known as ‘Tanagra’) style figures brought from Alexandria in the Ptolemaic and from Abu Mena in the Byzantine period. In sharp contrast to the Archaic period, terracotta figurines from Greece, East Greece and Cyprus are rare, and the last imported Hellenistic figures probably arrived in the early 3rd century BC (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures). In contrast, the large quantities of locally produced ‘Graeco-Egyptian’ terracotta figures (Greek style figurines of Egyptian deities and subjects, Fig. 1) found in domestic contexts in Ptolemaic Naukratis suggest that Egyptian domestic religion was practised by the local population on a large scale.

### 1.1 The workshops of Naukratis

There is clear archaeological evidence for at least two terracotta workshops operating in north-east Naukratis from the end of the 4th or early 3rd century BC, until at least the 2nd century BC. An established local terracotta industry represented by kilns, moulds (Figs 2–5) and terracotta figurine wasters (Figs 6–7) was found in two separate, but adjacent locations. Figurines were already produced, on a smaller scale, before the Ptolemaic period (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures), sometimes even in Greek style (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures). Production continued throughout the 3rd to 2nd centuries BC, when other artefact groups, such as mould-made pottery, portable stoves and lamps, may also have been made there. Roman figures could have been produced in as yet unexplored parts of the site, as no evidence of their manufacture has so far been discovered at Naukratis, although lamps were certainly made in Naukratis at this time.

Locally produced figurines of the Ptolemaic and Roman periods were made of a dark red-brown to orange highly micaceous and organic Nile silt, often with quartz and white inclusions, low fired and light in weight. Thessaly, Volos, some of which have been included in the catalogue. We are most grateful to Professor Mazarakis-Ainian for granting access to this archive and permission to publish its holdings.

The name ‘Tanagra’ has become synonymous with a specific style of early Hellenistic figurine produced in various Hellenistic production centres and as a result the term ‘Tanagra style’ is often used to describe the production of various centres, not just the famous centre of Tanagra itself (Burn and Higgins 2001, 26). It is used within this article as a shorthand for the famous style that includes draped female figures without implying an actual Tanagran origin (see Jeammet 2010 and articles within, particularly Kassab Tegzò 2010, 186).

5 Bailey 2008, 111.

6 Petrie 1886a, 45, ‘Site 95’; Edgar 1905, 121, ‘Site 38’.


8 Although we cannot be sure that the moulds come from the same workshop, moulds of a similar style were found during the same season of both Ptolemaic relief ware pottery (see Bailey 2011) and lamps. The local Nile silt fabric was probably sourced and processed in a similar fashion for all these productions during the Ptolemaic period. Workshops for both figurine and relief-ware pottery production are attested in Athens and Alexandria from the late 4th century BC onwards and can be linked with metal working (Barr-Sharrar 1990, 32–5, fig. 25).

9 A lamp mould dated c. AD 50–400 was found at Naukratis (see the chapter on Lamps in terracotta and bronze).

10 In comparison to contemporary wheel-made Nile silt tableware pottery, terracottas appear to have usually been fired at a lower temperature of c.600–800°C (Thomas 2011a, 79; cf. also Nordström and Bourriau 1993, 165, and Spataro et al. forthcoming).
fired terracotta figures have a coarse surface texture marked with numerous cracks and vesicles left by straw inclusions, except when covered with a thin slip. The fabric used was finer with fewer organic inclusions than that employed previously for the terracotta plaques and hand-made figures of the Late Period, though still far rougher than the fabric utilized for imported Greek figures. This was then fired, in an oxidizing atmosphere (with oxygen), at a temperature that was lower but more even than that used previously, to produce a hard and durable, yet lighter figure. The figures were then coated in a gypsum-based white wash that covered the rough cracked surfaces left in the fabric and also often obscured the fine detail from the earlier Ptolemaic moulds, before being painted brightly with red, green, pink, blue and yellow pigment.

This production began at a reasonable quality, copying relatively naturalistic Greek ‘Tanagra styles’ (Fig. 4) to a higher standard than attempted before in Egypt, though far below the level of quality achieved in mainland Greece or East Greece at this time. Cleaning, smoothing and remodeling were often crudely done, with production quality deteriorating slowly over time. The Roman technique and technology was essentially the same, though cruder, and the figures were not always painted, but red-slipped instead. Despite the introduction of the thick gypsum coating that was often applied, the highly stylized form and exaggerated features of Roman figures may have remained more visible than would have been the case in examples with a more subtle, naturalistic style, and so would have served as a better guide for the painting of features such as the eyes.

1.2 Developments over time

At Naukratis, as elsewhere in Egypt, the Macedonian and early Ptolemaic period was marked by significant innovations in technology, technique and concept, despite the brief continuation of Late Period production technologies in the form of the mould-made plaque figures into the early Ptolemaic period (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures). Innovations included the production of highly decorated (Fig. 9) hollow mould-made figures with a vent in the back, of both Egyptian (Figs 6–11) and Greek subjects (Figs 2–4), in a relatively naturalistic style. Naukratis had already been producing Greek and Cypriot style figures in local materials before the Ptolemaic period, using borrowed technology or new techniques to create increasingly difficult compositions (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures). The usual technique from the Ptolemaic period onwards involved the use of two or three part plaster (Fig. 2) or terracotta moulds (Fig. 5) to produce thin-walled, hollow figurines with a vent at the

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19 Late Period figure-plaques are rough, unevenly fired, often over-fired (vitrified), suggesting an uneven firing temperature and atmosphere.
20 In the case of the coffin-fittings, calcite (Bailey 2006, 264; 2008, 6).
21 Burn and Higgins 2001, 313–15. See Fig. 9.
22 The production at Alexandria is finer than that of Naukratis, though still inferior to that of mainland Greece (Kassab Tezgöz 2010, 187).
23 Replacing terracotta moulds, the plaster mould was introduced to Greece in the 3rd century BC from Egypt, where this technique had already been used for centuries (Edgar 1905; Uhlenbrock 1990, 16; Bailey 2008, 5). At Naukratis both plaster and terracotta moulds were already in use during the Late Period, and both continued to be used during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures and Lamps in terracotta and bronze).
back. The back was modelled in the earlier examples, but already by the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC many figures were made with only a rough, unmodelled, convex back with a simple circular vent (Figs 6–7). This technique appears to have been introduced to Egypt from either the Greek world or (less likely) Cyprus, probably via Naukratis, in the late 4th century BC. It is often suggested that the earliest and finest copies of mainland Greek terracottas in Egypt were produced in Alexandria, with its distinctive fabric. However, it is likely that mainland Greek-style figurines (many copying the ‘Tanagra’ style and subjects, though possibly inspired by products of Athens or elsewhere in Boeotia rather than specifically the town of Tanagra) were already being produced before the construction of Alexandria was completed. In addition, the dispersal of the techniques, technology and style across the Mediterranean during the 4th century BC, and the rather hasty variants produced at Naukratis (Naukratis production was a simplified and more rapid version of mainland Greek terracotta production, see Table 1 below), means there is no reason to exclude the possibility that inspiration for this production style came from mainland Greece via another workshop centre elsewhere in the Mediterranean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hellenistic (Greek)</th>
<th>Ptolemaic</th>
<th>Romano-Egyptian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fabric</td>
<td>fine dense clay, fine inclusions</td>
<td>straw, sand and calcareous inclusions (mostly fine)</td>
<td>coarse straw and calcareous inclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulds</td>
<td>2 or 3 pieces</td>
<td>2 or 3 pieces of plaster and terracotta</td>
<td>2 pieces of plaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back</td>
<td>modelled</td>
<td>modelled rarely from the 3rd century BC</td>
<td>mostly un-modelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vent</td>
<td>square/oval</td>
<td>circular</td>
<td>often missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reworking</td>
<td>Common and neat</td>
<td>common, sometimes untidy</td>
<td>Rare, basic trimming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoothing</td>
<td>common</td>
<td>common</td>
<td>uncommon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slip</td>
<td>common</td>
<td>uncommon</td>
<td>rare if painted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White wash</td>
<td>kaolinite, usually thin</td>
<td>gypsum, usually thin</td>
<td>thick gypsum or absent if slipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint</td>
<td>common, diverse palette</td>
<td>common, diverse palette</td>
<td>sometimes absent, limited palette</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Comparison of techniques used in the production of imported mainland Greek terracottas (dated c. 330–250 BC), with Naukratis production during the Ptolemaic and Roman periods.  

2. Ptolemaic figures: Iconography and meaning

Ptolemaic figures show some significant changes in subject and style compared with those of preceding periods. Local production met local demand, which is to say that the pattern we see is a reflection of the local inhabitants’ use, rather than the practices of visiting traders who play less

22 See Kassab Tezgöz 2007; 2010, 187. Note Kassab Tezgöz suggests that the same types known from Myrina also ‘took their models’ from these Greek workshops (ibid.). Direct copying of mould series has been confirmed by the presence of Alexandrian copies of mould generations of figures also produced in Boeotia (Muller 2010, 103). This assumes influence from mainland Greece was direct and not dispersed via workshops, such as those in East Greece, that also copied Boeotian and Athenian production, or that there was a network of contemporary workshops across the Mediterranean influencing each others work.

23 Modified with Naukratis specific data, but after Barrett (2011, 1089–1118, Table 11). Barrett highlights that the features recognized in the Naukratis material were common to the other, equally rapidly produced Egyptian figure production.
of a significant role during this period. Demand during this period resulted in a proliferation of subjects depicted and a greater range of different artefact types displaying figurative art being mould-made in terracotta.

Ptolemaic figurines can be broadly divided into 10 groups. These are: Egyptian deities (Figs 8–12), Greek deities and mythological characters (including satyrs and maenads, Figs 14–5), actors (Fig. 3) and the theatre (Figs 2 and 15), ‘Tanagra style’ figures, male and female cult followers and priests, pregnant female ‘orans’ figures, votive models of animals and objects, figure vessels and ampullae, and coffin fittings, with just a few miscellaneous pieces not fitting into these groups. Roman figurines largely follow the pattern set by figures of the Ptolemaic period, though with a more restricted subject range and are fewer in number, as is also the case elsewhere in Upper and Lower Egypt. For ease of discussion, Greek deities and mythological characters, actors and ‘Tanagra style’ figures are grouped together under ‘Local Greek’ style figures, which all have a similar temporal distribution. Similarly ‘orans’ figures, votive models of animals, objects and figure vessels are grouped together under the term ‘Egyptian votive or magic’ figures.

2.1 Egyptian deities

Egyptian deities were popular subjects in local terracotta production since the founding of Naukratis and represent a continuation of Late Period practice, albeit in a more ‘naturalistic’ Hellenistic style that mixed both Greek and Egyptian cultural symbols, as was common across Ptolemaic Egypt. They remain popular throughout the Ptolemaic and Roman periods, though their production declines with time, as does the manufacture of figurines at Naukratis in general. Despite this they are attested until the end of the 2nd or possibly early 3rd century AD. Of the Egyptian deities, Harpokrates (Fig. 8, with distinctly Ptolemaic period iconography) is by far the most frequent, though his mother Isis-Hathor (Fig. 9), the Sothic dogs (Fig. 10) associated with her cult and his protector, Bes (Fig. 11), were also popular, with hundreds of examples found. As in the Late Period, the majority come from domestic contexts, which is unsurprising as these were deities associated with protection, fertility and childbirth, commonly found in similar contexts also at other Egyptian sites, such as Memphis. They represent a continuity of Egyptian domestic religion from the Late Period, concerned with family health and protection. Other deities, such as the Apis bull (Fig. 12), Boubastis, or Serapis are rare. The new Ptolemaic and Roman period representations of Serapis, the Sothic dog, and busts of Apis are proportionally increasingly common in the Roman period, when Serapis begins to appear more frequently on figures, medallions, lamps and other moulded terracottas. Some animals may be associated with Egyptian cults, such as a hawk and Horus. A cat (Fig. 13) is possibly a

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25 The variety of female figure types produced in Egypt at this time and identified as Hathor, Isis-Hathor, Aphrodite-Isis, Isis anasyr(o)mene, Isis lactans and others are discussed critically by Bailey (2008, 7–11, with extended bibliography), and updated with numerous more recent studies (see Malaise 2014).
26 Numerous parallels available from the Petrie Museum’s online catalogue, although many are dated incorrectly.
27 Bailey 2008, 28–30. Not represented at all in the Late Period or early Ptolemaic assemblage from Naukratis.
representation of Bubastis (a Hellenized version of the Egyptian goddess Bastet), with parallels from an early Ptolemaic sanctuary dedicated to Bubastis of the 3rd century BC in Kom el Dikka, Alexandria.  

2.2 Greek deities, fantastic creatures and the theatre

The principal divergence from the preceding Late Period is the range and quantity of locally produced terracotta figures of Greek style and subject that became particularly popular in the 3rd century BC, although they had declined into obscurity by the Roman period. Especially favoured were representations of civilians and actors, which become common from the late 4th and 3rd centuries BC onwards. These include poor quality copies of women and children in the ‘Tanagra style’, as well as representations of actors and theatre masks. (Fig. 15) Greek deities (Fig. 14), mythological scenes and characters were not particularly popular and rarely produced locally.  

Figurines of deities are usually imported representations of Greek goddesses: Demeter, Aphrodite, Artemis and Athena (Fig. 53). Like the few locally made examples, they are also early (late 4th to 3rd century BC) and mostly come from sanctuaries. Male Greek deities are rare, with Dionysus (Fig. 14), Eros and Priapos being the most popular represented within this small group.

Depictions of Greek mythological creatures, such as satyrs and maenads, are rare at Naukratis. However, (theatre) masks of satyrs (Fig. 15) are numerous, a common decorative trope that fits with the masks and models of theatre subjects and actors. It seems that early Ptolemaic Naukratis followed the fashions that were sweeping across the Hellenistic world during the beginning of the 4th century BC. Greek style figures were mostly found in domestic contexts, possibly used for decorating homes, although some of the representations of Greek deities were used as offerings in Greek sanctuaries. Local representations of Egyptian deities or imported Greek and Cypriot representations of Greek deities were more suitable for votive offerings in the Greek sanctuaries. It seems that Egyptian subjects, even if made in a Greek style, were most suited in Ptolemaic times to settings in the home. Figurative art was popular during the Ptolemaic period as a form of decoration used to embellish the household and terracotta household objects (such as portable stoves). It was especially popular in the early Ptolemaic period, albeit less so in the Roman period.

There are a few representations of warriors, including an emperor ‘Hadrian’ as a legionary (Fig. 16), and of characters going about more ordinary pursuits such as fishermen or teachers. A large group of ‘Tanagra style’ figures include in particular representations of draped women, but also of boys and girls. These have been found well distributed at Naukratis, in

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28 Unpublished examples are known from the Bubasteion found in Kom el Dikka in Alexandria (Seif El Din, pers. comm.).

29 As has also been recognized for Athens and other Greek settlements (Ammerman 1990, 38–40), where only Aphrodite and Dionysus were commonly depicted.

30 The use of figurines for decoration as well as ritual and religious purposes is discussed by Burn and Higgins (2001, 21). The use of terracotta figures in Greece may well be different from those found elsewhere, and context is clearly important for understanding function and meaning. On the primary function of figurines as religious, see Boutantin (2014, 543–5).

31 Please see the catalogue entry for Boston Museum of Fine Arts no. 86.449 and the argument of Bailey for the British Museum parallel for this identification as Hadrian (2008, no. 3509). Bailey discusses the merits of the interpretation of parallels as the emperors Marcus Aurelius, Caracalla, Diocletian, Septimus Severus and Lucius Verus.
workshops, the cemetery, wells, domestic and sanctuary contexts as they were found across mainland Greece, East Greece and North Africa too.  

2.3 Figures connected with Egyptian religion or rituals

Models of votive objects, animals, figure vases and representations of nude and pregnant women praying (Fig. 17) were popular local products. They have not been found in large quantities, but remained popular until the Roman period. The depictions of pregnant women may represent a continued use of this symbolism in the Egyptian practice of magico-medical rites from the Late Period (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures), or they may have been intended as protective amulets. Some had loops (Fig. 17) for suspension for this reason. These figures seem to be part of a long-lived tradition, with similar subjects depicted on Late Period limestone plaques. They continued to be popular into the Roman and Byzantine period, with figures that are frequently labeled ‘beneficent demon’ by modern scholars when discussing examples of the 1st century and 2nd century AD (Fig. 18), or ‘orans’ figures for those produced during the Byzantine period, when they became integrated into Christian ritual at Abu Mena. Along with the nude female and ithyphallic youth figures (discussed in the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures) that by the Ptolemaic period can be identified as the Egyptian deities Harpokrates (Fig. 19) and Hathor (Fig. 1), they have a long history of use at Naukratis extending for at least a millennium.

By far the most common representations of human figures are depictions of lay celebrants (cultists), festival-goers and priests. This rather evocative group of festival celebrants is full of fun and energy (Figs 20–3), as figures are captured performing actions pertaining to a festive procession. They are often in grotesque style or follow ‘Tanagra types’, but wear festival wreaths (Fig. 20), play instruments or carry offerings or statues to their deity. Sometimes a relationship with a specific deity can be identified, for example in the ‘water carriers’, who are possibly devotees of Demeter (Fig. 21). Other figures have been interpreted as priests and lay followers of Ptah or Harpokrates because of their distinctive shaven head and side-lock (Fig. 22). However, the precise association remains uncertain. There are also representations of black Africans, dwarfs (Fig. 23), wrestlers, dancers and other performers of the same style, date and group.

All these figures may represent followers of the wandering goddess (perhaps known at this time in Naukratis as Hathor or Isis), as she returns from the south, or other celebrants participating in inundation festivals.

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32 A survey of the context in which ‘Tanagras’ were found was conducted by Jeammet and Mathieux (2010, 160–2, table 3), highlights that they were commonly associated with sanctuaries, burial and dwellings. The presence of ‘Tanagras’ in sanctuaries and cemeteries, led them to identify the figures as representations of mortals that were used in religious rituals, tentatively associated with rites of passage for both women and men (ibid.). However, their description of the contexts of discovery in Naukratis, is incomplete and incorrect. Note their identification of Site 38 as a sanctuary (Jeammet and Mathieux 2010, 278, table 3, quoting Gutch 1898-9, 70) is incorrect, as this is a workshop. Such figures were found in a wide variety of contexts in Naukratis.

33 Frankfurter 2014, 125-41.

34 See the discussion by Bailey (2008, 55–8), with references.

Indeed, the depiction of wine, music and phalluses may relate to symbolism concerning the festival of drunkenness, though this is not certain. The iconography represents festival-goers, and is often not specific enough to discern which festival of which deity is referred to, if it was ever intended to be so specific. Thus these may concern the festivals of various deities undertaken at different times of the year. During Ptolemaic festivals and processions, a range of performers was hired, including musicians and actors, raising the question whether the ‘Greek style’ theatre and satyr masks could have been reappropriated or reinterpreted by Hellenized Egyptian inhabitants of Naukratis as representations of Egyptian religious festivals, rather than aspects of Greek culture. It is tempting to associate these festivities with the (infamous) inundation festivals, though other processions are possible, too.

Whilst some of the figures clearly were modelled on Greek types (water carriers, Fig. 21), or shared common styles and subjects with Greek interpretations of the same or related subjects (grotesques), they seem fully appropriated by Naukratites and incorporated into the vast array of Ptolemaic figurines they consumed. Although Roman examples exist, their number is tiny in comparison to this largely 3rd century BC to 1st century BC phenomenon at Naukratis.

Several small model votives of weapons, shields and the Archimedes screw have also been found, mostly in workshops and largely of mid-Ptolemaic date. Animal figures are also represented across all periods, as are figure vases that commonly represent Dionysus, a bunch of grapes or performers.

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39 Barrett 2011, 308-9, 433. See the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures.
40 See Bailey 2008, 55-8 for further literature.
3. Roman figures: iconography and meaning

Roman period figures at Naukratis are quite different to those of the Ptolemaic period, a pattern recognized also at Memphis43 and already discussed in depth by Don Bailey,14 with well-dated parallels from Mons Claudianus45 and Quseir Al-Qadim.46 Differences include a change in style, quality, subject and quantity produced and consumed at Naukratis. Over the course of the Roman period, a cruder stylized figure-type was being made across Egypt, featuring the changing hairstyle fashions of the time, with its own distinct style from the late 1st or 2nd century AD. These figures were mass produced, without much of the fine detail found on some of the Hellenistic types.47 Good parallels are known from across Egypt,48 including Karanis in the Fayum,49 Heracleopolis Magna,50 Koptos51 and Middle Egypt.52

Roman figures across Egypt are dominated by representations of the so-called ‘beneficent demon’ figures (Fig. 25) that represent a (pregnant?) woman, usually naked, praying.53 Representations of Isis enthroned with Harpokrates, or nude standing Isis-Hathor (Fig. 26), Harpokrates, ‘Sothic’ dogs54 (Fig. 10) and riders (Figs 27–8) were also very popular from the mid-1st to the early 3rd centuries AD, with good parallels from sites with secure independent dating to the Trajanic and Antonine periods.55 Understanding the precise trends of continuity and change from preceding periods is difficult, as there is a significant reduction in the use of terracotta figures in the Roman period, compared with the preceding periods. Also many of the pieces that may be Roman cannot be given precise dates on the basis of the parallels available in the current literature. What is distinct, is that representations of the most popular Egyptian deities, as well as of praying pregnant women, riders and animals, continue to be popular well into the Roman period.

Despite changes in production quality and quantity, the reduced variety of figure subjects represents a reversion to the normal range of types used within Egyptian society before the Ptolemaic period. The Ptolemaic period may have had an impact on the techniques, technology and style of figures, but the subjects represented are very similar to those found in

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43 Thomas and Nicholson 2013, 201.
46 Thomas 2011a, 79–84.
47 Barrett 2011, 89–116. Note, however, that Barrett in her study assessed Roman terracottas from Egypt and compared them to Hellenistic Greek terracottas. Barrett’s comment on how Egyptian producers prized time-efficiency over the aesthetic appearance focused on by Hellenistic Greek producers (Barrett 2011, 117) is correct. In fact, the difference is not as stark when one compares contemporary assemblages for the two different regions, as the production techniques are more similar during the same period (see above).
48 Bayer–Niemeier 1988, no. 261, also no. 307; Dewachter 1986, 85, no. 103; Castiglione 1969, pl. xic.
49 Allen 1985, nos 82 and 83.
51 Ballet and Galliano 2010.
54 For recent discussion see Boutain 2014, 218–35.
preceding periods. As in the Late Period, the Egyptian terracottas produced at Naukratis attest to a significant proportion, if not majority, of the inhabitants of Naukratis holding traditional Egyptian beliefs.

By the 3rd century AD, the use of terracotta figures had all but disappeared at Naukratis. A few figurines, mostly of riders or animals, have been found dating to the mid and late Roman periods, but these are rare despite the continued existence of Naukratis during the difficult 3rd and 4th centuries AD and a slight revival in the Byzantine period.56 By the Byzantine period other objects served as artefacts of devotion, such as lamps and vessels (Figs 29–31) used as containers for eulogia (blessings of oil, water or dirt), although they are rarely visible as such unless the word (‘τὐλογία’, Fig. 31) is specifically written on the object, as is the case with just one example.57 The votive function of the mould-made ampullae produced in the settlement of Abu Mena is clear from the stamped image they bear of the patron saint of the site.58

4. Dating and contexts

In Hellenistic Greece, terracotta figurines were deposited in sanctuaries, cemeteries and domestic contexts59 and the same is also true for Naukratis. The contexts in which figurines were found is significant for understanding how they were used in activities at Naukratis, such as their dedication in Greek shrines or Egyptian temples60 and their utilization in magico-medical rites, domestic religion and burial rituals. These rituals were everyday practices important to the inhabitants of Naukratis. In some contexts at Naukratis such practices may be specifically local, in other cases more general Egyptian or pan-Hellenic. It is clear from the fieldwork of Petrie, Gardner, Hogarth, Coulson and Leonard that figurines were found distributed across the site of Naukratis, with certain types concentrated in sanctuaries, whilst others were found in industrial production areas. The unequal distribution of terracotta types is significant for understanding religious practices, ethnicity, (the presence or absence of) long-distance trade, industry and settlement patterns across the site.

Petrie, Gardner and Hogarth rarely recorded precise findspot and stratigraphic information for the Ptolemaic and Roman figures from Naukratis as they focused on the earlier phases of the site.61 When we are provided with information on location, it is often vague.62 The excavations

56 Thomas 2014b, 202–3, fig. 13.
57 British Museum, OA.9431.
60 Gutch 1898–9, 71; Petrie 1886a, 13–16; Gardner 1888, 55–7; Edgar 1905, 131.
61 Large numbers were acquired by the excavators from the sebbakhin (Petrie 1886a, 45; Hogarth 'list of antiquities' of 1903, a box list of finds, all of which were sent to the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford), but even those that were excavated were not published with contextual information. Petrie did attempt to get the findspot information from the finders with variable success and reliability; see for example Petrie's terracotta workshop 'Site 95' (Petrie 1886a, 45; Bailey 2008, 3–5). A notable exception is the excavation that Petrie and Griffith recorded in their notebooks of a Ptolemaic house which revealed a seated woman in 'Tanagra style' (Fig. 32, see Petrie notebook 1885, 84; Griffith notebook 1885, 12)
62 Hogarth and Gutch describe a sandy deposit laid in response to rising groundwater during the Ptolemaic period, which provided a distinct horizon above which the Ptolemaic and Roman figures were found. This appears to refer to the north-eastern part of the site, including the Hellenion and adjacent areas (Hogarth 1898–9, 37; Gutch 1898–9, 70–1).
of Leonard introduced a detailed observation of stratigraphy to Naukratis and provided an additional corpus of 33 figures, most of which were found within 3rd to 1st century BC contexts in the ‘South Mound’ and Kom Hadid. 63 The chronological sequence of some figurine types has moreover been complemented and confirmed by recent excavations at the site. 64

As a result of our study of these figurines, a corpus of some 200 terracotta figures that have some form of recorded context (excluding all the coffin-fittings) has now been assembled. It comprises mostly fragments found in the town and eastern town (Fig. 32). The majority were found as fragments, probably within rubbish layers associated with houses, as are common in Egyptian and other settlements of this period. 65 The contexts in which figures have been found are discussed below, starting with the evidence for production in workshops from the presence of moulds and wasters. This is followed by a discussion of the use of the figures and their subsequent breakage and disposal in domestic settings in the town. Next to be considered are the Ptolemaic and Roman figures found as votive offerings within the sanctuaries of Aphrodite, Hera, Apollo, the Hellenion and their associated wells. Finally, attention turns to the figures and coffin-fittings deposited within graves.

4.1 Naukratis terracotta workshops

The production of Ptolemaic figurines at Naukratis is attested by numerous mould and waster fragments. In Hellenistic Greece, terracotta figurine production is often found in association with public buildings (such as theatres), sanctuaries and industrial areas. 66 In Naukratis at least two workshops were situated within an industrial area in the north-eastern part of the town, just east of the Hellenion and alongside other workshops. 67 These two terracotta workshops are broadly contemporary, but produced different types of terracotta figure. 68 Numerous other local terracotta ‘industries’ have been identified on the basis of figures and moulds in other styles, using different techniques and technologies, but cannot be specifically located. Chronological changes, but also different contemporary choices concerning technology, technique and subject provide useful information on the decisions and innovations made by the coroplasts in response to local market demands.

The oldest workshop so far discovered at Naukratis is Hogarth’s ‘Site 38’, where four moulds (Figs 33–4) and 23 figures were found. From the end of the 4th century BC, and possibly into the 2nd century BC, it produced a
range of early Hellenistic Greek influenced figurines.\textsuperscript{69} The hollow figures were made from local Nile silt in a two or three part mould (heads were often added) with a vent at the back, made, and fired at a stable but low temperature in an oxidizing atmosphere. They were then coated with a gypsum-based wash as a preparation for painted decoration.\textsuperscript{70} Production included female figures of ‘Tanagra style’ (nine figures plus a mould) as well as actors or their masks (two moulds) and female water bearers (hydrophoroi, two examples), all of types typical of the late 4th and 3rd century BC. A mould for the head of an African (Fig. 34) and eight figures of devotees wearing festival wreaths of slightly later style dated to the 3rd or 2nd century BC have also been found here. Representations of Aphrodite, Isis and Demeter (Fig. 35) are known from the Site 38 assemblage, otherwise rarely attested at Naukratis, where the subjects depicted are generally of people performing an expression of devotion, a performance (possibly associated with religious festivals) or everyday activities. The figures from Site 38 are of relatively high quality for Egyptian production, imitating better quality Hellenistic figurines of the ‘Tanagra style’.\textsuperscript{71} These are the earliest Egyptian hollow figurines produced at Naukratis, if not in all of Egypt.

A second workshop was identified by Petrie in 1886, labelled ‘Site 95’ and erroneously dated to the Roman period.\textsuperscript{72} This workshop produced a range of hollow figures (Figs 6–7) and models (Fig. 36) of the 3rd to 2nd century BC,\textsuperscript{73} possibly overlapping with the production at Hogarth’s ‘Site 38’. At least 20 figures, including wasters and two moulds (Fig. 5) have been found here alongside a Ptolemaic lamp\textsuperscript{74} and other finds. The figures depict traditional Egyptian subjects: the deities Harpokrates, Isis-Hathor, pregnant women, priests and devotees wearing festival wreaths, models of swords, shields, horns, boats (and other objects) as well as animals and a theatre mask.

Other moulds known from Naukratis lack recorded provenances and may come from either of these workshops or indeed from other areas of the site. Moulds and wasters from Late Period Egyptian terracotta figure production are known, but have no findspot (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures)\textsuperscript{75}, and may represent earlier activity within these workshops or separate industries. Other moulds (but without findspot information) are broadly contemporary (Ptolemaic) with the two known workshops sites 38 and 95.\textsuperscript{76} Moulds are also preserved for the production of related ceramic objects such as coffin-fittings,\textsuperscript{77} mould-made relief-ware pottery\textsuperscript{78} and lamps of Ptolemaic\textsuperscript{79} and Roman date\textsuperscript{80} (see the chapter on Lamps in terracotta and bronze and the forthcoming chapter on Ptolemaic

\textsuperscript{69} For techniques of construction see Muller (2010, 100-3) and Kassab Tezgöz (2010, 186).
\textsuperscript{70} The kiln wasters are not slipped, coated or painted (Figs 6–7).
\textsuperscript{71} Kassab Tezgöz 2010, 186–7.
\textsuperscript{72} Petrie 1886a, 45.
\textsuperscript{73} Bailey 2008, 3–5, 51.
\textsuperscript{74} See Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, GR.202.1899.
\textsuperscript{75} British Museum, 1886,0401.1541.
\textsuperscript{76} Mask (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 86.672); swan (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.733), man and woman (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-E.4802); and a head from a figure or fitting (Musées Royaux d’Art et d’Histoire, Brussels, A.1838).
\textsuperscript{77} Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.908. Putative identification.
\textsuperscript{78} Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.910; 88.909; see Bailey 2011.
\textsuperscript{79} Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.907; RES.87.234; Castle Museum, Nottingham, NCM 1898-86.
\textsuperscript{80} British Museum, 1886,0401.1366.
pottery), which may have been part of the same industry based in the same workshops. As contemporary coffin-fittings, relief-ware pottery, lamps and stoves display the use of the same materials, technologies and techniques as Ptolemaic figurines, it is reasonable to assume they were produced and marketed by the same people during a period when figurative art appeared in many media and was readily available to Naukratis’ inhabitants.

4.2 Naukratis town

As with other Egyptian sites, the majority of the 134 Roman and Ptolemaic figure fragments known to have come from the town at Naukratis, probably come from the domestic rubbish deposits, where they were discarded at the end of their useful lives. This is confirmed by a number of examples from the stratigraphically recorded excavations by Leonard in Kom Hadid and the South Mound portions of the settlement area. The figure assemblage collected by Petrie and Hogarth from likely domestic contexts at Naukratis is much like that found in the two workshops and the areas excavated by Leonard; indeed they are sometimes from the same mould-series. Judging from fabric and mould series, the vast majority was made in Naukratis. The figurines represent the requirements and concerns of the Greek and Egyptian inhabitants of Naukratis. A significant proportion of the assemblage comprises representations of popular deities, particularly Harpokrates (19), and his protector Bes (2), his mother Isis-Hathor (6) and her (?) dog, Sothis (1), a Pan and two of Priapos (Fig. 37). ‘Tanagra-style’ figures of women and actors (8) were popular, as were representations of priests and worshippers dressed for a festival. Representations of pregnant females may have been used in medical rites as a continuation of earlier practices (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures). The assemblage excavated from Kom Hadid included representations of Harpokrates (3 and 2 uncertain, Fig. 38), Isis-Hathor (4), Sothis (1), females (5), actors and their masks (2) and figure vessels (1), whilst the assemblage from the Ptolemaic building on the South Mound, which encroached upon the Great Temenos, also consisted mainly of Harpokrates (4) and Isis-Hathor (3) as well as two unidentifiable figures.

The evidence thus suggests that many of the houses of Naukratis contained terracotta images of deities and cultists performing in religious festivals or rituals, including Hellenized versions of Egyptian deities. Greek subjects are rare, other than those that concern specific elements of ‘Greek’ culture, such as the theatre and women wearing Greek dress. It may well be the case that these were incorporated into daily Egyptian life without carrying the same meaning as in other parts of the Hellenistic (and later Roman) world. Instead, representations of actors and satyrs, reinterpreted for an Egyptian audience, may have been thought of as referencing performers in the Egyptian religious festivals attested in documentary sources.

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**Footnotes:**

81 Probably, but not certainly all from houses.
84 Montserrat 1996, 170.
Most common are representations of Egyptian deities that represented domestic concerns; Harpokrates, his mother Isis (Fig. 39) and protector Bes (Fig. 40), and her dog (?) Sothis. Other than cultists and priests, figures of praying pregnant females may be seen as a successor of the Late Period limestone plaques (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures), a type that subsequently continued into the Roman period where it developed into the ‘beneficent demon’ and later ‘orans’ types. The general impression given by the terracotta assemblage is that figurine iconography across time reflects predominantly the local worship of Egyptian deities.

Representations of Greek deities declined from the beginning of the Ptolemaic to the Roman periods. The ‘secularization’ of terracotta production generally in the Hellenistic world had a significant impact also on Naukratite terracotta production in the late 4th century BC, resulting in the addition to the local repertoire of primarily decorative small-scale figurative art for a domestic setting. However, throughout the Ptolemaic period local demand also remained strong for representations of lay worshippers and priests of Egyptian deities. It is possible that the patterns of terracotta figurine consumption at Naukratis were influenced by the settlement’s long association with Greece and the Greek visitors’ and inhabitants’ practice of dedicating representations of dedicants in the local Greek sanctuaries, or by the new wave of Greeks that settled in Egypt at the beginning of the Hellenistic period. The fact that over time representations of Egyptian deities remained dominant suggests that a community following Egyptian religion remained significant throughout the Late Period, Ptolemaic and Roman period sat Naukratis. However, there was a change in how terracotta figures were produced and use in Egyptian religion over this long period. In the Roman period, the subjects represented in figurines remained largely the same, at least as far as the range of Egyptian deities were concerned, although their diversity and quantity declined significantly. ‘Beneficent demons’ became relatively popular (though never very frequent) and representations of cultists and priests declined and eventually all but disappeared at Naukratis as well as elsewhere in Egypt.

### 4.3 Naukratis cemetery

An area of particular interest in Naukratis is the cemetery, which was excavated, but poorly published, by E.A. Gardner in 1886 and has been largely ignored by subsequent studies. Gardner states that the cemetery yielded ‘little or nothing’ of 6th century date and only ‘one or two’ 6th century vases, leading him to conclude that the cemetery was mostly early

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85 Sothic dog of Isis, a representation of the Dog Star, Sirius (Bayer-Niemeier 1988, pl.109.7, no. 626; Dunand 1990, nos 867–76; Besques 1992, pl. 80 D/E no.4541; Szymańska 2005, 259 and no. 264; Bailey 2008, nos 3704–15). The rising of the dog star (Sirrus), personified by the Egyptian goddess Sothis, was the harbinger of the Nile flood (Jasnow and Smith 2011, 50–1; Montserrat 1996, 170). The animal could simply be depicting a common dog (see discussion by Boutantin 2014, 217–50). However, the consistent iconography of a double stranded collar with a bulla pendant around the ‘spitz-type’ hound’s neck and its occasional association in figure groups with both Isis and Harpokrates suggests that those dogs possessed some symbolic significance and were associated with Isis in some way (Bailey 2008, 175).

86 See the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures (Type L-F.3).

87 Ammerman 1990, 38.

88 Möller 2000, 197.
Ptolemaic. The area excavated revealed mainly Ptolemaic material (Figs 41–5), even if a number of objects survive that are clearly of 6th, 5th and 4th century date (see also the chapter on Topography). Much of the earlier (Archaic period) cemetery may still lie underneath the modern villages of Rashwan and Abu Mishfa to the north of the main settlement of ancient Naukratis.

The cemetery produced an important group of early Ptolemaic period terracottas, a large number of terracotta coffin fittings (172 recorded to date, excluding four imported 5th century BC examples). Originally from wooden coffins (which have not survived), and frequently gilded (Fig. 41), this well-known industry at Naukratis was popular enough for its coffins to be distributed to nearby Kom Firin, Memphis and Alexandria. The majority of the fittings date to the Macedonian or early Ptolemaic period (c. 332–250 BC), and were probably made in Naukratis, as attested by the massive duplication of types and moulds for fittings found both by Gardner and also more recently by Ali Hakim in the northern part of the site (unpublished, Ali Hakim pers. comm.). These fittings were usually made from the local micaceous brown Nile silt pressed into a one-piece mould and then fired. They were given a thin white coating of calcite before being painted and sometimes gilded. The fittings come in a limited range of forms, many from the same mould series. Only five different types (with variants) were produced, including heads of Medusa (Fig. 42), occasionally with wings added to her temple (72), rosettes (40) bukrania (22, Fig. 43), eagle-griffins (19, Fig. 44) and lion-griffins (15, Fig. 45). These are all common motifs on Hellenistic coffins and other burial furniture. The range of subjects produced at Naukratis is very similar to that of fittings produced and used elsewhere in the Eastern Mediterranean and North Africa (particularly Cyrenaica), and represents a conscious choice on the part of the inhabitants of Naukratis to bury their dead in a Hellenistic Greek fashion.

Other terracotta figurines have rarely been found in a funerary context at Naukratis; just seven other examples are known, only two of which are complete. The two intact examples are early imported Greek figurines of ‘Tanagra type’, one a figure group of Eros and Aphrodite, the other a child with a musical instrument. The latter depicts a boy holding a lyre with a tortoiseshell sound-box; it was found in the cemetery and is dated to the mid-3rd century BC. It has a white coating with added detail painted in pink, dark red, rose madder, yellow and blue. Made of fine pale-buff clay in a two-piece mould and with well-modelled detail, it was originally thought to be from Alexandria. However, the pale, finely levigated fabric most

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89 Hogarth et al. 1905.
90 Parlasca 2001, 175–82.
91 Spencer 2008, 12.
92 Petrie Museum, London, UC48468. However, this may have been incorrectly assigned to Memphis by Petrie, and so could have come from Naukratis.
93 Breccia 1912, pl. lxxix; Breccia 1930, pl. xlv. no. 6; Breccia 1934.
94 A few of the Medusa heads have been dated to the later Roman period based on stylistic grounds, though this interpretation may be overturned by further research at the site.
95 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.908.
96 Edgar 1905; Besques 1992; Parlasca 2001; Spencer 2008, 12.
97 Besques 1992, 81, 84.
98 Winter 1903, 353, no. 5; Bailey 1999, 160 n. 19; Bailey 2008, 67 (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures).
closely resembles clays from the central Greek mainland,\textsuperscript{100} and also the coating of white kaolinite,\textsuperscript{101} which is rare in Egypt and not found near Alexandria, is a common feature on terracotta figurines from Attica and Boeotia.\textsuperscript{102} Two webbed, clawed feet are probably fittings from an item of funeral furniture or tomb monument.\textsuperscript{103} The remaining three fragmentary pieces are local ‘Tanagra style’ copies cannot have come from undisturbed graves, but may have been grave offerings that were disturbed by subsequent activity within the cemetery, either ancient or modern.

4.5 The sanctuaries of Naukratis

The figurines found at the Greek sanctuaries in Naukratis were different from those found in the town. Many votive terracotta figures were found to have been deposited in the Archaic and Classical Greek sanctuaries of Naukratis (see the chapters on Cypriot figures and Greek terracotta figures). There was a significant drop in this practice during the Ptolemaic period (although in this case, the term Hellenistic may be more suitable) as the limited continuity of this practice appears to have been largely brought about by visitors, rather than by Naukratis’ inhabitants.

The Hellenion possesses the strongest evidence for terracotta votives (16 pieces), followed by the sanctuary of Aphrodite (12). The assemblages from both sites consisted of representations of female subjects. At the Hellenion most of the figures were representations of Greek deities or mythical scenes, while a few are representations of Egyptian deities (Fig. 46). The majority of pieces from the Hellenion were of East Greek origin, including four fragments of a female figure in front of a sanctuary, two joining fragments of a nude Aphrodite standing on shell, a Europa and the bull and another unidentified female figure (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures). A single representation of Artemis(?) wearing a kalathos came from Cyprus (see the chapter on Cypriot figures). Egyptian pieces included five fragments of nude Isis-Hathor types (Fig. 46), one unidentified, a Dionysus flask (Fig. 47) and an Eros (Fig. 48).

The sanctuary of Aphrodite was rebuilt in the Ptolemaic and Roman periods\textsuperscript{104} and from these later contexts come three Ptolemaic female figures, some in ‘Tanagra style’ (Fig. 49), presumably representations of worshippers. A sphinx and two Roman camel figures (Fig. 50) were also found. However, the small number of fragmentary figures preserved from this sanctuary between the 4th century BC and the 3rd century AD are not sufficient evidence for the continued practice of figure dedications within the sanctuary, not least as its final phases were disturbed before Petrie began his excavations. Similarly, in the sanctuary of Hera only a single fragment of a nude Isis-Hathor figure was found, calling into question whether this area was still operating as a sanctuary at the time. The

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\textsuperscript{100} Burn and Higgins 2001, pl. II. 2051, clay fabric illustrated.
\textsuperscript{101} Joyner and Bowman 1999; Bailey 2008, 67.
\textsuperscript{102} Burn and Higgins 2001, 307–12.
\textsuperscript{103} University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology & Anthropology, Philadelphia, E118; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, RES.87.158. Parallels from Alexandria have been dated to the ‘probably Roman’ period (Seif el-Din 1998, 176–7, fig. 14), but are likely to be Ptolemaic in this case.
\textsuperscript{104} Gardner 1888, 37, pl. 3.
sanctuary of Apollo likewise yielded only a single fragment of a figure vessel of a queen or (more likely) kalathos-wearing goddess (Fig. 51).

Ptolemaic terracotta figures were also found in wells associated with the Greek sanctuaries of Apollo and Aphrodite, possibly as ritual deposits associated with the sanctuaries. A ‘Tanagra style’ figure (Fig. 52) and an Athena (Fig. 53) come from wells probably associated with the Hellenion. A model of an Archimedes screw (Fig. 54) was found with a ‘Bes’ and a ‘Horus’ (Harpokrates) figure by Petrie, possibly near the sanctuary of Apollo.

This rather sparse and fragmentary record of Ptolemaic and Roman terracotta figures from the sanctuaries of Naukratis is significant for two reasons. Firstly, while figurines from these periods are attested in the sanctuaries of Apollo, Hera and Aphrodite, they pale into insignificance when compared to the far larger numbers of Archaic and Classical Greek figures found there in earlier contexts. Either the function of the precincts changed over time, or, more likely, offering practices did. Secondly, the iconography of some of these later figurines suggests that Egyptian deities had become equated with the Greek deities to whom the sanctuaries were dedicated (Isis-Hathor for Aphrodite or Hera). The few complete examples we have are from wells, and they are generally of a relatively early date (late 4th or 3rd century BC at the latest). Imported figurines from East Greece, mainland Greece and Cyprus are rare in mid- or late Ptolemaic contexts, and the majority of Hellenistic figures reached Naukratis before 250 BC. They usually depict Greek deities or mythological scenes, sometimes characters from the theatre or ‘Tanagra-style’ draped women and were found almost exclusively in Greek sanctuaries or the cemetery (see the chapter on Greek terracotta figures). The one religious context where imported pieces are attested in some quantity is the Hellenion, where a number of female Greek deities (Demeter, Aphrodite, Artemis and Athena) come from early Hellenistic contexts. Again, the Egyptian figures found there usually depict Isis-Hathor, representing an interpretatio aegyptica of the Greek gods.

As with the terracottas from the cemetery, the imported pieces from sanctuary contexts mostly appear to date to the Macedonian or very early Ptolemaic periods. Could it be that they represent the final phase of Naukratis as the premier port for Mediterranean trade of Egypt? While the imported pieces may reflect practices of visiting traders from Greece, local demand in this period appears to have had a different focus, involving predominantly Egyptian figures and their use for different purposes. The diminishing role of Naukratis as a destination for foreign traders is perhaps

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105 It is not always clear from Hogarth’s and Petrie’s unpublished excavation journals exactly which well is which and how they relate to their published maps.
107 Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-G.80. This was found in well 36, also known as well B, alongside an early Ptolemaic figure and numerous local and imported pottery vessels (Hogarth 1898–9, 34–5; Gutch 1898–9, 92; Edgar 1905, 123, fig. 3). The style is unusual for the Ptolemaic period (the eyes and hair style resemble those found on Roman terracottas), so this could be a later piece, calling into question the dating given by Edgar, based on an assessment by von Bissing (i.e. c. 525–330 BC). The pottery from this mixed context is discussed in the chapters on Egyptian Late Period pottery, Greek transport amphorae and Locally produced Greek pottery.
109 The ‘Bes’ and a ‘Horus’ figures to date remain unidentified (Petrie 1886a, 44).
the obvious explanation for the decline of this long Archaic to Classical Cypro-Greek tradition of traders leaving offerings at Naukratis.

5. Conclusions

Five significant patterns emerge from the analysis of the Ptolemaic, Hellenistic and Roman figure corpus from Naukratis. First, a significant reduction can be observed in the number of imported figures at Naukratis when compared with the preceding periods. Imports in this period account for only 3% (53) of the whole figure assemblage. The few imported figures are concentrated within the Hellenion and Aphrodite sanctuaries; they date from the late 4th or early 3rd century BC and are of a very different character from figures found in the Ptolemaic houses. Imports to Naukratis were rare just a generation after the founding of Alexandria.

Secondly, a new terracotta industry, represented by at least two workshops, was set up in Naukratis in the late 4th and early 3rd centuries BC. This industry utilized new techniques and technology to produce a new style of figurine influenced by mainland Greek prototypes of the so-called ‘Tanagra style’ (Fig. 52). However, these Egyptian copies were produced more rapidly than their Greek archetypes. It has long been recognized that mainland Greece, specifically Athens and Boeotia (including but not exclusively the town of Tanagra) was a major influence on the early Hellenistic style figures produced at Alexandria. The same may also be the case for Naukratis. However, given the long-standing and direct influence on the terracotta (and pottery) production at Naukratis from East Greece and Cyprus, it is possible that it was industries in those areas that inspired, or were involved in, the introduction of new techniques and fashions to Naukratis. The new hollow mould-made figures and fittings, often with a back vent, account for 46% of the terracotta figure corpus from Naukratis (37 to 43% dating to the Ptolemaic, 4 to 9% to the Roman period).

Thirdly, we see a massive increase in the number and range of figurines produced at Naukratis, with many heavily influenced in technique and style by Hellenistic fashion. Greek ‘Tanagra’ style figures made in workshop ‘Site 38’ and representing Greek deities (Fig. 53), women, actors and masks were very popular in Macedonia and Greece during the early Hellenistic period. At Naukratis their production proved a highly successful industry, despite the poor quality Nile silt fabric available and the apparent lack of processing of this fabric. The industry focused on speed and efficiency, with the quality and detail of the workmanship reducing over time. Its success was based on a significant demand for Greek things on the part of the inhabitants of Naukratis, including it seems the use of figurines as decorative objects in the home. Decorative intent is also evident in the spread of Hellenistic figurative art to other domestic artefact types such as portable stoves and lamps (see the chapters on Lamps in terracotta and bronze and Portable stoves), common across the Greek

110 See the chapters on the Greek terracotta figures and Cypriot figures.
111 Kassab Tezgör 2007.
112 Using plaster or ceramic moulds.
113 The fabric is poorly sorted, with organic inclusions, which produced a rough surface causing numerous moulding errors in the final product.
world, and to the cemetery with the introduction of fine gilded coffin fittings for Greek style coffins, known also elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean and North Africa. At least some of the Naukratites thus made a conscious choice to live and to bury their dead in a Hellenistic Greek fashion.\textsuperscript{114} However, a primarily decorative intent cannot be assumed for all terracottas, as many figures in Naukratis (and the rest of Egypt) depicted aspects of, and appear to have been used in, Egyptian religion.\textsuperscript{115}

Fourthly, despite the introduction of new techniques and of a fashionable ‘naturalistic’ Hellenistic style, the subjects presented in the majority of terracotta figures\textsuperscript{116} remain concern with Egyptian religion, particularly the already popular Egyptian deities Harpokrates, Isis, as well as pregnant female fertility figurines (see the chapter on Late Period Egyptian figures). Particularly common in domestic settings, Egyptian deities appear also on other artefact groups in the later Ptolemaic period, specifically lamps (see the chapter on Lamps in terracotta and bronze). These figures were common in all periods, representing the most popular and long-lived subjects of Egyptian coroplastics; Egyptian gods, which continued to be produced until the 3rd century AD. They attest the continued importance of Egyptian religion at Naukratis from its beginnings until the Byzantine period. The tradition of making mould-made terracottas continued into the Byzantine period in Egypt, with female figures, figure vessels and amphullae still being produced, but for Christian customers.

Finally the Roman material is quite different from that of earlier periods. Whilst representations of Egyptian deities, particularly Harpokrates and Isis, continued to be popular, the diversity and quantity of terracotta figures significantly drops after the 1st century BC. Their character also changes, becoming more stylized in the 1st century AD. The local terracotta workshops at Naukratis may have already ceased production in the Augustan period, with no moulds known from the Roman period. The pieces seem to be made of a Nile silt fabric different from that previously common at Naukratis.\textsuperscript{117} However, the decline in the production and use of terracotta figures in Naukratis, as elsewhere in Egypt, had already begun by the late 2nd century AD.

\textsuperscript{114} For contemporary parallels from Cyrenaica see Besques 1992, 81, 84, pl. 47, 51–3.

\textsuperscript{115} Boutantin 2014, 53–72, 543–5.

\textsuperscript{116} Particularly the production of workshop ‘Site 95’.

\textsuperscript{117} Bailey 2008, 48, pl. 20. The fabric is finer, chocolate brown Nile silt, seen also in Nile valley figures found at Myos Hormos and Mons Claudianus (Bailey 2006, 264; Thomas 2011a, 79).