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FEMALE REPRESENTATIONS
FROM TELL EL-FARKHA

In 2006 a spectacular discovery was made on the Western Kom at Tell el-Farkha. In the western part of the so called administrative-cultic centre, dated to the end of Dynasty 0 and the beginning of Dynasty 1, a room was discovered that certainly served a cultic purpose¹. Among other objects, a small jar (23 cm in height) covered by a bowl was discovered there. The jar was decorated with ostrich and gazelles representations. Inside, 62 votive objects were found, others were discovered in the vicinity, in the same area². Human representations are dominant among the votive objects. These figurines can be divided into a few groups. One of them is formed by six representation of women.

Two of them depicted naked women. The better preserved one (8,5 cm in height), was found in 2006 in the jar mentioned (Pl. I), the second one (3 cm in height), with badly destroyed face, broken left hand and lower parts of the legs (Pl. II), was discovered outside. Both represented women standing with legs together and right arms alongside the body. One hand, with clearly modelled fingers, rests on the hip. The left arm is bent at the elbow, while the hand with similarly rendered fingers is turned up and holds the right breast. The cast of features in the better preserved exemplar are carved in detail: lips are relatively large and narrow, its nose is large and hooked, eyes almond-shaped and eyebrows slightly rounded. Lack of pupils can be the result of the surface damage. Long hair are parted in the middle, reach the waist on the back and fall on the breasts in two separated bands. The figure's womb and buttocks are plastically represented.

¹ Cf. M. Chłodnicki, K.M. Ciałowicz, *Tell el-Farkha 2006*, PAM XVIII, Warszawa 2008, pp. 127-147.

² Cf. A. Buszek, *Dwarf Figurines from Tell el-Farkha*, [in:] J. Śliwa (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization 12*, Kraków 2008, pp. 35-55; K.M. Ciałowicz, *Gazelles and Ostriches from Tell el-Farkha*, [in:] J. Śliwa (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization 12*, Kraków 2008, pp. 21-34.

Two other examples represented women in robes. First (8,0 cm in height) of them is dressed in a long robe reaching the middle of her calves, tied with a belt (Pl. III). She stands on a round basis, her legs together. In the badly damaged face a large and hooked nose, almond-shaped eyes, small and thick lips are still visible. Long hair, parted in the middle, reach the shoulders, ending roundly. In her bent, upturned hands, the woman holds a vessel: a bowl or a plate. The figure is leaning slightly forward as if she was offering the bowl. Her toes are carved in every detail. Second one (6.9 cm in height), standing on an oval basis, is dressed in a robe or coat that reaches her slightly bent knees (Pl. IV). Her feet, with clearly marked toes are put together. The arms hang alongside the body and reach the hips. All fingers are carefully modelled. The face is expressive, with large almond-shaped eyes, clearly marked eyebrows and small, relatively thick lips. The figure's nose is wide and straight. Her left ear is marked much deeper, both are large and sticking. Long hair reach the half of the back, being arranged on top into waves going from fore to back, while on the back itself the waves go horizontally.

Extremely interesting are representations of women with children. First of them (4,7 cm in height) has a child in her arms (Pl. V). The woman stands on a basis and is dressed in a long robe that reaches her ankles. Her long hair fall to the half of her back and on her probably large breasts in two separated bands. The face is not preserved, although it was most certainly schematically carved. The right arm that hangs alongside the body is only partially preserved. With the left hand the woman holds the back of a probably naked child sitting on her hip. The child has a round head and sticking ears. Its face is not marked in detail. The child's left hand is bent at the elbow and rests on its chest. The second figurine (4,1 cm in height) represented two persons sitting in what was probably an oval palanquin (Pl. VI), made of wood or what is more certain of basketwork, composed of four clearly separated horizontal segments. The woman is presented to her waist. She wears a kind of a coat that covers her completely and is visibly marked by her neck. The body was treated very schematically. The face severely damaged: badly preserved almond-shaped eyes and lips, the nose is straight and narrow. Hair parted in the middle of the head, were most probably falling on her shoulders. The woman holds on her knees a child that sits sideways to her. This figure is very schematically presented, most certainly it is dressed in a coat with its hands put together on the chest. Facial features are not marked.

In the Pre- and Early Dynastic art there are numerous representations of naked women. They appear already in the Badari culture. One of the fine examples³, made of ivory (14,3 cm in height) is a woman with a large, bald

³ British Museum inv.no. EA 59648; G. Brunton, G. Caton-Thompson, *The Badari Civilisation and Predynastic Remains near Badari*, London 1928, pl. XXIV,2.

head sited on a very short neck. The arms hang alongside her body, hands resting on hips. The face was roughly modelled, with large oval eyes made by incisions. Pupils were marked with round points – like the nipples on her prominent breasts. Her nose is large and wide, in contrast with a very narrow mouth. Distinctly marked pubic area. The rest of the body was treated very schematically. Also the Louvre figurine⁴ is sometimes thought to be of Badarian origin, though such attribution may rise doubts due to its style⁵. Made probably of ivory, the sculpture is a 8,7 cm high representation of a naked woman, standing with very thin arms bent at the elbows and settled on the stomach. A relatively large head is oval and squeezed between the shoulders with no part of the neck visible. Eyes are slightly oval as well, the pupils (once possibly inlaid) marked by large, round points. Wide mouth accompany quite small a nose. Her hair is modelled into two braids, covering breasts, with the waves emphasised by deep incisions. Breasts and pubic area are clearly marked.

Representations of naked women gained popularity during the Naqada I period. A smallish figurine (4,3 cm in height), made of ivory, was found in grave U-246 at Abydos, dated to the end of Naqada I⁶. Considered as a depiction of a woman by its founders, should probably be treated as a she-dwarf portrait, due to proportions. The figurine is modelled very schematically – a naked woman with narrow torso and very wide hips. Arms, hanging alongside the body reach the middle of her hips. Legs are short, with very small feet which seem to point inwards. The head is bold, eyes marked by round incisions (once inlaid?) with sticking ears, prominent nose and almost invisible mouth.

One of the most significant artefacts, though of an unknown origin, is deposited in the British Museum⁷. The small figurine (11.4 cm in height) represents a naked woman standing on legs that are put together, with her hands holding the breasts. The head is oval, very large in contrast to the shoulders. Neck is not marked. Nose is prominent and mouth wide. Disproportionately large eyes inlaid with lapis-lazuli particularly draw attention. Her hair fall on the both sides of the face in thin plaits. Nipples and navel are marked with

⁴ Inv. No. E 11887; Y. Tristant, *Les premières communautés agricoles dans la vallée du Nil*, *Dossiers d'Archéologie* 307 (2005), p. 21.

⁵ Early phase of the Naqada I culture seems much more probable. A similar opinion was expressed by G. Andreu, M-H. Rutschowscaya, Ch. Ziegler, *L'Égypte ancienne du Louvre*, Paris 1997, p. 38.

⁶ Reg. No. Abydos R 383; U. Hartung, *Friedhof U*. [in:] G. Dreyer, U. Hartung, T. Hikade, E.C, Köhler, *Umm el-Qaab. Nachuntersuchungen im frühzeitlichen Königsfriedhof. 9/10 Vorbericht*, *MDAIK* 54 (1998), p. 85, pl. 4d; G. Dreyer, *Abydos*, [in:] U. Rummel (ed.), *Meeting the Past. 100 Years in Egypt. German Archaeological Institute Cairo 1907-2007*, Cairo 2007, p. 61.

⁷ Inv. No. EA 32 141; A. M. Donadoni Roveri, E. Tiradritti, *Kemet. Alle sorgenti del tempo*, Milano 1998, p. 31.

round holes. A wide pubic triangle is created by numerous little punctures. Narrow hips of oval shape, legs joined together, with small feet distinctly modelled. The same collection includes another figurine of a naked woman, with arms situated alongside the body⁸. This artefact, probably of Naqada origin, has been previously a part of MacGregor collection. The head is bald, almost rectangular, with large sticking ears and once inlaid eyes. Semi-circular eyebrows are formed by incisions. Only partially preserved nose is wide, mouth relatively large. Plastically modelled breasts, with a round hole for navel and a number of small punctures forming pubic triangle. The figurine's right hand reaches the middle of rounded thighs, while the left one is only partially preserved. Her feet are small, toes marked by incisions.

A couple of naked women figurines, both of bone and clay, has been published by Petrie⁹. The majority of them lacks archaeological context but can be dated to the Naqada I period. Of particular interest to us are two artefacts that were bought with another five and come, according to the trader, from Ballas. The first one bears resemblance to the British Museum figurines described above¹⁰. Its head is oval and bald, neck not marked, quite large a nose and sticking ears. Both eyes and eyebrows were once inlaid with different material. Prominent breasts and large pubic triangle formed by small punctures on rounded hips. Only the upper part of the arms survived, making it difficult to state if they were straight or bent at the elbows. Legs are held together, with only the left, distinctly separated foot, preserved. Navel was marked by a round hole.

The second figurine, much larger than the one just described, has a similarly oval head with small, though sticking, ears. Its eyes were inlaid with round steatite beads covered with green glaze¹¹. The nose is missing, mouth seem too narrow. Relatively slender torso, wide rounded hips. Both breasts and lower parts of the legs didn't survive. Arms hang alongside the body with hands broken off.

Representations of naked women were still popular in the Proto- and Early Dynastic period. A badly damaged statuette of bone, showing a naked woman with her hands falling alongside the body, comes from the Early Dynastic deposit from Tell Ibrahim Awad¹². Two fragments of faience figurines, dated to the Archaic period, are known from Elephantine¹³. Both preserved from waist

⁸ Inv. No. EA32 141; H. 12 cm; hippopotamus tusk; A.J. Spencer, *Early Egypt. The Rise of Civilisation in the Nile Valley*, London 1993, 31, fig. 15.

⁹ W.M.F. Petrie, *Prehistoric Egypt*, London 1920, p. 6 ff; pls. II-VI.

¹⁰ Petrie, *Prehistoric...*, pl. II, 21

¹¹ Petrie, *Prehistoric...*, p. 9; pl. II, 22

¹² G.A. Belova, T.A. Sherkova, *Ancient Egyptian Temple at Tell Ibrahim Awad*, Moscow 2002, ph. 55

¹³ G. Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII. Der Tempel der Satet. Die Funde der Frühzeit und des Alten Re-*

up, represent women with their right hands held alongside the body while the left one supports a breast. Another example from this site is a statue of a naked woman with hands crossed on her breasts, wearing long hair or a wig¹⁴. Facial features and anatomical details are presented very schematically. One more figurine of Elephantine origin, probably dating to the period of our interest, is made of ivory¹⁵. Small (4,8 cm in height) and very schematic depiction of a naked woman with arms lining her body. Long hair reach the middle of the back. Large eyes and very wide mouth particularly draw attention. The rest of anatomical details is shown only schematically and in a conventional way.

A few examples are known from the Main Deposit of Hierakonpolis. To this group belongs, among others, a figurine from Petrie Museum¹⁶. The large (20 cm in height) figurine of ivory, presents a standing naked woman. Despite the fact that both her hands are broken off, it is safe to suppose that the left arm was bent at the elbow and held breasts, while the right one was falling alongside the body – the hand with carefully shaped fingers is preserved. What draws attention is the distinctively modelled face with almond-shaped eyes, relatively wide nose and thick lips. Particularly interesting is also the hairdo. The long hair or wig reach the figure's waist, with curls represented by horizontal lines. It makes this sculpture very similar to both found in Tell el-Farkha. The majority of figurines from Hierakonpolis is deposited in the Ashmolean Museum. Among them is the one bearing resemblance to the Petrie Museum sculpture mentioned above – both in style and condition¹⁷. A slender naked woman, with waist-long hair falling down her back and forming equally long braids in the front, framing the face. It's impossible to reconstruct the exact set of the arms as they are broken off. Fortunately, another figurine from the Main Deposit survived almost intact from the knees up¹⁸. Its right arm lines the body, while the left one supports the breasts. A hairdo identical as the one described above, almond-shaped eyes, prominent eyebrows and small nose with proportionate mouth, complete the picture. This last example is formally the same as the one from Tell el-Farkha. An exceptional example of a naked woman figure is a lapis-lazuli figurine found in the Main Deposit of Hierakonpolis¹⁹. Its head was made separately and joined with the torso by means of a wooden peg. The

iches, Mainz 1986, p. 99-100; Inv. Nos El.K. 1569; 1239

¹⁴ Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, p. 100; Inv. No. El.K. 1016.

¹⁵ Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, p. 103; Inv. No. El.K. 664.

¹⁶ Inv. No UC 14860; B. Adams, *Ancient Hierakonpolis*, Warminster 1974, p. 70

¹⁷ Ashmolean Museum E185; J.E. Quibell, W.M.F. Petrie, *Hierakonpolis I*, pl. IX, 1-2.

¹⁸ Quibell, Petrie, *Hierakonpolis I*, pl. IX, 6-7.

¹⁹ Ashmolean Museum E 1057; 1057a; H. 8,9 cm; The body was found in 1898, but the head eight years later. H. Whitehouse, *Ancient Egypt and Nubia in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford 2009, pp. 34-35.

figure is standing with legs kept together, arms bent at the elbows and settled on a stomach, beneath the breasts. Only the pubic triangle – with small punctures, breasts and fingers are marked clearly, with other anatomical details shown only schematically. The legs end in a straight edge at ankle-level. The artist concentrated on the head – almost spheric, carefully modelled, with a hairdo of small, tight curls – possibly indicating the woman's non-Egyptian origin. Prominent, though not sticking ears, large almond-shaped eyes, deeply cut for inlaying. The nose is small and mouth wide.

From the same set come also representations of women dressed in long robes. The first example is a figurine enveloped in a kind of a mantle, reaching the middle of her thighs, with another garment – probably a dress – picking from beneath²⁰. The edge of the outer robe creates a sort of a high collar covering the lower part of the hair falling down the back. Both ears were left uncovered. The eyes are almond-shaped, the nose wide and mouth narrow.

The another figurine's face didn't survive²¹. Her hair apparently fell on the shoulders, with a knee-length coat covering the body. The garment was decorated with a trimming made of cuts and dots. Feet, situated on a round base, are plastically modelled, with each toe clearly marked.

Another figurine – this one from Louvre Museum – bears strong resemblance to those just described²². A woman, covered in a coat, knee-long and decorated in the upper part with an ornament made of a few rows of parallel ropes. This outer layer probably overlaid a dress. The head is almost round and squeezed between the shoulders with neck invisible. The hair, parted in the middle, fall down the back in parallel strands. Eyes almond-shaped, with eyelids visibly lengthened. Equally broad eyebrows marked by incisions. A small nose and plump, though narrow mouth. Both cheeks and chin distinctly modelled. The woman's right hand lies alongside the body, reaching the middle of a thigh, while the left one, hidden beneath the coat, is bent at the elbow and seems to be holding the garment on the breasts. Visible parts of legs are modelled schematically, with feet missing.

A small, ivory figurine (6,1 cm in height) has been found recently in the grave U-182 at Abydos, dated to Naqada IID phase²³. It depicts a woman with a sort of

²⁰ Whitehouse, *Ancient Egypt...*, pp. 32-33.

²¹ Quibell, Petrie, *Hierakonpolis I*, pl. IX, 4-5.

²² Inv. No. E11888; H. 13, 5 cm; hippopotamus ivory; Ch. Ziegler, *Le Louvre. Les antiquités égyptiennes*, Paris 1990, p. 19.

²³ Reg. No. Abydos R 564a-b; U.Hartung, *Friedhof U* [in:] G. Dreyer, A. von den Driesch, M. Engel, R. Hartman, U. Hartung, T. Hikade, V. Müller, J. Peters, *Umm el-Qaab. Nachuntersuchungen im frühzeitlichen Königsfriedhof. 11/12 Vorbericht*, MDAIK 56 (2000), p. 63, pl. 5a; Dreyer, *Abydos...*, p. 62.

a scarf or mantlet covering the head, falling down the shoulders and reaching her feet. A dress was probably worn underneath. The edge of the scarf is decorated by two stripes: the narrow one, covered in a delicate cross ornament and the wider one, scattered with black paste-filled dots. Oval eye, as well as eyebrows, are formed by similarly filled incisions. Nose and badly damaged mouth are narrow.

Grave B14 in Abydos, connected with the burial of Aha, brings us another small figurine – a woman dressed in a sort of a dress²⁴. The garment reaches just above her ankles. Her arms are bent at the elbows and settled on her breasts. The head, far too large for the rest of the body, is almost round. Hair, divided at the top, fall on her shoulders. Eyes are almond-shaped, prominent nose and wide but thin mouth. The style of the figurine places it rather among the lower quality examples dating to the Early Dynastic period, which is a surprise, considering the place of discovery.

Another couple of women figurines probably also come from Abydos. The first example is actually a piece of a large, clay statue, badly made and preserved from legs up²⁵. The woman is clothed in a coat, falling down from the right shoulder. Her left arm and breast, both clearly marked, remain uncovered²⁶. The edge of the garment, held up by the woman's left hand, is decorated with rope design. Her right hand emerges below from the folds of the coat. Schematically shaped face is broad, with almond-shaped eyes and long, clearly marked brows. The face has a not too large a nose and a proportional mouth. Her hair falls down the back in even, distinguished locks.

The second figurine, curved from limestone²⁷, is that of a woman tightly wrapped in a coat that reaches her ankles. She stands on a round, flat base. Left part of the cloth ends in a clear edge. Her arms, bent at the elbows are visible under the garment, possibly holding it up. The face is broad with a prominent nose and narrow mouth. The ears are large and sticking, almond-shaped eyes, as well as brows, were initially inlaid. Her hair, parted in the middle, fall onto the shoulders and down the back in schematically marked waves. Lower part of the coiffure is seemingly hidden under the coat. Bare feet are large, with toes and nails carefully modelled.

The Munich Museum collection includes a limestone figurine, bought in 1962 and considered by H.W. Müller to originate from Abydos temple complex²⁸.

²⁴ Museum of Fine Arts Boston; Inv. No 01.7367; ivory, h. 6 cm; E.J. Baumgartel, *About Some Ivory Statuettes from the Main Deposit at Hierakonpolis*, JARCE 7 (1968), fig. 1-2.

²⁵ Kofler-Truniger Collection; H. Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire* [in:] H. Schlögl (ed.), *Le don du Nil. Art égyptien dans les collections suisses*, Bâle 1978, p. 29

²⁶ H. Schlögl considers this figurine to be the representation of the enthroned ruler.

²⁷ Kofler-Truniger Collection; H. 29,8 cm; Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire...*, pp. 29-30. In his opinion the figure presents the local god.

²⁸ Inv. No. ÄS 4234; h. 34,7 cm; H.W. Müller, *Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst*, München

A woman in a long, simple dress with her right hand lining the body, while the left one is bent at the elbow and settled under the breasts. Both feet and left side of the head are missing. Waist-long hair fall down the back with two braids covering her breasts and large ears sticking out from the locks. The face is broad, almost round. Oval eyes were inlaid. Her lips were full, the missing nose relatively broad.

Depictions of women with children are relatively rare – only three examples from Elephantine are known to us²⁹. The first one, dated to the Archaic period or the beginning of the Old Kingdom, is preserved from the waist up. The woman is supporting a child she's carrying on her back, while it embraces her waist with its legs. Her face is very carefully modelled for a faience figurine. Oval eyes are trimmed with clearly marked lids and brows. The nose is wide but short, with mouth relatively narrow. Her hair fall down the back and seem to be bound at the neck. The child, meanwhile, is depicted very schematically. Another, similarly dated figurine represents a woman with two children in her arms. This statue, technically much worse, depicts a standing woman, probably in a dress, cuddling to her breasts very roughly modelled figures of children. The head is almost spherical and tilted slightly upwards. Eyes are almond-shaped, mouth wide and nose small. Her legs are disproportionately fat, with big feet forming a base the statue was set upon. Another figurine of this kind, in even worse condition, is preserved from the knees up and heavily damaged. The children are modelled as they were in the previous example. Her hair fall onto the shoulders. With facial features almost completely gone, the only anatomical detail clearly visible is a large ear.

A statuette of a mother with children, without provenance, is also kept in London³⁰: a woman in a long robe supports with her left hand a child that hangs on her back. Two others are now in Berlin³¹, however we do not know where they come from. Both are dated to the Naqada III period and both represented naked women. The first one supports her child on the hip. The surface heavily damaged, her features are unlike any described above. The eyes are almond-shaped, nose and mouth wide. The hair fall down the back, with ears large and distinctly modelled. Her torso is much too big in relation to the legs, hands are too wide. The face and proportions of the child figurine are almost grotesque – possibly due to the state of preservation. It seems to be raising the mother's left

1976, p. 38; cf. A. Grimm, S. Schoske, *Am Beginn der Zeit. Ägypten in der Vor- und Frühzeit*, München 2000, p. 34

²⁹ Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, p. 103; Inv. Nos El.K. 1444, 1022, 1009; this set includes also a sitting figurine of a man holding a child, dated to the 5th dynasty – Inv. No. El K 916.

³⁰ Inv. No BM 32 143; J. Capart, *Primitive Art in Egypt*, London 1905, p. 168.

³¹ Inv. Nos. ÄMP 14441 (H. 7,5 cm); ÄMP 17600 (H. 6,5 cm), ivory; Grimm, Schoske, *Am Beginn der Zeit...*, p. 34.

breast to its mouth. The second sculpture depicts a woman with a large belly and very fat thighs. Her head is flattened at the top, the hole at the back indicates a hairdo made of different material. Ears are large and sticking, the face almost round. Small, almond-shaped eyes seem to disappear between brows and cheeks. The nose is fairly wide but incomplete, with mouth very narrow and broad. The child, with its front to the mother, seem to be supported by her flabby belly, with hand reaching for breasts. The mother holds it with both, disproportionately large, hands.

A number of figurines depicting baboons with their young, is also worthy of our attention. In the example from Abydos, the animal holds its offspring sited between the knees, with its back to the mother³². From this site comes also a figurine of a baboon embracing its young, this time facing the parent³³. The limestone figurine of a seated baboon with a young baboon between its paws is know also from Hierakonpolis³⁴.

While discussing the representations of women with children sitting in a litter, we find ourselves in a completely different situation. No direct analogies to such figurines are to be found in the early Egyptian art. In these case attention should be drawn to some representations in relief and small objects of plastic art. The former show figures in litters for instance on the mace-heads of Scorpion and Narmer³⁵. Sculptures of covered litters are also known, consisting of a rectangular base, probably depicting a basket, covered by a light construction with oval cross section, made of mat or fabric³⁶. Of particular interest is a limestone model of such a litter from Abydos³⁷. Inside, there is a depiction of a human face, possibly that of a woman, with cow ears and horns. Ribbons showed underneath it are woven together to form the ankh sign. Three hieroglyphs below form an inscription – reput. Each side of the litter is adorned with a depiction of humanoid figures with the head of a bird and ram's horns. Covered in a sort of a short coat, decorated so that it resembles bird's wings. As this creatures are shown on the sides of the litter, they were probably its carriers.

Women figurines from Tell el-Farkha can be, already on the first glance, classified as typical examples of the early Egyptian art. However, when compared

³² Kofler-Truniger Collection; H. 9,5 cm; faience; Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire...*, p. 25.

³³ W.M.F. Petrie, *Abydos II*, London 1903, pl. V, 41.

³⁴ Inv. No. UC 15000; H. 10, 3 cm; Adams, *Ancient Hierakonpolis...*, p. 25.

³⁵ K.M. Ciałowicz, *La naissance d'un royaume. L'Égypte dès la période prédynastique à la fin de la Ière dynastie.*, Kraków 2001, pp. 197-206.

³⁶ Belova, Sherkova, *Ancient Egyptian...*, phot. 49; H. Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire...*, p. 26.

³⁷ Kofler-Truniger Collection; H. 8,9 cm; H. Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire...*, p. 27.

with examples of this kind, known from other sites, one notices vital differences. Therefore, it seems plausible to state that despite numerous similarities, their creators were given much freedom and did not have to follow strict patterns.

The most similarities, or even a strict following of a certain pattern, may be seen in depictions of naked women. Here the pattern is clear: standing woman with arms lining the body or with the left arm bent at the elbow and supporting her breast. Such representations appear already in the early Naqada culture, continued later during the Proto – and Early Dynastic periods. Figurines of women with both arms bent at the elbows and settled on the stomach became much rarer then. Seemingly, those early depictions of naked women can be compared mainly with later representations of concubines, one can therefore assume they were produced with similar intention.

Figurines of dressed women make up a more differentiated set. It's caused, on the one hand, by the fact that the garments could be treated in more or less decorative manner. On the other, the artists had more opportunities of showing hands: hanging loosely, covered with a dress or a coat, holding various object. Seemingly, only members of elite were depicted clothed – both those of the highest circles and those from the local social structures. Such representations, like the previous ones, are known throughout the Egyptian territory, but are much more varied.

The fact that there is no direct analogy to the Tell el-Farkha bowl-carrying figurine, shouldn't be a surprise then. To this type belongs a small figurine from Tell Ibrahim Awad³⁸. The surface is heavily damaged, with facial features and majority of details almost invisible. It represents a standing woman in a long robe, with her hair falling on the shoulders and with a jar in her hands. The artifact was placed on a wedged base, to be fixed in place. Among the objects from Elephantine, there are three figures holding something in their hands. One of them represents a man embracing a round object (bread?) against his chest, the second is only partially preserved and shows a woman with a vessel on her head, while the third one, also incomplete, is a sitting figure holding a large vessel in front of it³⁹. Another figurine, this time of faience, also comes from the same site. It is a sitting baboon holding a jar in front of it⁴⁰. The latter object has its counterpart in a monkey from Abydos, now comprising a part of the Kofler-Truniger collection⁴¹.

Similar conclusions, about lack direct analogy, can be drawn while analyzing the statuettes showing women with children. In most cases it is impossible to safely identify if they were mothers or nannies/wet nurses. Here also, by

³⁸ H. about 6,5 cm; Belova, Sherkova, *Ancient Egyptian...*, ph. 104-105.

³⁹ Dreyer, *Elephantine VIII*, p. 101; Inv. No. El.K. 999, 1499, 967.

⁴⁰ Belova, Sherkova, *Ancient Egyptian...*, Fig.. 72.


⁴¹ Schlögl, *Le préhistoire et la protohistoire ...*, p. 25.

showing different types of persons: dressed and naked, with children on the back, in the arms, on the breasts etc., the artists had much more freedom in their endeavours, the fact that undoubtedly influenced individual objects. As there was no pattern, the quality of work and the form of the figurines, depicted naked or dressed, depended on the craftsman talent and imagination.

Of particularly special importance is among them a figurine of a sitting woman, with a child on her knees, in the palanquin. As mentioned above, this unique artifact doesn't have an analogy in the early Egyptian art. The woman's dress – a kind of a coat with characteristic high collar – and the fact she sits in the palanquin, imply high social standing. The aforementioned depictions from the mace heads and litter models of Abydos may suggest that the representation from Tell el-Farkha can be in relation to reput, recognized as a representation of a mother, a divine pharaoh's mother⁴² or, in a broader sense, women from the royal family⁴³. The closest chronologically, is a depiction of a king on his mother's knees – though not in the litter – like the famous statuette of Pepy II and Ankhnesmeryre II from the Brooklyn Museum⁴⁴. Still, it is almost eight hundred years younger than the figurine described. Depictions of women in the litters, known from the mace-heads, especially that of Narmer, seem to be closely linked with the sed festival. Therefore, it is plausible to assume that our figurine represents a young ruler sitting on his mother's knees and is connected to celebration of the royal jubilee – the king shown as a child, to put emphasis on the moment his strength rejuvenated. It is worth mentioning that also a figure of a walking man in a coat – probably a ruler during the heb-sed festival – has been found at the Tell el-Farkha site⁴⁵. Should one accept the interpretation of the above statuettes as depictions of the king, another evidence – apart from the golden figurines from Kom E⁴⁶ – is gained for the close connection between the site and the emerging monarchy.

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[All photographs by Robert Słaboński, all drawings by Anna Longa]

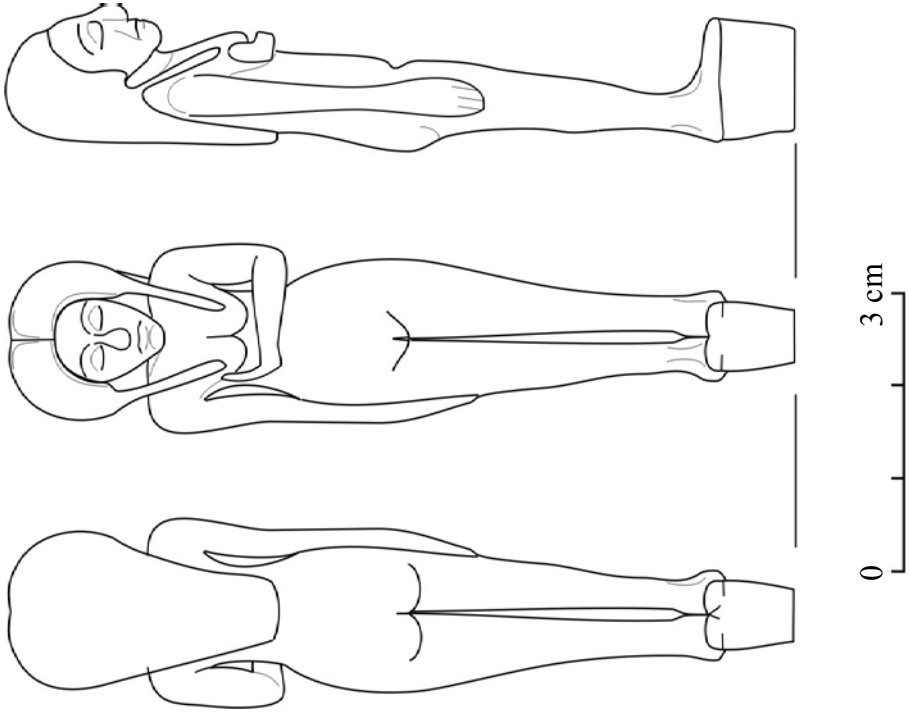
⁴² W. Kaiser, *Zu den  der älteren Bilddarstellungen und der Bedeutung von rpw.t*, MDAIK 39 (1983), p. 262.

⁴³ N.B. Millet, *The Narmer Mace-Head and Related Objects*, JARCE 27 (1990), pp. 53-59.

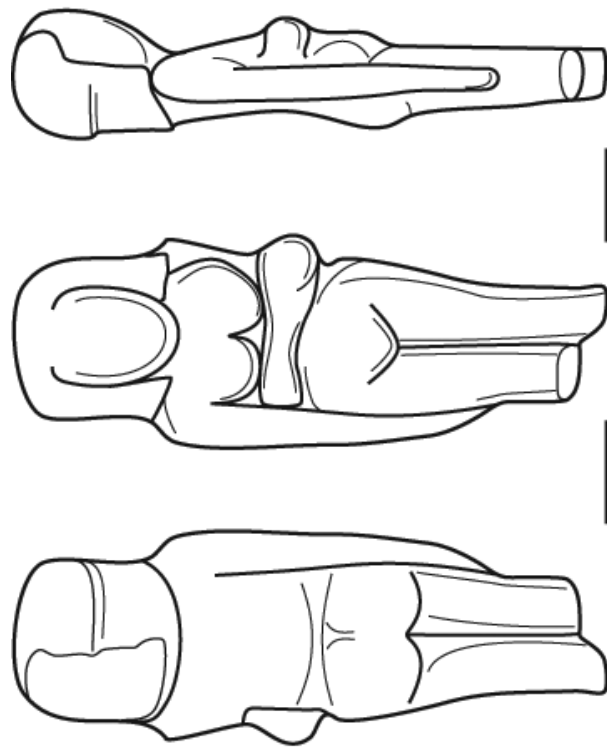
⁴⁴ Inv. No. 39.119; H. 39, 2 cm.

⁴⁵ K. Błaszczuk, *The Royal Figurine (?) from Tell el-Farkha*, [in:] J. Śliwa (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization 12*, Kraków 2008, pp 57-61.

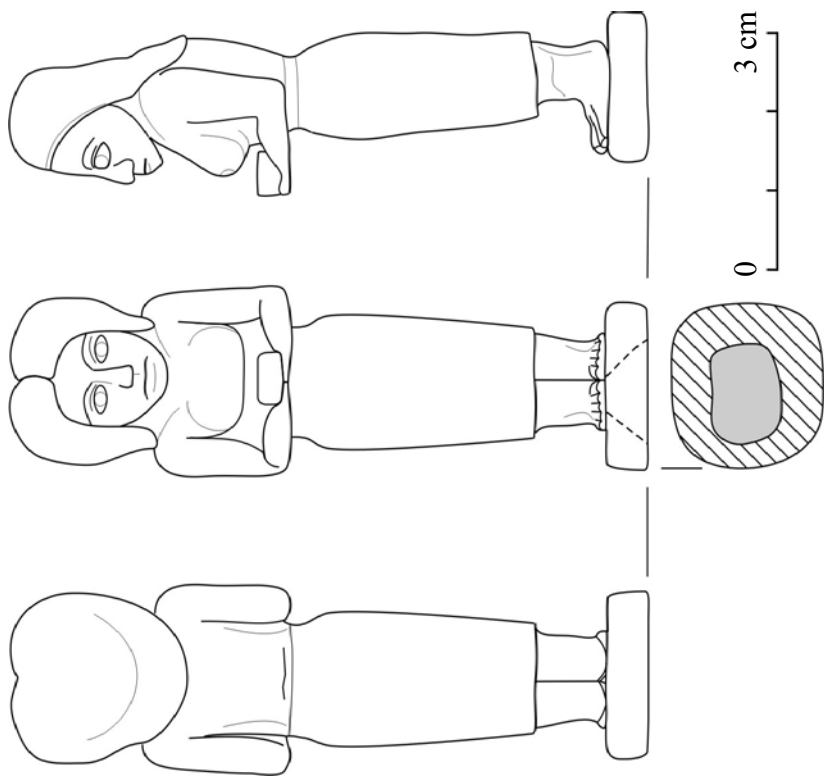
⁴⁶ M. Chłodnicki, K.M. Ciałowicz, *Golden Figures from Tell el-Farkha*, [in:] J. Śliwa (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Art and Civilization 10*, Kraków 2007, pp. 7-21.



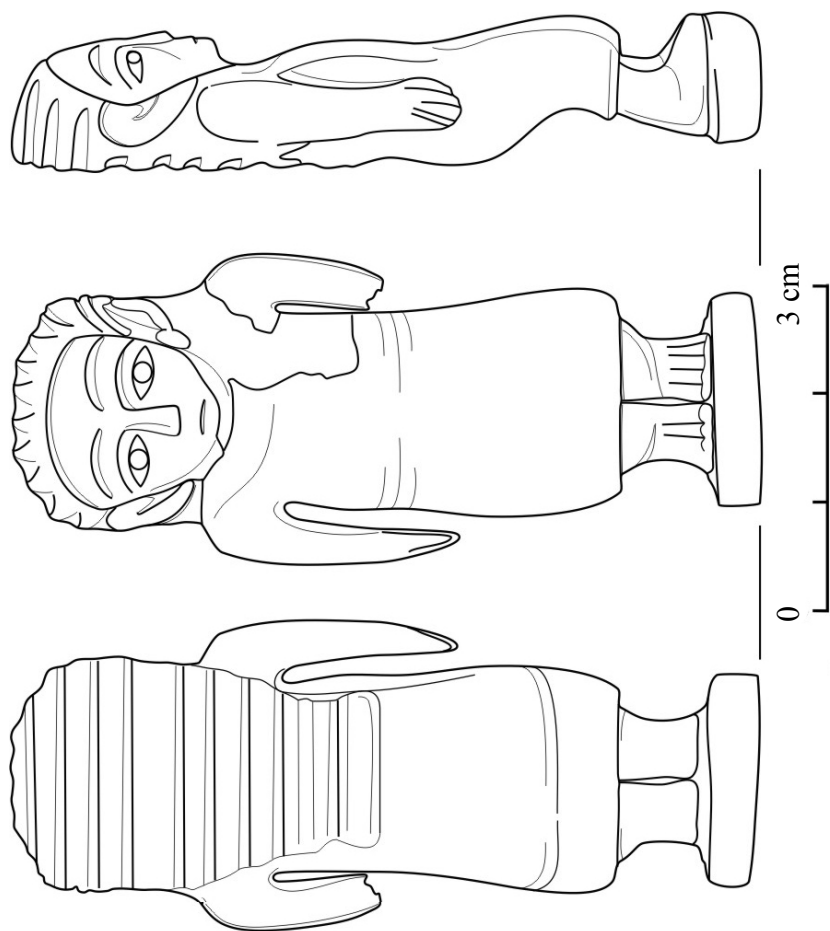
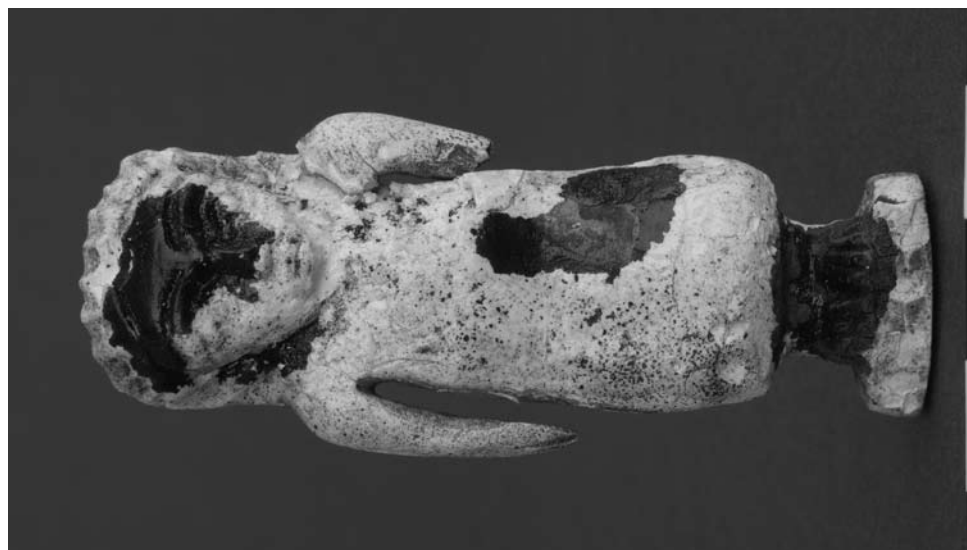
Pl. I. Naked woman; hippopotamus tusk, height 8.5 cm. Reg. No. WD 06/25 (R-624)



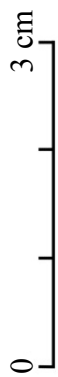
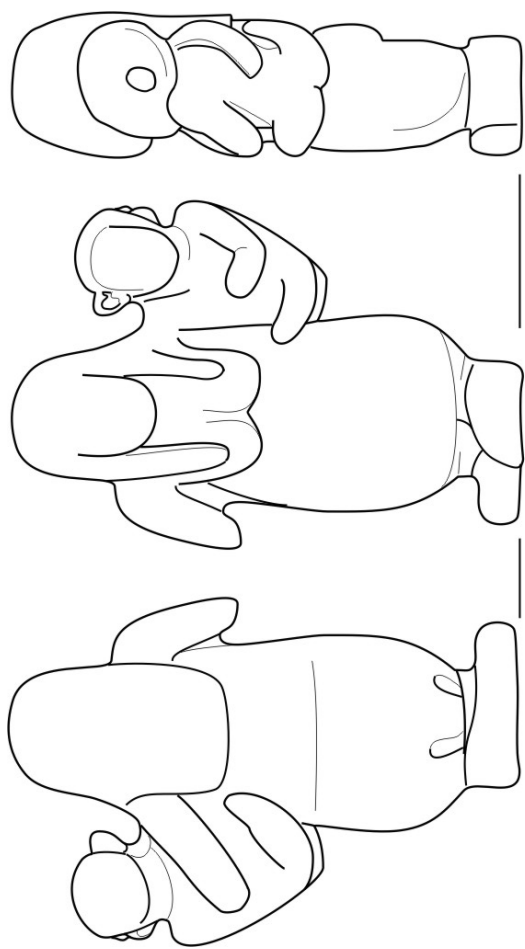
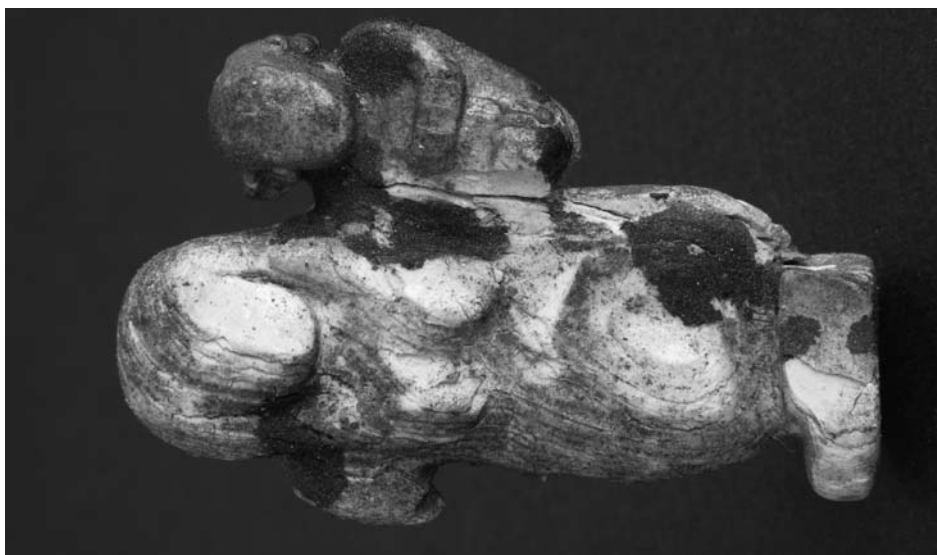
Pl. II. Naked woman; hippopotamus tusk, height 3 cm. Reg. No. 06/7 (R - 665)



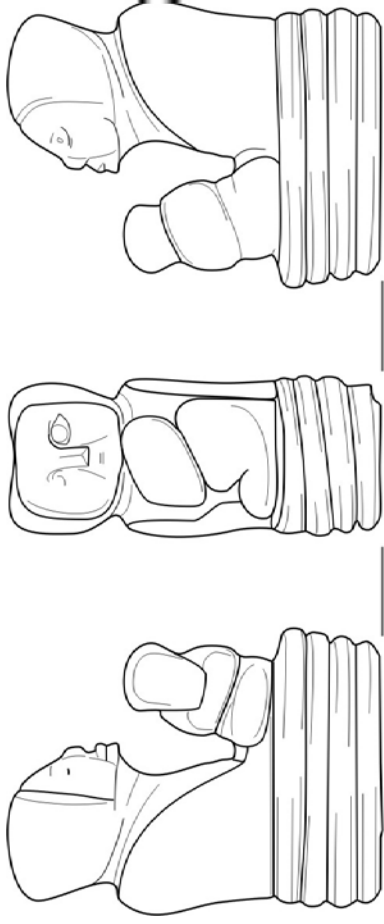
PL. III. Woman with a vessel. Hippopotamus tusk, height 8 cm. Reg. No. WD 06/26 (R - 625)



Pl. IV. Dressed woman. Hippopotamus tusk, height 6.9 cm. Reg. No. WD 06/53 (R - 652)



Pl. V. Woman holding a child. Hippopotamus tusk, height 4.7 cm. Reg. No. WD 06/28 (R - 627)



Pl. VI. Woman with a child on her knees sitting in the litter. Hippopotamus tusk, height 4.1 cm. Reg. No. WD 06/49 (R - 648)

