

The project PROCESS – “*Pharaonic Rescission: Objects as Crucibles of ancient Egyptian Societies*”, of the University of Pisa (PI: Prof. Gianluca Miniaci) is organizing a conference with the title “**Clay Figurines in Context: miniatures as crucibles of Nile Valley societies in the Second Millennium BC (Egypt and Nubia)**”, focusing on the study of clay and ceramic figurines of ancient Egypt.

Figurines representing humans, animals and other animate and inanimate subjects have been produced in large numbers in ancient Egypt since Prehistoric times. Nonetheless, the category of figurines made in clay (fired and unfired) has not received enough attention by scholars, while figurines in other types of materials have been privileged (wood, metal, faience, ivory, etc). Especially for the second millennium BC, typological studies and research on finding ‘contexts’ are limited. The conference aims to bring attention to the contextualization (according to type and deposit) of clay figurines in the Bronze Age in Egypt. The focus of the conference is primarily on the MBA and its transition to LBA (Middle Kingdom and early New Kingdom), but a broad comparison with other epochs of production (such as Old Kingdom and Late New Kingdom) is envisaged as an important part of the discussion.

The themes of the conference will be:

- archeological context and typological classification of figurines;
- raw material analysis and manufacture technique, including post-depositional events such as restoration and conservation (archaeometry/*chaîne opératoire*);
- social dimension (social identity of the makers and end users; the acquisition of the raw materials);
- ritual dimension (breakage and mutilation of figurines);
- figurines in contact with North-eastern Africa (Nubia, Libya, Ethiopia, Eritrea), Eastern Mediterranean (Cyprus, Greece and the Levant) and Near East (Mesopotamia, Anatolia).