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Articulate Bodies: Forms and Figures at Çatalhöyük

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Abstract This paper examines the materializing practices of bodies at the Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük. We focus on the clay and stone figurine corpus (over 1,800 total, with over 1,000 of those being diagnostic), but also consider other media such as wall paintings and sculptured features, as well as the skeletal evidence. This paper is the first attempt to analyze particular bodily characteristics in the Çatalhöyük figurine repertoire from a perspective that investigates, rather than assumes, a priori the representational priorities of their makers. Within a wide range of anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines, we find that specific areas such as the stomach and buttocks were often clearly delineated and emphasized, whereas demarcation of primary sexual characteristics was typically downplayed. These traits and their material "prominence" might underscore specific bodily areas that have generally been overlooked as potential sites of articulation and attention. Our work challenges older assumptions that figurines were always engaged in projects of either deification or self-making. Instead, we suggest that these body types might mediate other kinds of social concerns and practices.

Keywords Çatalhöyük · Figurines · Neolithic bodies · Flesh

Introduction

It is neither new nor controversial to say that ancient figurines, like many other objects and practices, inhabited various and often radically different social worlds. Their constitutions and valences are diverse, and the now longstanding recognition of multivocality within archeology has led to a widening acceptance that we cannot know the past absolutely (see Hodder 2006a, b). In any given community, what constitutes knowledge and core values is decided upon locally (Law 1991). However

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challenging, many archeologists are focusing this horizon of inquiry on ancient worlds, examining objects and practices in terms of their roles in the negotiation of local knowledges and values in past contexts. In this study, we investigate one possible set of concerns articulated by materializations of the human body at Neolithic Çatalhöyük. These figurines did not simply represent, they distilled, emphasized, and forged a specific set of choices and preoccupations. As such, they outlined specific perceptions of the human body and its various features, as particular sites of social attention and production.

Çatalhöyük figurines range from elaborated human bodies with emphasized features (anthropomorphic) to pared-down torsos with simple heads and bases (abbreviated), yet we do not infer that they all shared the same usage or meanings. While the latter outnumber the former by a 3:2 ratio (Meskell *et al*. 2008: 143), interpretations have focused on the tacitly female forms (which comprise less than 3% of the entire corpus) and have invoked explanatory narratives of religion, female fertility, and matriarchy. However, the findings from our current analysis challenge many of these common associations and ideas. Inconsistent with the expected treatment of highly valued, "inalienable," or religious objects, the figurines at Çatalhöyük are ubiquitous, appear across the site, and almost always derive from secondary contexts such as midden and fill (Meskell *et al*. 2008: 144). As we have argued previously, figurines were likely considered necessary in daily practices and rituals, as their ubiquity suggests, but their expedient manufacture, dispersal, and deposition challenges the traditional interpretation of revered cultic objects symbolically placed in shrines. Regardless of form and material, figurines were common and ultimately disposable, rather than guarded, protected, and handed down over generations. There is much, then, to argue against conventional interpretations of these figurines as images of deities or powerful symbols, though this does not rule out their role in daily social, ritual, or even magical spheres (Nakamura 2009).

In this paper, we concentrate our attention on the bodily traits and specificities of anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines, most of which are not considered visually dramatic, but rather make up the bulk of figurine production and circulation at Çatalhöyük. While the entire figurine corpus numbers over 1,800, about 1,000 of those are diagnostic figurines; among the 1,000 figurines, 446 are anthropomorphic and abbreviated in form, while the rest include the zoomorphic or other forms. Recently, some prehistoric figurine studies have sought to quantify the presence or absence of specific body parts and particular postures (Nanoglou 2005), although attention has focused on sex determination (Clark 2003; Μαραγκού 1991). There has also been an upsurge of interest in Neolithic masculinity, specifically phallic culture in the form of figurines and other material representations (Knapp and Meskell 1997; Kujit and Chesson 2005; Meskell 2007; Mithen *et al*. 2005; Nanoglou 2006; Özdoğan 2003; Robb 2007; Verhoeven 2002). Recently excavated Anatolian sites such as Nevali Çori and Göbekli Tepe reveal how Neolithic artisans crafted a phallic culture across very different material scales (Hauptmann 2007; Schmidt 2006). However, such representational practices do not necessarily or exclusively deal with issues of sexuality or gendered practices and ideals. While figural traditions may emphasize certain sex and other attributes, they concomitantly downplay others. For example, at Çatalhöyük, we might ask why are breasts, buttocks, and stomachs frequently depicted on figurine bodies whereas genitalia are

not? Why is extra attention often given to the head on abbreviated figures and why are many human figures headless? Can any of these figural traditions be correlated with each other and what might such correlations reveal about the bodily cultures of Çatalhöyük and the wider Anatolian Neolithic? Contextualizing figurine practice within other bodily practices across the site, including the treatment of human remains and plastering of skulls and bucrania, we suggest alternative ways of assessing figurine bodies that move away from simplistic representations of gender, identity, and cultic practice. Instead of attempting to construct metanarratives by "reading off" the visual characteristics of around 20 female figurines, we have quantified the physical properties of all the anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines known up through 2007 (446) to investigate some of the practices and concerns of figurine producers and consumers at Çatalhöyük.

Whereas our previous work dealt with the macroscale spatial analysis of figurine deposition across the site (Meskell *et al*. 2008), our present work attempts a microscale mapping and analysis of bodily zones. Thus, we have moved from a site-wide analysis to a more intimate study of individual objects and their traits. In our earlier work, we conducted a spatial analysis of all figurine types across the site using their three-dimensional coordinates. Our results demonstrated that unlike other materials that were cached (e.g. obsidian, clay balls) or placed in burials (lithics, ochre, beads, animal bone), figurines were not placed in "special deposits,[1] but were dispersed through midden, house fill, and external areas much like mundane refuse. For a community that took such a particular interest in storing and caching objects, as well as their burial and foundation deposits, this was a striking pattern. The disposing of valued objects in refuse areas or natural places has been shown to have ritual valences in other prehistoric societies (Bradley 2000; Chapman 2000; Mills and Walker 2008). However, the well-documented depositional choices made by the inhabitants at Çatalhöyük suggest that this was not their preferred practice for valued things.

Background to Çatalhöyük

The Neolithic site of Çatalhöyük (7,400 to 6,000 cal BC), although well known to local villagers before its identification by archeologist James Mellaart in the 1950s, found world renown through Mellaart's popular and scholarly publications of his 1960s excavations (Mellaart 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1975). Through Mellaart's evocative visual reconstructions and compelling narratives, the site became known for its distinctive architecture, art, and symbolism. New excavations at Çatalhöyük under the directorship of Ian Hodder began in 1993 and continue into the present, and while this new project has challenged many of the sensational claims and associations marshaled previously (Hodder 1996, 2000, 2005, 2006a, b), the site still remains associated with controversial narratives of prehistoric

[1] From the 1995–2007 excavations, there has been only one clear instance in which a figurine was cached: one figurine was found in the SE corner of building 65 in a possible placed deposit with equid scapulae, worked bone, one pot sherd, and a baby leg" (Regan 2007). While this example is evocative and may reveal some kind of "magical" gesture (Nakamura 2009), it does not articulate a common treatment of figurines.

matriarchy and mother goddess worship. Yet only about 20 figurines of robust or even corpulent females inspired such grand theories. And although these ideas have raised considerable controversy (Gimbutas 1989, 1991; Hamilton 2006; Mellaart *et al*. 1989; Meskell 1995, 1998a, b), the notion of a "Mother Goddess" has established firm roots and will likely remain intact for years to come.

Human figurines commonly evoke or have even become synonymous with goddess veneration, the female domestic sphere, and ritual or cultic activities. However, such ideas are often grounded in Euro-American stereotypes and values and are, therefore, deeply problematic when projected back onto the past. Ancient and non-Western female forms have especially sustained projections of Westernized views of the female body, fertility, and sexuality (Bahrani 1996; Meskell 1998a). Large breasts, stomachs, and buttocks, which we find on some figurines at Çatalhöyük, are higly sexualized features in the West, and they may or many not have held the same connotation in the Neolithic. While the prominence of such traits might signify fertility (though pregnancy, birth, and childhood do not appear as representational subjects at Çatalhöyük), it could also denote excess, abundance, or age. Rather than reading the body as a totalizing narrative, one can also consider sites of emphasis and erasure and investigate what these reprentational gestures communicate.

It is worth briefly summarizing the evidence we have from actual bodies at Çatalhöyük. Oddly, the skeletal remains themselves have been overlooked, when it comes to popular understandings of Neolithic bodies, in favor of the more imaginative iconographic sources. Research on a small sample of femora by the current project indicated that the Çatalhöyük adults were short but had relatively strong and robust long bones, reflecting a high degree of physical activity and mobility, in comparison with Neolithic populations from Europe (Boz *et al*. 2006). Several lines of evidence suggest very similar diets and lifestyles between men and women and there is little evidence of specialized tasks for either sex. For example, the stable isotope analysis for human bones does not demonstrate statistically significant differences in the diet for males and females (Richards and Pearson 2005). Taken together, this suggests little differentiation in the allocation of roles and activities at the site. Similarly, the burial data and treatment of individual bodies confirms this lack of differentiation between the sexes. With regards to placement, posture, and directionality, there are no marked differences as Mellaart once claimed (Hodder 2006b: 211; Molleson *et al*. 2005). The number of grave goods associated with burials at the site is relatively small, and some gendered differences have been noted in previous analyses; however, it would be difficult to argue for some clearly demarcated pattern (Hodder 2006a, b: 212). These data argue against the older ideas of matriarchy or a special status for women and instead formulate a picture of a society where men and women participated in similar kinds of labor, sustained similar injuries, shared a similar diet, died at comparable ages, and were ultimately buried with similar treatments and objects. The representational sphere thus constitutes one domain where researchers might be able to examine ideational bodily regimes and articulations that might both tease apart and blur gender conceptualizations; basic quantification and trait analysis are methods that might move us closer to uncovering Neolithic concerns rather than simply confirming our own predilections.

Articulating Bodies: Exaggeration and Abbreviation

Historically, the study of figurines has generally focused on the alluring but often frustrating pursuit of meaning (Hamilton 1996; Talalay 1993; Ucko 1968). More than other kinds of objects, we want to know what human figurines *meant*, perhaps because they evoke something so distinctly human. But getting at meaning in the past is surely a challenging if not problematic project (Nakamura 2005; Olsen 2003). Meaning can never be fixed. It continually arises from acts of engagement and articulation. This relationality is precisely what constitutes the figurine as a *process* rather than simply a thing (Meskell 2007). The figurine does not only sustain, but, demands multiple viewpoints. In this way, it anchors a dynamic network of encounters with and between individuals and coproduces various and often concomitant perceptions, experiences, and knowledges. Such practices of circulation and exchange do not simply transmit meanings, but are constitutive acts in themselves (Lee and LiPuma 2002: 192). This focus on process rather than the end product, then, situates meaning in the field of practices that lie around figurine work, those traditions, shared understandings, values, and patterned behaviors that are always already grounded in the world and constitute what we might identify as a distinct cultural entity.

It is the "figural" aspect of figurines which present the actual difficulty: figurines are at once among the most compelling, visually accessible, and yet unintelligible archeological finds. The most robust interpretations of figurine practices come from those found with good contextual information. Yet, as evocative, familiar bodily forms that provoke a kind of immediate recognition, figurines inevitably invite the constant reinscription of meaning, especially in the absence of provenance or context. In a slightly different and perhaps more troubling way, figurine bodies have been made to stand in for actual human bodies in archeological contexts. Many descriptions of the human physique at Çatalhöyük (Molleson *et al*. 2005) and elsewhere (e.g., Christopoulou-Aletra *et al*. 2006) draw upon the visual sources such as figurines rather than the human remains and the considerable evidentiary reserves they contain. Even within academic discourse, scholars must fight against certain ingrained habits of associating certain body types or features with personal, learned, or culturally specific meanings.

Encouragingly, recent figurine studies have become critical of naturalized concepts and simple readings of the body as canvas or display. Moving towards exploring figurine work in more socially integral and embedded ways, such studies underscore the body and its materiality as constituitive of social life and critically engage with various relevant literatures such as feminist theories of embodiment (Joyce 1993; Kujit and Chesson 2005; Meskell 1996; Meskell and Joyce 2003), theories of personhood and self-making (Bailey 1994, 2005; Talalay 2004), and various post-Marxist material discourse theories (Nakamura 2005; Nanoglou 2006). More broadly, research on the body has converged around the broader projects of investigating ancient forms of self-fashioning, sexuality, or the mediation of ritual relations. While these themes may indeed capture some of the concerns addressed by Çatalhöyük figurine work, we would like to suggest that bodily representations do not necessarily mediate such grand, totalized, or integrated bodily projects. Alternatively or concurrently, they may have articulated much more immediate, discrete, and focused concerns.

Limiting our present discussion to exploring the latter proposal, we will concentrate specifically on the Çatalhöyük figurine conventions that, on the one hand, emphasize certain body zones and traits, and on the other, pare down bodies to simple forms or silhouettes. Notably, such conventions are also seemingly characteristic to Anatolia more broadly during Neolithic times (see Badisches Landesmuseum Karlsruhe 2007; Özdoğan 2003). These different practices of exaggeration and abbreviation likely addressed or articulated different, but not necessarily incompatible, ideas or values. In the following discussion, we elaborate on the specific presence, cooccurrence, and absence of bodily traits on the diagnostic anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines from Çatalhöyük.

Under Consideration: The Anthropomorphic and Abbreviated Figurine

Elsewhere, we have discussed our wider work on the entire Çatalhöyük figurine corpus in detail (Meskell and Nakamura 2005; Meskell *et al*. 2008; Nakamura and Meskell 2004, 2006). However, a few general points are worth reviewing here. For analytical purposes, we have delineated three main formal categories of "anthropomorphic," "abbreviated," and "zoomorphic,"[2] and the three diagnostic categories of "figural," "indeterminate," and "nondiagnostic." Presently, we will only consider the *figural anthropomorphic* and *abbreviated* figurines recorded up through 2007, with a focus on those *with some form of bodily elaboration*. Since we are excluding all zoomorphic, indeterminate, and nondiagnostic forms, the number of figurines discussed below represent only a subset of the entire corpus and will encompass a significantly smaller number (446) than the total number of Çatalhöyük figurines (1,745 [939 diagnostic] as of January 2008). However, this reduced number is still considerably greater than those furnished by other Neolithic sites (see Bailey 2005; Chapman 2000).

As we are not only dealing with ideas of presence and absence of bodily traits, but their exaggeration and attenuation, it is helpful to discuss briefly the formal differences between anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines. Anthropomorphic forms are rather self-explanatory; they depict a generally unmistakable human form (Fig. 1, see also Fig. 4). Some parts, such as limbs, extremities, and heads, may be entirely or partially absent, and the body may assume various postures and positions. Yet as a whole, such forms approximate an unambiguously human physique. Abbreivated forms, on the other hand, are ambiguous by definition. These figural forms minimally consist of a head, torso, and base in a very simplified three-dimensional silhouette that may afford an overall human, animal, or "hybrid" appearance (Fig. 2). At Çatalhöyük and elsewhere, others have referred to these ubiquitous Neolithic forms as "bird-men" (see discussion in Hamilton 2006) or "phalloi" (Özdoğan 2003). Given the formal differences between these figurine types, dicussions of exaggeration and attenuation need to be contextually appropriate to each form; for instance, since anthropomorphic figurines are more elaborated and

[2] While these three categories encompass most of the figurine corpus, the terms "phallomorphic" and "geomorphic" are also used to describe some figurine forms, although often as a secondary designation.

Fig. 1 Carved and incised anthropomorphic figurine. 10264.X1 (marble; H.9.1 cm, W.4.6 cm, Th.4.5 cm; 203 g).

abbreviated figurines are less elaborated *by definition*,[3] we will deal with the themes of accentuation vs. attenuation quite differently for each type. Finally, we will explore how these various body kinds might have enunciated different, more localized, or intimate concerns than those offered by previous interpretations of the Çatalhöyük figurines.

Bellies, Breasts, and Buttocks (3Bs)

The most common traits depicted on anthropomorphic figurines were the breasts (67% of figurines with traits), buttocks (56%), and bellies (40%; Table I). All three traits cooccurred at least once with all of the other anthropomorphic traits except for beards (Table II). While breasts were the trait most commonly depicted, the stomach and buttocks received the most emphasis or exaggeration. We have noted previously that there was a strong tendency for exaggerating the buttock and stomach regions seen in increasing numbers on female and nongendered figurines. This attention to the buttocks and stomachs, to their careful delineation or pronouncement, was typically at the expense of other bodily characteristics such as limbs and sometimes breasts (Fig. 3). Notably, a few abbreviated-human crossover examples also sported exaggerated buttocks and breasts (Table I), suggesting that the two "traditions" of exaggeration and abbreviation were not mutually exclusive nor strictly divorced.

The combined emphasis on breasts, buttocks, and stomachs has prompted many to interpret these figurines as pregnant or fertile women. However, as we have argued previously, many of these features were depicted in such a way that is not

[3] There are a few examples that do push the boundaries of these categories. For instance, we do observe some crossover anthropomorphic forms that are very "abbreviated" in appearance except for having one trait, such as the buttocks, emphasized. The formal designations we have assigned to the figurines, therefore, represent a kind of continuum rather than discrete categories.

Fig. 2 Range of abbreviated forms (clay). Photo by Jason Quinlan.

suggestive of fertility, but of maturity (Meskell *et al*. 2007; see also Voigt 2007). Furthermore, while breasts and stomachs are secondary reproductive traits (genitalia being primary), buttocks are not. The most common paring of traits was bellies with buttocks (21), breasts with buttocks (20), and breasts with bellies (19; see Table II), while all three occurred together a total of 17 times (Table III). Many cultures, including contemporary ones like our own, place enormous emphasis on the buttocks, bellies, and breasts in social, sexual, and esthetic terms; the depiction of these features, therefore, does not necessarily signify reproduction or fertility. Notably, buttocks are the second most common trait on anthropomorphic figurines after breasts (Tables I and III), while bellies receive slightly less attention.

At Çatalhöyük, we have found only two figurines with pubic triangles and eight phallomorphs. It is also notable that across virtually all of the representational media, there is a seeming aversion to depicting children, adolescents, mothers with babies, and childbirth.[4] The representational material *in toto* thus suggests a severely curtailed presentation of the life cycle. As in other cultures, some aspects of the cycle may invite prohibition since they represent dangerous or liminal life experiences. For a more potent symbol of fertility/virility, one might turn to the small number of purely phallic examples (see Meskell and Nakamura 2005; Nakamura and Meskell 2004). However, these are isolated examples of an idiosyncratic type rather than whole bodies, and they appear to be another clear example of the desire for abbreviation, this time of the male body.

[4] Possible exceptions are few and include the famous "mother goddess" figurine flanked by leopards and giving birth from Mellaart's Shrine A.II.1; however, Mellaart's interpretation of this figure as giving birth has been disputed (Hodder 2006b: 261). A possible representation of a child with a bearded man occurs in the "great bull" wall painting from Mellaart's Shrine F.V.1. For adolescent forms, Mellaart's interpretation of figurines of young men (e.g., "young god" from EV:25, "boy god on leopard" from E.VI.10) must also be questioned. From the current excavations, we have found only one possibly "adolescent" form (13129. X1, see discussion below).

Table I Anthropomorphic and Abbreviated Figurine Forms by Traits

	Anthropomorphic traits									Abbreviated traits						No. of figs with features	Total no. of figs
				Anthro traits only										Abbrev traits only			
	Breasts (Br)	Buttocks (Bu)	Belly (Be)	Navel[a] (N)	Pubic triangle (PT)	Fingers (F)	Parted hair (PHa)	Headless (\He)	Phallus[b] (Ph)	Beard (Be)	Clothing/ body adornment (C/A)	Puncture marks/ hair (PM/Ha)	Hair/ cap (H/ C)	Folded head element (FHE)	Pointed head (PHe)		
Anthropomorphic	49	40	30	16	2	10	1	16	2	1	7	3	7	0	0	78	153
Abbreviated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	5	21	10	34	240
Anth-ab crossover	3	4	1	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	1	0	3	1	1	14	18
Ab-zoo crossover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	13
Other-phal crossover	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	1	3	1	5	14
Phallomorphic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Feature totals	52	44	31	16	2	10	2	18	19	2	9	4	16	26	12	132	446

Totals reflect number of diagnostic figural objects

Hair/cap head ornament that is more rounded and/or rimmed, *Adornment* clothing, body markings, or jewelry, *Phallus* an aspect of the form rather than its depiction on the body, *Head element* pointed and/or folded shapes on the head see Fig. 2

[a] The occurrence of this trait may be underestimated by half. Many of the human figurines found by Mellaart appear to depict navels. These objects are located in the Ankara museum and, at the time of writing this paper, we could not confirm the occurrence of this trait for 20 figurines and, therefore, left them out of the tallies

[b] This category refers to overall form rather than depicted trait. There are no phalloi depicted on anthropomorphic or abbreivated figurines. This category is, therefore, excluded from the no. of figs with features total

Table II Correlations and Occurrences Among Depicted Traits For Anthropomorphic Figurines

	Breasts	Buttocks	Belly	Headless	Navel	Fingers	Head adornment[a]	Body adornment	Pubic triangle	Beard
Breasts	*15*	20	19	9	14	7	3	3	1	–
Buttocks		*4*	21	8	10	5	2	1	1	–
Belly			*1*	7	12	6	2	1	1	–
Headless				*2*	4	2	–	–	–	–
Navel					–	5	–	–	–	–
Fingers						*2*	–	1	–	–
Head adornment							*7*	1	–	–
Body adornment								*2*	-	–
Pubic triangle									*1*	–
Beard										*2*

Italicized values indicate the number of times the trait occurs alone

[a] Head adornment includes all hair and head treatments (HC, PM/Ha, Pha, H/C)

Fig. 3 Figurines with exaggerated buttocks from 1960s excavations (clay).

Other anthropomorphic features that occur include fingers, body markings or clothing, and hair or head adornments. Such traits are also nonreproductive and might articulate particular ideas of identity, sexuality, or gender. However, it is worth noting that headlessness and the depiction of fingers and navels are the most frequent traits associated with the 3Bs, while decorative head and bodily adornments are substantially less frequent (Tables II and III). Again, these data suggest an attention to the body and its features (rather than adornment), but not explicitly in terms of female reproductive capacity.

From Matriarchy and Fertility to Abundance, Duration, and Success

The idea that these robust, exaggerated figurine forms do not signify fertility or matriarchy, but rather more general notions of abundance and excess at Çatalhöyük is more in line with other indications across the site that support an idea of the importance of ancestors, generational continuity, and duration. Over the past few seasons, the project has found increasing evidence for the concentration of reproductive and symbolic power in a limited number of households (Hodder and Pels 2009). These "history houses," as Pels and Hodder have termed them, persist over several generations, tend to be more elaborate in terms of decorative and structural features, contain higher numbers of burials, and show an increased control or concern over memory storage (for instance, the burial and retrieval of human skulls and plastered sculpture and bucrania). One could imagine that accumulated knowledge and skill would likewise be concentrated in a number of senior individuals who would hold and transmit these to the next generation. Such "guardian" figures would most likely have been the elder individuals (Hodder and Pels 2009); and there is compelling evidence that physically associates "elders" with houses both in life and death. Hodder notes that both old men and women were

Table III Groups of Trait Occurrences

Grouped traits	Number	Grouped traits	Number
3B's	**17**	**Breasts + other traits**	**24**
Br–Bu–Be	4	Br	15
Br–Bu–Be–F–N	4	Br–\He	3
Br–Bu–Be–\He–N	2	Br–\He–F	1
Br–Bu–Be–\He	2	Br–F–C/A	1
Br–Bu–Be–F	1	Br–N	1
Br–Bu–Be–N	2	Br–C/A	1
Br–Bu–Be–H/C–PT	1	Br–H/C	1
Br–Bu–Be–C/A	1	Br–Ph	1
2B's	**16**	**Head elaboration**	**8**
Bu–Be	5	H/C	4
Br–Bu	3	PM/Ha	3
Br–Bu–N	2	Pha	1
Br–Be–N	2	H/C–C/A	1
Br–Be	1		
Br–Be–\He–F–N	1	**Sex traits**	**2**
Bu–Be–\He	1	Ph–PT	1
Br–Bu–H/C	1	PT	1
Buttocks + other traits	**7**	**Body adornment**	**2**
Bu	4		
Bu–\He	3	**Headless**	**2**
Belly + other traits	**3**	**Fingers**	**2**
Be	1		
Be–Pha	1	**Beard**	**2**
Be–\He–N	1		

found with soot-filled lungs, suggesting that the elderly became more house-bound at the end of their lives either by necessity or choice, or both (Hodder 2006b: 210). Strikingly, there is also evidence that in the south area (and building 1, a likely "history house" with 62 burials), house burials tend towards greater numbers of either the very young (neonates to preadolescents) or the mature to older adults (Molleson *et al*. 2005, see especially Tables 12.1–12.2 and Fig. 12.2). This pattern is especially pronounced in building 1, whereas the south area pattern is more heavily weighted towards the very young. While primary burials of adolescents and adults do occur in building 1, they are significantly fewer in number than the young and old; intriguingly, they also represent the only group to receive secondary burial treatment in the building, specifically associated with the northwest platform. So, the adolescent-to-young adult population may be underrepresented in these house burials. Cessford (2005) has remarked that it is unlikely that all individuals were

buried in houses; if this is indeed the case, there would appear to be a specific preference for burying the young and mature in the house.

This correlation evokes ideas of generational continuity and ancestors associated with the house. Many scholars of history and philosophy, from Virgil to Vico to Fustel de Coulanges, have noted a certain kind of foundational link between the house, the unborn, and the dead. Drawing from Vico's ideas, Harrison remarks, "the house was not merely a place of residence, but an institution that linked the living to the dead, the dead to the unborn, and the family to its native ground" (2004: 25). This image surely resonates with what we find at Çatalhöyük, especially for the history houses described above. Furthermore, the act of burial is a potent gesture that links the past to the future. Burial in a broad sense means "to store, preserve, and put the past on hold" (ibid: xi). But something that is buried is also something that may be reclaimed for the future. At Çatalhöyük, we see this practice in action as people remember and retrieve skulls, other body parts, building materials, and plastered features from burials and houses below (Hodder 2006b).

Returning to bodily traits, we might find a further link to these ideas of abundance, duration, and success in the distinct focus on the navel. We have noted an interest in depicting the navel across a variety of media at Çatalhöyük, marking it as either an indentation or an added detail. This can be seen across the site in a subset of figurines (Fig. 4a, b), stamp seals (Fig. 5), as well as the famous plastered wall figures with swelling, decorated stomachs (Fig. 6 and Mellaart's "Shrines" VI. B.8, VI.B.10, VII.31, and VII.45). Among anthropomorphic figurines, it is the fourth most common trait after breasts, buttocks, and bellies. Moreover, it is the only trait that must always occur with one or more of the 3Bs (see Tables II and III). Again, we do not interpret this focus as a preoccupation with fertility or birth. In a literal sense, the navel is an external, visual marker (and trace) of the link between the living and the unborn. Therefore, it may be connected to ideas of birthing as a cultural concern and the connection between generations that may extend beyond offspring to producing ancestors, both in a literal and symbolic sense.

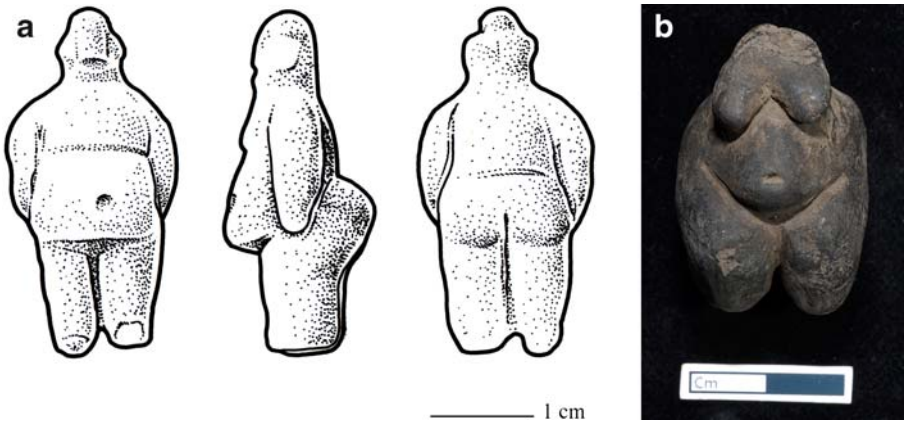

Fig. 4 **a** Androgynous anthropomorphic figurine with navel and protruding belly and buttocks. 11324.X3 (clay; H.2.8 cm, W.1.4 cm, Th.1.1 cm; 2.5 g). Drawing by John G. Swogger. **b** Female figurine with large breasts, belly and navel. 14183.X17 (clay; H.3.7 cm, W2.4 cm, Th.2.9 cm; 21 g). Photo by Jason Quinlan.

Fig. 5 Animal ('bear') stamp with navel. 11652.X1 (clay; H.2.7 cm, L 6.6 cm, W. 4.6 cm. Photo by Jason Quinlan.

This idea might find some support in the occurrence of navels on androgynous bodies such as the splayed plastered wall figures and human figurines. In 2007, excavators uncovered a plastered splayed figure, probably of a bear, in the 4040 area during construction of the site shelter (Fig. 6). Unusually, it was placed in the corner of a building with its legs astride the corner. It was carefully shaped and smoothed; the stomach was round and protruding with a pronounced navel. It was clear that the stomach was shaped and added later and plastered over to convey a smooth three-dimensionality. The presence of the navel on animal forms, especially animals like bears, presents us with a clear case of anthropomorphism or human/animal crossover. It is salient to note that, while in theory all mammals (with the exception of monotremes) are born connected to the placenta by way of an umbilical cord, this does not leave the trace of a navel that is peculiar to human offspring. The mother cleans away the remains of the umbilicus and there is no visible mark. Moreover, unlike human bodies, those of animals like cats and bears are covered with fur,

Fig. 6 Plastered wall relief of splayed quadruped with modeled belly and navel. F.3032. Photo by Lynn Meskell.

making any presence even more impossible to view. Just like the numerous bears anthropomorphized today in our own society (for both children and adults), there was a need to insert the navel to make the body legible and familiar for those viewing and comprehending the perhaps human-like traits of the animal.

While this example is intriguing in the way it forges a link between humans and certain animals (perhaps in a generative or foundational sense), it also generally reinforces some of the issues we have identified for anthropomorphic figurines at the site. It highlights the significance of the stomach and underscores the importance of articulating the navel. While the number presented in Table I indicates that navels are less than half as common as the breasts, bellies, and buttocks, it is possible that this number underestimates the occurrence of this trait by half (see note 1; Table I). More significant is the fact that navels occur across multiple figural traditions (figurines, plastered sculptures, stamp seals) and forms (human and animal). Like the figurines, these other traditions downplay the presence of genitalia or sexing the body; the many splayed plastered anthropomorphic examples and the "bear" stamp seal are clearly unsexed and lacking genitalia, while the stomachs are typically accentuated with added plastered elements and/or navels.

Incidentally, the exaggerated bodily traits, along with the navel, almost exclusively occur in three-dimensional media: figurines or plastered sculpture. Such rendering alone is more directly expressive of abundance and accumulation as it conveys a sensual fullness through both sight and touch. Given the emphasis on certain fleshy traits (the 3Bs) and concomitant exclusion of primary reproductive traits, we argue that the subset of human figurines discussed above articulate more general notions of abundance and longevity. While fertility is required for this process, it is not simply the reproductive capacity, but the link between the past and future that ensures the thriving, long-term endurance of the group.

The Value of Maturity

While the exaggerated traits on anthropomorphic figurines are indeed common indices for productive and fertile bodies, they are also the parts of the body that often locate the most "flesh" or adipose tissue. As such, they can also be indices for the more general concepts of abundance or excess, as these are the bodily zones most prone to taking on more flesh when times are "fertile," both in a physiological *and* social sense. While not completely excluding fertility and reproduction as a concern, the figurine data does not articulate it as defining cultural trait as some would suggest.

At Çatalhöyük, the figures with both prominent breasts and stomachs are often depicted as flattened, drooping, and angular (see Fig. 1), rather than robust and rounded in shape. Many breasts are not portrayed symmetrically and appear to be somewhat flattened and pendulous (Fig. 7, see also Fig. 4b). Similarly, stomachs, while exaggerated, are not evocative of pregnancy, but rather of advanced maturity or even obesity.

In this way, many of the human figurines are suggestive of aging bodies rather than young and reproductive types. Oddly, there is little attention to any shape that might suggest a young or adolescent body type, which have tended to be a focus in other cultural repertoires such as in Egypt, the Mediterranean, and the Mayan

culture. We have only one example of a potentially "young" body type (13129.X1), a somewhat slender piece without a head or visible breasts, hands placed on a slightly protruding stomach, and with traces of red paint on the surface. Notably, human females are rare in both the wall paintings and the plastered forms. The majority of the human images in wall paintings are male, and the plastered anthropomorphic examples are androgynous or, in some cases, may have been zoomorphic, as in the case of the splayed "bear."

Both Mary Voigt and Naomi Hamilton have argued against the interpretation of these figurine forms as pregnant female bodies. Voigt (2007) has addressed this issue in her work with some 76 clay and stone figurines from Level VI at Haçilar now dated to ca. 6,000 BC. Although somewhat later in date than many of the figurines we are analyzing, her ideas on the materialization of the aging body are noteworthy. In the illustrated examples such as those shown in Voigt's Figure 12.4 (Mellaart's figurine 490 and 589), clear attention is paid to the buttocks at the expense of the front of the torso and the arms. The pubic region seems of little consequence while elongating and accentuating the buttocks takes on unnatural proportions. Other famous examples show exaggerated and pendulous breasts, but more typically, the Haçilar figurines draw the eye to drooping stomachs and accentuated buttocks (e.g., 531, 487, 505, 507, 520, 529, 486). While these kinds are a generally more elaborate than those uncovered at Çatalhöyük, one can detect a certain commonality in the materialization of the body. At Haçilar, Voigt suggests that the life cycle or life course of women can be traced through the figurine corpus, from young girls with small breasts and narrow hips to mature women with "enlarged upper arms, medium to large breasts, pendulous stomachs, and huge hips and buttocks" (2007: 165). She surmises that these robust evocations represent bodies worn by work and childbirth. While younger, adolescent forms are generally absent from the Çatalhöyük corpus, the more robust and curvaceous forms occur with some regularity. And Hamilton (2006: 211) has colorfully observed that, "the 'fat-female' figurines depict confident,

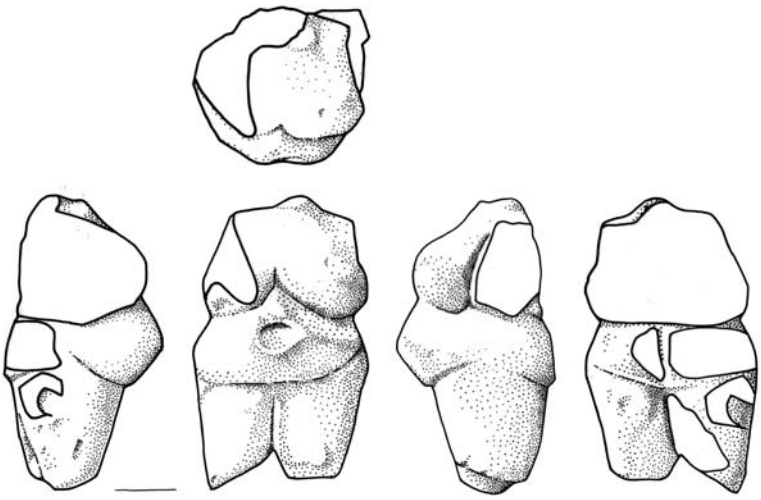

Fig. 7 Female figurine with large breasts, belly, buttocks (broken) and incised navel. 14522.X8 (clay marl; H.4.9 cm, W.3.0 cm, Th.2.8 cm; 33 g). Drawing by Kathryn Killackey.

mature women, in poses that suggest elders (particularly when 'gathered in council' as in A.II.1) rather than women groaning under the weight of pregnancy."

Voigt also underlines female sexuality, specifically a mature sexuality that was largely obscured by Mellaart, in favor of emphasizing childbirth and maternity. Overall, she identifies these particular embodied representations as ordinary women that served as models for adult roles within the society (Voigt 2007: 168), and she extends this interpretation to those examples found at Çatalhöyük that she also sees as linked to initiation practices. In a similar vein, Hamilton has argued that a change towards more strongly sexed female figurines in the later levels at Çatalhöyük indicates an "increasing concern for women's roles in society" (Hamilton 1996: 226).

While we find Voigt's and Hamilton's ideas on mature bodies compelling, we depart from their specific emphasis on female gender and mature sexuality. Instead, we propose that these Çatalhöyük figurines articulated a more general concern for bodily excess or abundance. Conventions of exaggeration in anthropomorphic forms underscored the torso as a focal zone. Emphasized bellies and navels, in particular, also occur across different media. But these bodily traits, moreover, occurred on ambiguously rather than explicitly sexed bodies. And while we admit that breasts are undeniably indexical of the female form, as an index, they are always underdetermined for significance (Keane 2009); to put it simply, breasts might be an index for femaleness, but they are also, concomitantly or alternatively, an index for life-sustaining, bountiful, and mature forms of life, and the attendant meanings they might convey.

Strikingly, there are no clear indications that the robust, fleshy figurine body types were found in the actual human population. The mortuary data does not demonstrate any evidence of obesity in either males or females. For instance, the human remains team has found no evidence of diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis that may be associated with obesity. This is an ossifying condition that produces ankylosis of the spine due to ligament ossification and is rarely observed in individuals younger than 40 years old (Aufderheide and Rodríguez-Martin 1998: 97–98). We might also expect to find osteoarthritis in the knees and toes, suggesting that the body has had to carry undue stress due to excessive body weight, but this has not yet been identified. However, there are a few individuals that may warrant further study. Burial cuts tend to be quite small; a fact that supports the idea that the general population was relatively small in stature, but it is possible that some individuals departed from this bodily norm. At least one individual received a quite different treatment: a headless body in building 6 was uniquely arranged with splayed legs and a cloth and wooden plank covering the torso, demarcating a special treatment. The burial cut for this individual was substantially larger than most cuts due to this unique positioning; however, Jessica Pearson (personal communication) has suggested that this individual also may have been quite large or obese and thus required this kind of "special" treatment. Intriguingly, this individual was buried with his head intact, but the skull was removed at a later date. If this individual was indeed obese, then this burial might make a compelling argument for the association of excess with longevity—or rather, abundance with ancestors. Ongoing studies on the human remains will, no doubt, substantially help clarify this picture.

In light of the information now available, the exaggerated figurine forms at Çatalhöyük, which we would assert were not rigidly gendered in every case (and

thus not always female), do not appear to have drawn from daily life scenarios. Rather, it is possible that these were idealized bodily forms expressing abundance, duration, and memory. As robust figures emphasizing areas of potential growth and abundance (and generational connection through the trace of the navel), they perhaps materialized a cultural desire and respect for accumulated knowledge, skill, and power through the bodily idiom of accumulated flesh.

These figures of desire and idealization also fit well with the fact that almost all Çatalhöyük figurines appear to be eventually discarded or "recycled." As materialized "wishes" and desires, rather than objects of worship, such figurines were perhaps powerful in a more instrumental rather than symbolic way. That is to say, they performed the work of mediation rather than idolatry. We suggest that the exaggerated forms articulated a more abstract notion of abundance and maturity that was not necessarily tied to ideas of female or male status. Images of mature bodies are suggestive of longevity, health, achievement, and elder status—in short, the knowledge and experience required to be a respected, productive group member who ensured the survival and success of the larger group. With the figurine forms, flesh and excess might signify a concern and desire for social success that looks towards the future and also draws from the past. As such, they are images of abundance, duration, and success.

Abbreviated Bodies

On the other end of the figural spectrum, Çatalhöyük also produces many "abbreviated" forms that range from about 1 to 5 cm in height and generally delineate a head and torso on a formed base (divided and undivided). The head is commonly formed by a pinched action that creates a large nose or beak and trunk is often elongated and curved forward, giving the impression that the figure is seated. Many of the figurines are free-standing on bases that are sometimes divided to suggest limbs, feet, or perhaps in the more phallic examples, testicles (Fig. 2). They indicate a certain rapidity in making and their ubiquity suggests that such practices could have occurred regularly, perhaps even on a daily basis. As noted earlier, these enigmatic figures have elicited prior identifications as diverse as "bird-men," miniature phalloi, and "humanoids." Such ambiguity may suggest a potential blurring between categories of human and animal, in the case of "bird-men," or whole and part, in the case of anthropomorphized phalloi with human heads and "feet."

In contrast to anthropomorphic forms, abbreviated figurines demonstrate a much more constricted frequency and range of elaboration. Only 14% of all abbreviated forms show any kind of added detail, as opposed to the 50% of elaborated anthropomorphic forms (Table I). Unlike some of the human figures, these forms do not articulate a concern for flesh. Rather, they render simple but clear approximations of bodily forms.

Given the ambiguous and generic nature of these forms, we suggest that the inscription of specific meanings around them were possibly quite fluid and/or multiple. For instance, they articulate the most basic notion of a body as a head, torso or shaft, and base, and with subtle gestures can be made to be more suggestive of a human, animal, or phallic form (Fig. 2). Furthermore, the three-dimensional form of figurines aids such multiplicity. In handling and turning such figurines and

viewing them from different perspectives, some take on different aspects. Many abbreviated figurines, when viewed from above or from the side, give an overall visual impression of male genitalia; and Mehmet Özdoğan (2003) has argued that similar abbreviated forms from Mezraa-Teleilat represent phallic forms. This is certainly one possible interpretation for the abbreviated Çatalhöyük materials as well. However, we would also emphasize that visual play, which enabled multiple engagements and values, may have been intentionally or unconsciously created. Just as bodies and persons at Çatalhöyük must have had multiple roles and valences, so did these abbreviated figurines.

Although somewhat generic, abbreviated figurines do seem to articulate a set of specific concerns. This form, which likely sought to capture the most general qualities of a generic body—its capabilities as a semiautonomous, self-contained "living" organism—in a miniature, still-life form, was occasionally embellished. Out of 240 intact, diagnostic abbreviated figurines, almost all of the 34 forms with traits elaborated the head (Table I). Most commonly, this took the form of a folded head element. This element has commonly been interpreted as a headscarf or hair (Hamilton 2006), two features that are associated with humans rather than animals. The figures with pointed heads, which are less common, are more evocative of a bird or animal. Moreover, many of the figurines are self-standing and almost all assume a slightly hunched-over body position that gives the impression of a seated body. From the human remains, we know that the residents of Çatalhöyük did not use chairs habitually but squatted or sat directly on the ground, whenever at rest or to undertake particular tasks: various postures identified in the skeletal record include squatting on the heels, squatting or kneeling on toes, sitting cross-legged, squatting with both legs to one side, squatting with knees together and heels to buttocks, and squatting with weight on one foot purchase on the other (Molleson *et al*. 2005). In sum, the qualities of these abbreviated figurines, along with their small size, would invite people to engage the figurines in particular ways; abbreviated figurines could be set up on floors and surface and also carried around or circulated. Regardless of their specific values and meanings, we surmise that the social worlds of such objects addressed a potentially wide suite of intimate or individual concerns and, therefore, constituted a very fluid and familiar set of practices at Çatalhöyük.

Body Kinds, Body Politics

How might archeologists situate such varied figurine work within a broader body politic at Çatalhöyük? Specifically, we have interrogated what sets of concerns emerge in the examination and correlation of certain standardly exaggerated and attenuated body parts and body types. Body images that are commonplace, much like some of the Çatalhöyük figurine forms (Fig. 1), seem to concretize a process of articulating subjective bodily experience with cultural knowledge and concerns. Such body kinds likely do not represent particular individuals, especially in light of their disposability. It is worth stressing that irrespective of materials employed, whether clay or stone, figurines at Çatalhöyük were treated and disposed of in the same ways (Meskell *et al*. 2008: 143–144). It is not simply a matter of saying that clay examples are crude whereas stone examples are more expertly manufactured

and demonstrate more detail. Examples in clay and stone can equally highlight or downplay bodily and sexed specificity. Certainly, such figurines may have been used as agents in storytelling, play, or instruction, and many have additional or nonstandardized details that evoke a quality of "uniqueness." However, many of these figurines also strongly evoke a "body kind." Body kinds are not just specific bodily physiques. Rather, as Rom Harré has argued, they are complex structures or concepts that combine social, historical, and anatomical criteria, which are called into use among human groups when they look at, judge, and interact with each other (Harré 1991: 78). Moreover, he states that "body kinds as noticeable forms are created by society, but they are also, and therefore, icons of that society, a kind of visual or material metaphor through which one enacts one [sic] social attitudes. And as such, the body becomes political" (ibid: 68).

We might then view the anthropomorphic and abbreviated Çatalhöyük figurines as depicting two body kinds: exaggerated anthropomorphic bodies that focus on the torso and its features such as stomachs, breasts, and buttocks and abbreviated, sharpened three-dimensional silhouettes of a head and torso. While these two are not the only body kinds found at Çatalhöyük, they arise from distinct patterns of bodily attention and nonattention and, therefore, appeal for further consideration. What might these different concerns reveal about certain social attitudes at Çatalhöyük and the Neolithic more broadly? We propose that the more robust human forms might have enunciated a particular social concern for flesh and enfleshment—and in Harre's words, were a kind of "icon of society," while the pared-down, abbreviated figures addressed more intimate and less body-specific relations. The abbreviated forms, while perhaps not iconic, nevertheless could have provided ready vehicles through which one could enact and explore various social attitudes, relationships, and values.

Flesh and Bone

For the anthropomorphic examples, it is helpful to look at the Çatalhöyük body practices across different media including wall art, figural plaster features, and human burials. One observable difference, perhaps somewhat dictated by the constraints of media, is that the human figures on wall art are rendered much more dynamically. Humans often appear in motion, with an emphasis on limbs indicating different activities such as dancing or hunting, whereas the figurine and plastered features are much more static and compact. Additionally, when one considers the three-dimensional data (figurines, plastered human remains, and plastered objects), it is possible to argue that these practices articulate a tension between fleshed and skeletal bodies, which are mediated by practices such as plastering bucrania, human skulls, and figurine production (Meskell *et al*. 2008). Perhaps the most dramatic example of this tension occurs in a single object: a headless figurine (12401.X7) that depicts an articulated skeleton on the back and a typically robust female with large breasts and stomach on the front. While this figurine is evocative of the duality of life and death, it can also be seen in terms of the more visceral duality of flesh and bone and their attendant, complex associations with life, survival, and vitality.

The realms of life and death were not kept rigidly separate at Çatalhöyük. The tradition of burying people under platforms in houses meant that at least some

people confronted various levels of death and decay throughout their lives. Burials frequently cut into and disturbed previous internments and people took these opportunties to remove certain body parts from older burials while the skeletons were still partially fleshed (Molleson *et al*. 2005). Villagers carried out such acts with a precision that suggests that they had significant anatomical knowledge of the human body and its decomposition, and they must have been intimately familiar with the dual processes of fleshy decay and skeletal durability. They often retrieved and perhaps circulated human skulls and plastered and reburied at least one. Additionally, they often plastered certain types of animal bones, primarily bucrania, skulls, and claws, and installed them as features in rooms. Given the qualities of plaster—that it protects, transforms, and fortifies an underlying substructure—it is tempting to view the practice of plastering in terms of maintaining, building up, and indeed "enfleshing" domestic/ritual objects and spaces in order to make them more durable, robust, and efficacious (Meskell 2008). Clays and plasters likely had particular associations with flesh and bone. The preoccupation for plastering surfaces and objects then might have articulated a particular concern for making things and spaces more durable and lasting, linking generations, accumulating knowledge skill and experience, and materializing a connection between the past with the present.

Extending this idea a bit further, it becomes possible to view the emphasis of breasts, stomachs, and buttocks outside of the standard gendered-biased frameworks. While the skeletal structure supports the forms of limbs and the head, the forms of breasts, stomachs, and buttocks emerge from bodily soft tissues. The prominence of such features does not only suggest fertility or abundance, but can also indicate longevity and survival. These latter themes might become embodied (quite literally) in the mature body. At a basic level, mature bodies imply durability, experience, and success simply by achieving an advanced age. The features emphasized on the figurines—breasts, bellies, and buttocks—are secondary reproductive traits that are often inscribed with social views on sexuality, health, and status. The striking lack of emphasis on explicit sex traits on figurines, however, and the transposability of certain features such as navels, bellies, and buttocks across various media and body kinds suggests that these body parts and zones addressed concerns that moved across rigid boundaries of male and female, human and animal, and the living and dead.

Conclusion

The work we have been conducting since 2004 suggests that the traditional ideas of cultic and religious figurine practice, while seemingly commonplace in archeological narratives, have not found much purchase empirically at Çatalhöyük. As we have previously shown, the majority of all figurine types derive from middens rather than houses. Figurines are consistently found in external midden and 30% of buildings contain no figurines at all (see Table 3 in Meskell *et al*. 2008). Contra Mellaart, we have not found a correlation between elaborate buildings and the presence of figurines (e.g., building 52; see Twiss *et al*. 2008). Secondary deposition is a general pattern seen across the site for all materials; however, certain things such as shell, bone, and obsidian were periodically cached within houses at Çatalhöyük. Given the association

of caching, embedding, and burying with the crafting of memory or long-term social identity (Hodder 2006a, b; Hodder and Cessford 2004), it is striking that figurines were not typically treated this way (Meskell *et al*. 2008). Depositional practices at other Neolithic sites (see Gebel *et al*. 2002; Kujit and Chesson 2005; Verhoeven 2002) often indicate protective, magical, and ancestral concerns. At Çatalhöyük, such arguments are not so easy to make. In comparison to the substantial evidence of clearly "ritualized" practices at Çatalhöyük, figurines appear to be lacking such clear ritual framing. Our previous work examined general patterns of figurine ubiquity, occurrence, and disposal across the site and over time. As a result of these findings, we argued that figurines were ever-present and quotidian things that were made and discarded expeditiously and potentially played numerous roles in everyday life. While their deposition in midden and infill does not necessarily exclude them from the ritual sphere, figurines and their find contexts do not readily reveal what such ritual framing could have been (but for a few exceptional examples, see Nakamura 2009).

In the current paper, we have turned specifically to materializations of the human body itself in order to gain further insight into the worlds they inhabited and embodied. Instead of starting from a position of interpreting a handful of evocative objects from their visual properties alone, we chose to quantify those physical traits present for the entire corpus of anthropomorphic and abbreviated figurines. The results of our study underline a tendency to emphasize the 3Bs (breasts, bellies, and bottoms) of the human form and alternatively erase the detailing of genitalia in the vast majority of cases. There are only two exceptions that detail the pubic area and a handful of free-standing phallic figurines. The exaggerated and often sensuous rendering of buttocks, thighs, and stomachs might draw our attention toward a mature sexuality that potentially cross-cut gender lines. Sexual characteristics or erogenous zones need not simply encompass genitalia per se. These are the physical characteristics or qualities of idealized bodies or body kinds that figurine makers chose to accentuate over some 1,400 years of the site's occupation. Another interpretation is that the depiction of fleshy stomachs and buttocks were material signs of longevity, good health, access to food, sedentary lifestyles, signs of indulgence, and the ability to give. The explicit roundness of numerous figurines "demonstrates the success of a way of life in producing a wealth of goods. It is the ideal visual metaphor for abundance" (Harré 1991: 68). The evidence from other data sources at the site including burials, human remains, and dietary analysis demonstrates that this was an idealized rather than lived reality for the majority of people at Çatalhöyük. Set against the fragility of life and the fragility of flesh, many figurines could have embodied a rotund success and maturity. As argued elsewhere, fleshing out human and animal remains with plaster, molding fleshy human and animal bodies on house walls, and creating exaggerated human figurines were all testament to ongoing efforts to maintain lifelike, robust, and dynamic materializations.

We have challenged the once popular notions that figurines were simply about representing fertility and procreation, since there was a reluctance to visually depicting pregnancy, child rearing, or children generally. In fact, our findings lead us to consider instead an emphasis on the nongenerative human form across the site. We certainly do not suggest that children were not important at Çatalhöyük, since their burial treatments and frequency attest otherwise. Rather, we question whether

the figurine corpus or even the wall art are the appropriate contexts to uncover cultural meanings or desires about their specific position in the world.

The other "body kind" popular at the site is the abbreviated form that might, in some instances, also blur the boundary between anthropomorphic and zoomorphic representations. These are much more common than the strictly anthropomorphic types but have received little scholarly attention. We suggest that they present a generic bodily form, sometimes with a phallic inflection, at other times hinting at a seated body, and typically retaining a fluid and multivalent character. The particular qualities of these abbreviated figurines, along with their small size, may have invited people to engage the figurines in particular ways. Because they are free-standing, they could have been set up on floors and surface yet also carried around or circulated. Irrespective of their specific values and meanings, the social lives of these objects constituted both fluid and familiar practices across the site.

Body kinds embody their own cultural politics and histories. Figurines are often materializations of idealized or projected types rather than direct reflections of reality and, as such, we should not be surprised that they do not necessarily correspond to the bodily evidence derived from the human remains or even the wall paintings. The iconographic sources have areas of overlap, but also their own specificities and the three-dimensional qualities of clay and stone allow for a different set of possibilities. Our aim in this paper has been to let a basic quantitative analysis challenge prior assumptions about the surmised *meanings* of figurines and enable our results to generate other lines of enquiry. We have suggested multiple interpretations for the most common body types in our repertoire, anthropomorphic and abbreviated forms, which coalesce around ideas of fleshy and mature forms, to the more generic embodiments of humans in miniature. As we continue to analyze the burgeoning corpus of figurines and work across multiple data sets, it is likely that we will uncover additional patterns and consider other interpretations for the figured lifeworlds at Çatalhöyük.

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