



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Quantifying regional traditions among third millennium BCE clay figurines from Mesopotamia

MAKOWSKI M. <sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw, Poland

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

The huge corpus of clay figurines from Early Bronze Age Mesopotamia calls for an analysis that captures its specificity at regional and supra-regional levels. Analyses published to date, focusing on issues such as typology and the diversity of details, have identified the main categories of representation and their chronological and geographical distribution. They have systematised the abundant material, but do not provide a complete picture of the process of regionalisation taking place in this category of material culture. The current study takes advantage of a case of more than 6500 figurines from 29 sites distributed throughout third millennium BC Mesopotamia to advocate a quantitative approach to research. Focusing on the internal structure of figurine collections from individual sites, the study examines the relative frequencies of different categories of representations in order to estimate the proportional relationships between anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines, and between different types of animals among zoomorphic representations. The patterning of the processed data reveals some geographical trends and diachronic changes. The patterns recorded clearly reflect three major traditions, characterised by different subject choices in terms of preferred representations and at least partly separate trajectories of development.

## Keywords

Mesopotamia, Early Bronze Age, clay figurines, regional traditions, quantitative analysis

## Session

4. The materiality of inscribed and figurative objects

## Type of paper

Oral presentation