

# **Fragile Gods: Ceramic Figurines in Roman Britain**

## **Volume 1**

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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## **Declaration**

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## Abstract

As small portable forms of statuary, pipeclay objects provide a valuable insight into the religious beliefs and practices of the culturally mixed populations of the Roman provinces. This thesis provides a complete catalogue of the nearly 1000 published and unpublished pipeclay objects found in Britain, including figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks. This research is the first study of this material conducted since the late 1970s.

Pipeclay objects were made in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region but not in Britain. Attention thus focuses on where and how the British finds were made by analysing their styles, types, fabrics and any makers' marks. This reveals how the pipeclay market in Britain was supplied and how these objects were traded, and suggests that cultural rather than production and trade factors were more influential on pipeclay consumption in Britain.

A typological, chronological and distributional analysis of this material is conducted to highlight pipeclay consumption in *Britannia*. As in many other provinces, deities are the most common depiction and Venus figurines the most common type. Comparison with Continental collections highlights distinctive regional consumption patterns, with Britain having several rare and exotic types, especially in London. The social distribution and contexts of the British finds shows that pipeclay objects were mainly used by civilians - probably in domestic shrines and occasionally in temples and in the graves of often sick children. Rare types (both in terms of origin and fabric) probably belonged to higher status foreigners.

This thesis identifies previously unidentified subtle differences between the use of pipeclay and metal figurines. While ostensibly the same function, significant differences in style and iconography show ceramic figurines overwhelmingly depicting goddesses while metal figurines tend to depict male deities. Similar numbers of each mean that both are rare in Britain, but subtle differences in their social distribution suggests different groups used 'higher-status' metal and 'lower-status' ceramic figurines in the province.

Fragmentation experiments suggest that deliberately breaking figurine heads was an important ritual practice.

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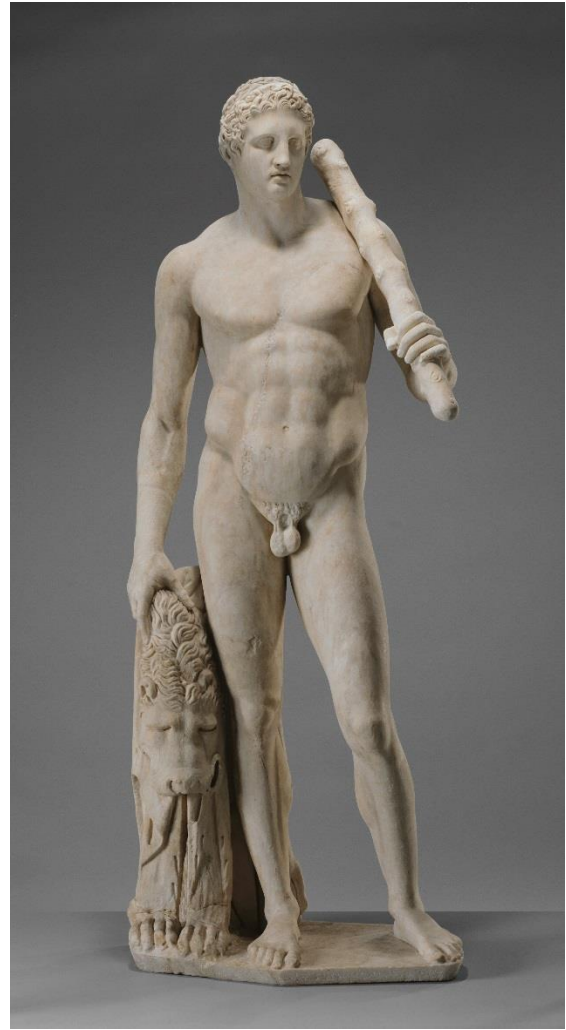
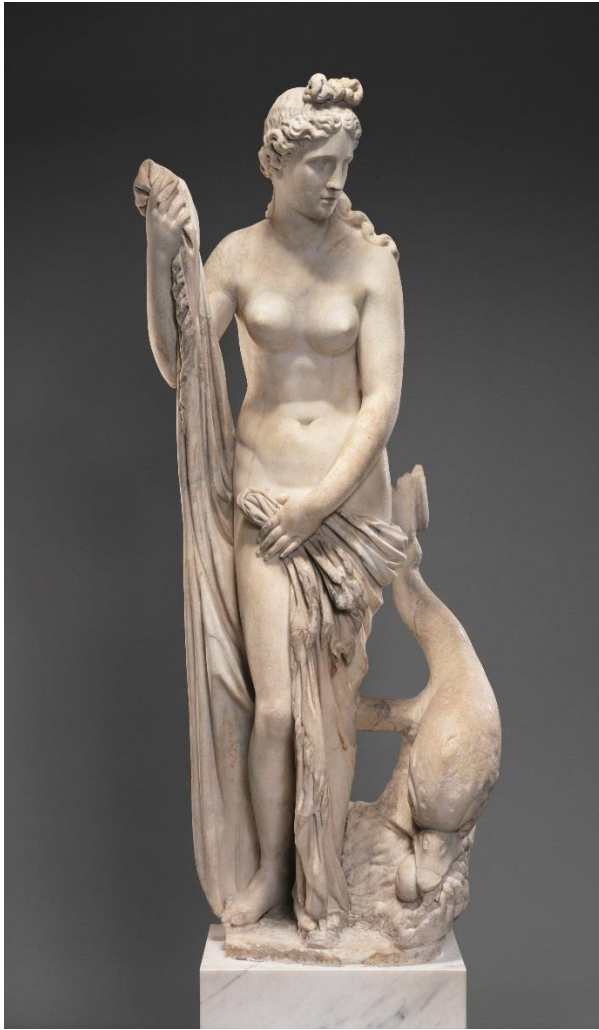
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## Introduction

Religion was a central part of life in most Roman provinces and an important aspect that shaped who people were and the daily practices they carried out (Alcock 1980; Henig 1984; Scheid 2003; Rüpke 2011; Kajava 2015). In British and European scholarship, monumental statuary has long been a way to study the religious and social beliefs and attitudes of people in the Roman world. The majority of these studies have focussed on the elites of Roman society, such as the emperor and eminent benefactors, and on the artistic and religious significance of statues depicting powerful gods and goddesses (e.g. Friedland *et al.* 2015; Fig. I.1). Yet little attention has been given to smaller, more portable, forms of statuary, which had a similar role to play for the more culturally mixed populations of people who lived in the Roman provinces (e.g. Durham 2012; Osborne & Vout 2016). This thesis presents and examines mould-made terracotta, or pipeclay, objects found in Roman Britain. It will present not just a catalogue and typo-chronological and distributional analysis of these pipeclay objects but also use this information to analyse their consumption and contexts to discuss the different beliefs, practices and identities of the people that used them in the province.

Pipeclay objects are small items (usually between 50mm and 200mm in height) that are made out of clays local to Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region. They were produced from the first to the third centuries AD (Higgins 1976; Boekel 1987: 217-30) and are generally regarded as mass-produced religious objects in Britain and across the Continent (Jenkins 1977: 418). In Britain these objects are always referred to as ‘pipeclay’ figurines, possibly because the term has been retrospectively applied to them from the post-Medieval pipeclay pipes that are made from the same white coloured clay. However, the same figurines on the Continent – as well as similar though distinctive Italian figurines - are usually referred to as terracotta



*Fig. I. 1. Second century Roman marble statues depicting deities.  
Left: The Mazarin Venus, second century, found in Rome, Italy.  
Right: The Lansdowne Hercules, c. AD 125, found in Tivoli, Italy.  
Both images courtesy of The J. Paul Getty Trust.*

figurines. The figurines in Italy are not white/yellowish-white like the British and Continental examples because iron-rich clays were used to make them, so the term ‘terracotta’ is appropriate, and it is this distinction that separates them from the other Continental pipeclay figurines that are different in terms of the white coloured and iron-poor clays they are made of. However, as in other existing Continental catalogues, it can be argued that ‘terracottas’ is generally an appropriate term for our Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle products as well given, not just because they too are made of clay, but also because they are easy to differentiate from other

types of ceramic figurines from Italy or elsewhere, not just in terms of their distinctive clay colour, but also their general style overall. 'Terracotta' is a term that Jenkins (1977) indeed often used interchangeably with 'pipeclay' to describe such figurines from Britain, but for the purposes of this thesis I have decided to use the term of 'pipeclay' to describe the British finds so that they are clearly distinguished from any other types of clay object from the province in line with how they are generally referred to in British site reports and catalogues today. In doing so, this thesis records almost 1000 (946) pipeclay objects that have been found in Britain, roughly doubling the corpus of finds known from the country in the late 1970s (Jenkins 1977). These objects depict a variety of different forms and types - mainly figurines of deities - but also figurines of animals, humans and composites, and busts of human figures, as well as shrines, animal vessels, and masks, a small range of other miscellaneous objects, including eggs, and numerous pipeclay bases and fragments from one or other of these various forms.

Large collections of pipeclay objects have been found in most western provinces covering the modern countries of Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005), France (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972; Bémont *et al.* 1993), Germany (e.g. Rüger 1980), the Netherlands (Boekel 1987), Switzerland (Lange 1989, 1990; Gonzenbach 1986, 1995) and, of course, Britain (e.g. Jenkins 1957a, 1962a, 1969a). Each region now has its own catalogue of finds and several Continental catalogues are supplemented by later additions, but the collection of finds from Britain has not been significantly updated since Jenkins completed his unpublished thesis, *Clay Statuettes of the Roman Western Provinces* (1977) in the late 1970s. While superficially similar, relative proportions of forms and types actually vary between provinces, but this has rarely been explored. One of the main objectives of this thesis is to carry out such an inter-regional comparative analysis to highlight differences in how supply, consumption and religious belief and practice differed between these different provinces.

In terms of function, pipeclay figurines and busts are usually thought to have been used in shrines for private domestic worship yet more specific ideas about their function have been put forward based on their iconography. It has been suggested, for instance, that different types might have had specific religious roles in different urban and rural provincial communities (Blanchet 1891, 1901, 1902) and that the large number of objects depicting females and children could reflect the religious views and practices of women (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 63; Boekel 1987: 238; Bristow 2012: 16;). Gonzenbach (1995: 387-428) quantifies and dates first century classical male motifs to suggest that their initial production was perhaps intended for the military market rather than the later 'non-classical' female forms of the second century that had a non-military use (Drinkwater & Vertet 1992: 27; Vertet 1984; Eckardt 1999: 61). Animal figurines, meanwhile, have been seen as having religious significance, often associated with specific gods: horses with Epona and cockerels with Mercury, for example (see Green 1986, 1989), while animal vessels and masks are usually regarded as having been involved with other kinds of religious practice as well (e.g. Boekel 1987: 776-7, 814-6; Martelli 2013a: 160).

In the 1990s typological-quantitative analysis started to recognise associations between certain figurine types and their use on specific types of site (e.g. Lintz 1993). As Fulford (1994) noted in his review of Bémont *et al.*'s seminal work of 1993, although the precise religious function of pipeclay figurines is unclear and the finds from Gaul are relatively evenly distributed between settlements, sanctuaries and cemeteries, significant differences in the way that certain figurine types are distributed include strong associations between deities and human forms with settlements, as well as burials. Patterns of distribution like this have yet to be fully investigated within Britain except for small-scale studies by Bristow (2012) on the finds from Hampshire, and Fittock (2015) on the group of pipeclay objects from Roman London. A province-wide study will undoubtedly help us to better understand the nuances of consumption and the use of pipeclay objects in Britain.

Pipeclay objects had important religious roles, both at temples, and as grave goods (e.g. Boekel 1987: 239-40, 903-5). The presence and function of pipeclay objects such as figurines at temple sites and sanctuaries has been explored in detail on the Continent but this is not the case in Britain despite several finds at known temple sites such as Lowbury Hill in Berkshire (Atkinson 1916; Fulford & Rippon 1994), Harlow (Bartlett 1988a/b), Heybridge (Atkinson & Preston 1998, 2015) and Kelvedon (Rodwell 1988) in Essex, Nettleton in Wiltshire (Toynbe 1982), and a large collection of finds at the important temple site at Springhead in Kent (Penn 1958, 1959, 1964). Pipeclay objects could tell us more about the specific deities these temples were dedicated to. The importance of Mercury has been identified at the Balkerne Hill temple complex at Colchester by the various animal figurines of the god at the site that have been tentatively identified as personal votive objects (Crummy 2006). Perhaps some of the pipeclay objects from Britain can be interpreted in a similar way.

The recovery of pipeclay objects from child graves in Britain and on the Continent has led to the suggestion that they were children's toys (e.g. Kyll 1966: 52-3, 67; Rouvier- Jeanlin 1972: 29; Jenkins 1977: 418, 523; Rüger 1980: 33, 90; *cf.* Eckardt 1999: 60), but several non-British finds come from adult graves as well (e.g. Gonzenbach 1995: 420). Some pipeclay objects are more likely to have been toys. A few Continental figurines, for example, have moving parts, such as wheels, or are filled with small stones that might have been rattles (e.g. Boekel 1987: 239-40). However, toys made of more suitable, 'child-friendly', materials such as leather, wax and wood were also available (Dasen 2011, 2012; Harlow 2013). This study will examine whether any of the pipeclay objects found in Britain were toys but we may never know for certain, though it is possible that the same object fulfilled multiple functions.

There is also a general assumption in modern scholarly literature that clay objects, including pipeclay, objects were cheaper, less valuable and more common alternatives to rarer, more valuable and expensive metal figurines which may have been used for the same purposes.

One of the fundamental principles of this view is that objects made of clay were typically low value objects. However, this notion has recently been questioned, not least by Glinister (2006: 27-30) who suggests that terracotta figurines from republican Italy were not necessarily easy or cheap to produce, but also others who now question the social status of the people that used them. Recke (2013: 1074), for example, has pointed out that we should be wary about unequivocally associating such objects with people of lower social status based upon the lower value of the material and its perceivably less costly production process, while Scopacasa (2015) has noted that not all clay figurines in central Italy made from the fourth to second centuries BC were exclusively used as dedications and gifts by common people or the poor. As such, while the pipeclay objects from Britain and the Continent have all traditionally been interpreted as 'low value' objects, it is now time to reconsider whether this was entirely the case and try to perhaps reveal a more nuanced picture about their value and the social status of their users.

Ascribing value to pipeclay objects is very difficult by analysing them and their spatial and contextual distributions alone, but one way to get a better indication of their value is to compare such data to that of other forms of material culture that are usually regarded as being higher in economic and/or social value because of the material they are made from. A main aim of this thesis is therefore to further explore such enduring interpretations and show that by directly comparing the updated corpus of 946 pipeclay objects from Britain to the *c.* 1000 metal figurines from the province (Durham 2012, 2012, 2014) using a detailed contextual approach, it is possible to attain a more accurate and nuanced picture about the different social values of these different objects, as well as highlight the different functions and practices associated with them. I also hope to differentiate between the religious beliefs and status (i.e. age, gender, ethnicities) of the individuals and social groups that used both object types in Britain.

The significant quantities of pipeclay objects from Britain additionally offer the chance to quantify the distributions of various production centres, thereby giving an insight into how

production and export were organised in relation to the British market. Doing so allows us to explore some important questions, such as how pipeclay objects were supplied and transported to the province, and if availability in Britain was a reflection of consumer preferences or selective export choices. Whether producers, merchants or consumers had more influence in terms of the products ‘selected’ for the British market may never be known, but what we can do is assess their availability in the province and how the British market changed through time by comparing the different proportions and distributions of specific pipeclay products (i.e. forms and types) and considering what might have affected any changes. As a result, this thesis concentrates on the consumption of pipeclay objects in Britain but it also gives a useful insight into the dynamics behind their production, supply and availability.

Overall, the emphasis of this thesis is to examine the consumption and context of pipeclay objects in Britain and to reassess their traditional art- and culture-historical based interpretations. While most pipeclay objects across the Roman world probably have multiple inter-related functions as small ritual objects, votive offerings, funerary objects and possibly toys, it has not been assessed whether there are any subtler patterns of use and practice between different social groups. There are also sweeping generalisations that need reconsideration, such as the ideas that *all* ceramic objects in female form were the possessions, and thus reflect the practices, of women, and/or were children’s toys. This thesis will thus systematically assess the archaeological contexts of the British finds to confirm or deny the validity of such suggestions.

The large collection of 946 pipeclay objects from Britain – especially the more modern discoveries - are particularly suited to this kind of detailed contextual analysis because of the well-recorded excavation information they come with. The full database of finds and associated data are available in Appendix 9 (see the CD in Volume 2). This large collection of material provides a rich source of data for detailed typological, chronological and spatial and social analyses that give a valuable insight into the nature of religious belief in Roman Britain. This

information, and the analyses, can also be used to analyse where pipeclay objects were used, who used them (e.g. military, urban and rural populations), and how these groups used them throughout the province. Detailed analysis of finds from habitation and ritual contexts, such as temples and burials, will also highlight subtle differences in the religious practices of different social groups.

Similarly well-recorded material has led to a wealth of recent material-based studies on Roman objects in Britain, from samian (Willis 2011) and lighting equipment (Eckardt 2002a) to cosmetic instruments (Crummy & Eckardt 2008) and metal figurines (Durham 2012), as well as thematic studies on deposit types, such as burials and other funerary contexts (e.g. Swift 2010; Pearce 2013; Pearce *et al.* 2015). How objects relate to and reflect social and cultural identities in relation to age, gender, ethnicity and status are focal points of social analysis in these studies but have not been addressed in relation to the collections of pipeclay objects in Britain or across the Continent. It is thus argued throughout this thesis that the use of pipeclay objects in Britain and elsewhere was an important way in which individuals and social groups constructed and expressed their social status and cultural identities (see Chapter 2 for a review of identity studies relating to Roman material culture).

## **Summary and Structure Outline**

The aim of this thesis is to provide a full contextual analysis of all of the pipeclay objects found in Roman Britain. To do this, Chapter 1 takes a reflective look at the development of pipeclay studies on the Continent and how this material has been studied in Britain, with a focus on how the function and social significance of these objects has been interpreted. Building on this, Chapter 2 goes on to consider how theoretical concepts of identity have more recently been applied to Roman material culture studies and explains how this can also be done in terms of studying pipeclay objects in Britain to learn more about the people that used them. Chapter 3



outlines the methodology for the thesis overall. This section explains which published and unpublished sources were consulted to ensure that as many objects as possible were recorded, before explaining how each object was recorded, what, how and why contextual information was recorded, and how the dataset is analysed contextually.

The subsequent chapters evaluate the assemblage typologically, chronologically and contextually to analyse several aspects, such as how and where the pipeclay objects in Britain were produced and supplied, the social groups that used them, what they were used for, and the various religious practices that different social groups utilised them for across the province. This begins in Chapter 4, which examines the production evidence for pipeclay objects found in Britain. As no evidence for production has been found in the province, attention instead focuses on how these ceramic objects were made and identifying their production centres in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region; this also highlights how the market in Britain was supplied. To do this I first carry out a visual assessment of style and clay colour to try and identify how many workshops supplied pipeclay objects to Britain. I also examine the inscriptions and makers' marks on some figurines to identify any links between the production of pipeclay objects and samian pottery (Fig. I. 2). Chemical and portable X-ray fluorescence analysis of fabrics are other techniques that could help better identify the provenance of individual pipeclay forms and types, but on this occasion were not used because of the inconclusive results such methods often provide (e.g. Lahanier & Rouvier-Jeanlin 1977; Lahanier *et al.* 1990; see also Hunt & Speakman 2015). Combining information about production centres, fabric analysis and makers' marks adds to the picture of how pipeclay objects were produced and supplied to, and their availability in, Britain. This highlights which pipeclay goods were made



*Fig. I. 2. A range of samian pottery vessels from the site of New Fresh Wharf and St. Magnus House, London and two Venus figurines (nos. 186 and 108) found nearby (after Dyson 1986).*

in Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle region, and explores how competitive the market was between the producers in each of these areas.

In Chapter 5 a complete typological assessment of all the pipeclay figurine material is conducted to analyse their consumption in Britain. The more descriptive elements are provided in Appendix 1 where a thematic discussion of each object form and type is classified and their iconography is assessed to identify symbolic characteristics, while the digital catalogue that makes up Appendix 9 provides more details about each individual object and their find circumstances. Chapter 5 thus provides a useful art-historical backdrop highlighting both the origins and broader religious and cultural significance of the deity, animal and human imagery depicted in pipeclay form. Most of the chapter will quantify the different pipeclay forms and figurine types depicting deities, animals and humans to highlight the nature of typological trends in the assemblage. This identifies the most common, rare and exotic types in Britain and

explores their possible significance. The composition of the British assemblage is then directly compared with that of Continental collections from Gaul (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972), Gallia Belgica (Beenhouwer 2005), the *Limes*/Germania Inferior (Boekel 1987) and Germania Superior/Raetia (Gonzenbach 1986, 1995) to highlight the varied character of pipeclay consumption between these different Roman provinces.

Completed in 2010 and published in 2012, a study by Durham conducted a detailed analysis of c. 1000 metal figurines found in Roman Britain from published and unpublished sources (Fig. I.3). As well as classifying and quantifying all of the deity, animal and human types depicted and in doing so noting a high proportion of male deities, Durham also notes the presence of rare figurine types depicting Eastern deities from London and Colchester and evaluates the unique style and distribution of certain groups, such as the Southbroom figures (Durham 2014) and horse and rider figurines (Durham 2010: 338-56). The second part of Chapter 5 in my thesis thus compares the typological composition of the metal and pipeclay figurine assemblages from Britain to see if there are any differences between the depictions represented and considers the extent that this might reflect differences in beliefs between the people who used objects made out of each respective material.

A full chronology of the British pipeclay assemblage is provided in Chapter 6 where I use stylistic dating by matching specific forms, types and sub-types of object with identical production moulds and parallel objects from dated contexts on the Continent. I also highlight any discrepancies between the British and Continental finds from dated contexts and where this provides new evidence for earlier use of any given pipeclay forms and types by systematically examining the Romano-British context dates. Examining the assemblage in this way reveals the temporal patterns of pipeclay supply to and consumption in Britain, as well as the movement of religious ideas and practices into the province from the Continent.



*Fig. 1. 3. Metal figurines of Minerva from Colchester, Essex (left) and Hercules from London (right), after Durham 2010, pls. 200 and 71.*

Contextual analysis of the pipeclay objects in Britain commences in Chapter 7 with a spatial distribution analysis that plots the location of each find on a map of Britain and discusses any significant geographic trends both overall and over time from the first to fifth centuries. The distribution of pipeclay objects is then compared with the distributions of similar categories of material culture that were also imported into the province during the first and second centuries, including metal figurines (Durham 2010: 77-82, fig. 12), samian pottery (e.g. Tyers 1996, 2014) and ceramic lamps (Eckardt 2002: 48-52, figs. 15-17, 71-3, fig. 32a). Doing so highlights the distinctive circulation of pipeclay objects in Britain as a whole and shows that any distributional differences are more reflective of ancient patterns of activity than merely modern excavation and publication practices.

The spatial distribution is followed by a two-stage social distribution analysis based on the evaluation of the different site (e.g. military, urban and rural) and deposit types (e.g. burials, temples and occupation deposits) from which pipeclay objects have been recovered. Examination of the social distributions of different forms (e.g. figurines/busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks), depictions (e.g. deities, animals and humans), and representations (e.g. males, females and children, and common and rare types) follows to highlight patterns of

regional beliefs and possible practices. The following chapter (Chapter 8) builds upon the analysis in Chapter 5 by directly comparing the distributions of pipeclay objects and metal figurines to examine whether more ‘valuable’ metal figurines were used any differently to the ‘less valuable’ ceramic objects by a different, wealthier, group of people.

A closer look at the ritual use of pipeclay objects in hoards, sanctuaries and burials is carried out in Chapter 9. Here, the different forms and types of pipeclay objects recovered from these contexts are identified and a full evaluation of grave structures and associated grave goods offers valuable insights into the age, gender, status and cultural identities of the people buried with them. Assessing all the pipeclay burials from the province in this way not only reveals the particular character and regional extent of this practice but also demonstrates how important pipeclay objects were for child funerary rites. All of the pipeclay objects from such contexts are listed in Appendix 6 and as a separate database query in Appendix 9.

Finally, Chapter 10 takes a close look at pipeclay figurine fragmentation and explores if they were intentionally broken. This extends methods developed during my earlier work for London that identified subtle patterns of figurine breakage (Fittock 2015: 125-9) and directly compares this with Continental patterns to suggest that fragmentation practices varied in different provinces to the whole province. An experiment breaking replica ceramic Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines identifies the natural and deliberate breakage patterns associated with the ancient figurines which may aid identification of this practice in the archaeological record. Based on these results, the potential function and social significance of pipeclay figurine heads is considered in greater detail. Such subtle breakage patterns thus give a direct insight into the nature of specific religious beliefs and ritual practices in Roman Britain.

This thesis therefore combines and analyses old and new data to re-evaluate a large dataset of important religious objects in a new, theoretically informed way to shed more light

on how pipeclay objects were integral parts of daily religious life, practice and identify construction for people in Roman Britain. It also serves as a further case study in terms of how contextual Romano-British material culture studies produce a more illuminating picture of how people lived their lives in what was a culturally mixed and vibrant province. It is only by examining and comparing surviving archaeological material in this way that we can truly continue to improve our understanding of life in Britain during the Roman period. Hopefully this study goes some way in contributing towards forming a better picture of this as well.

## Chapter 1. Roman Pipeclay Figurines. The Story So Far...

Pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks have been traditionally studied from the perspectives of art-history, typology and chronology. In general, catalogues describing the different types of each are popular but these very often inadequately contextualise the material by only cross-referencing finds with examples identical in form, design and style. Recent Continental work has usefully combined typological, geographical and chronological distributions with contextual analyses in an attempt to better understand the economic, social and functional significance of pipeclay objects but this situation compares starkly to Britain where analysis is still rather antiquated and focusses on figurine iconography, while the growing corpus of new finds from academic journals and site monographs remain unassessed. Very little has been achieved in terms of demonstrating how the pipeclay objects from Roman Britain relate to wider aspects of social, cultural and economic structures. To what extent these objects reflect socio-cultural identities also remains an unanswered question.

The interest in collecting and studying pipeclay objects began over 300 years ago and continues to the present day. In this section the aim is to carry out a brief analysis of the previous work on the subject and highlight some of the key themes and features associated with their study. Unlike some contemporary works in Roman archaeology that adopt a thematic approach to reviewing literature (e.g. Orton *et al.* 1993 for pottery studies; Eckardt 2002a for lamps), the relatively limited amount of work on pipeclay figurines lends itself towards a chronological account that integrates the themes of art-history, typologies and chronologies to gain a fuller account of the subject's development over time. It was, however, thought necessary to consider two of the more prominent themes that transcend most studies in greater detail, namely aspects relating to the production and trade of pipeclay objects and how their function has been

interpreted over time. The aim here is not to provide a detailed historical account of all the Continental studies and thus only those regarded as key contributions have been discussed. However, the review of the British works is as comprehensive as possible. It is hoped that this will highlight some of the key themes and research traditions of the discipline that will in turn help contextualise the current state of British research and identify useful new ways to examine the large corpus of material that is now available from the province.

The following review is arranged in two sections. It begins by evaluating the major Continental works before a full review of British pipeclay figurine studies is carried out. In doing so several research themes are considered throughout, including pipeclay production and trade, as well as the important topic of their function and how pipeclay objects have been traditionally interpreted. Organising the survey in this way was chosen over a discussion of the literature's characteristics (e.g. museum catalogues, excavation reports and monographs) as it better places each study in its historical context and accounts for important divisions in specialist reports and the larger regional studies. All the important publications in each section are discussed and in each case an attempt is made to consider their strengths and weaknesses as well as any alternative approaches they provide that are deemed to be relevant to my study.

### **Continental Approaches to the Study of Pipeclay Objects**

Pipeclay objects have been noted as interesting finds in certain areas of Europe ever since the seventeenth century (e.g. Smetius 1678: 147-8). Interest in these objects grew rapidly as large quantities of moulds and wasters of different forms and types were discovered and recorded during the excavation of terracotta kilns and workshops across France and the Rhineland during the early nineteenth century. The earliest case of this dates to 1826 when Rever reported on a small collection of pipeclay figurines from a newly discovered kiln site at Les Baux in



Normandy. Several discoveries of figurines and production moulds followed at sites such as Champ-Lary, Toulon-sur-Allier (Esmonnot 1856-8), Vichy and Moulins (Bertrand 1863, 1865, 1895) in and around the Allier Valley in Central France. Meanwhile, Klein (1885, 1889) and Lehner (1901, 1903) began publishing pipeclay finds from production sites around Cologne in the Rhineland. In the Netherlands, Janssen started to catalogue pipeclay figurines and other objects from Noordbarge and other museums across the country (1848a: 84-5, nos. III-XI; 86, nos. II-XXI; Pleyte 1880, 20-1). This included the notable collections at both the Provinciaal Utrechts Genootschap voor Kunsten en Wetenschappen (1846: 23-4, nos. 1-22) and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden in Leiden (1848b; 1862: 7-8, no. 10; see Boekel 1987, 199-201).

In the mid-nineteenth century the first concentrated and significant work on pipeclay objects emerged. Building on a series of preliminary papers (1854-55, 1856, 1858-59), Edmond Tudot began the process of collating and recording the pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines and vessels from terracotta production centres and kiln sites on the Continent and subsequently published his '*Collection de Figurines en Argile*' in 1860 (Figs. 1.1-6). This comprehensive and beautifully illustrated study provided a full examination of the discoveries from the Allier region and includes the very first detailed and extensive catalogue of pipeclay forms and types (Jenkins 1977: 13; Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 23-24; Beenhouwer 2005: 3), albeit in a descriptive rather than analytical way. The work was a great success and so popular that the British-based antiquarian Charles Roach-Smith (1860, 1868) translated the entire manuscript into English, with a supplement cataloguing all of the pipeclay figurine objects known from Britain at that time. The major drawback of Tudot's work was that he used stylistic attributes to incorrectly identify a long period of pipeclay production that he believed started in the first century BC and lasted until the seventh century AD (Beenhouwer 2005: 3). Nevertheless, he was the first to emphasise the value of pipeclay objects as important archaeological artefacts and encouraged the continued recording of other assemblages across Western Europe.



*Fig. 1. 1. Drawing of Venus figurines, after Tudot 1860, pl. 22.*



*Fig. 1. 2. Drawing of Dea Nutrix figurines, after Tudot 1860, pl. 26.*

The early work on pipeclay objects represents an aesthetic approach to their study that typically catalogued finds by their various forms and styles. Such objects were clearly considered as valuable collectables by antiquarians and the fact that numerous corpora were published goes to show how worthy of attention they were considered to be. Museum and private collections that are commonly comprised of the more complete, ornate and unique specimens are most likely the results of the popularised interest in, and collection of, antiquities that gained momentum in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This itself was inspired by the ‘Grand Tour’ of the previous century during which European elites travelled around the Mediterranean acquiring private collections of antiquities – including Greek and Roman sculpture (Chaney 1998). Much of the collection policy of this time focused on interesting objects of outstanding character, and in this sense ‘erotic’ pipeclay figurines of nude and semi-nude goddesses such as Venus and ornate miniature busts appear to have been all too alluring to the collectors of the day.

It should be stated that this perceived link with the high social class of antiquarians had little to do with the use of pipeclay objects in the past. Indeed, ancient sources state little about their function other than a vague association with children or child related practices. One of these sources is Macrobius’ *Saturnalia* (1.11.46-50), in which he makes a link between clay figurines and the *Sigillaria* - the festival following the *Saturnalia* in December - where markets were set up selling clay figurines that could be bought and given as gifts, and were given to children to play with. However, it is uncertain whether these clay figurines are exactly the same ones as the pipeclay figurines under discussion here (see also Martial’s *Epigrams* 14.171, 178, 182 for a description of other terracotta figurines given as gifts during this festival, and Boekel 1987: 240; Eckardt 1999: 60). As is shown for Britain, many Continental studies show that pipeclay objects - especially figurines - were used by many social groups of Roman society, probably because they were more obtainable - in other words cheaper and more widely



*Fig. 1. 3. Drawing of human figurines, after Tudot 1860, pl. 45.*



*Fig. 1. 4. Drawing of human busts, after Tudot 1860, pl. 50.*

available - than sculpture. A similar point is made by Vickers and Gill (1994) about Greek vases who argue that the modern value given to them is greatly at odds with the lower value and status that they actually had in the Greek period.

At the end of the nineteenth and into the early twentieth century, Blanchet started to advance the study of pipeclay objects. In a series of papers considering the finds from the growing number of ceramic workshops in Gaul (1891, 1901, 1902), Blanchet not only added to the corpus of pipeclay material from Central Gaulish production sites, but also conducted the first detailed analytical investigation of these objects – mainly of figurines – by combining an assessment of their iconography with an examination of their distribution patterns in different provinces to highlight their possible social significance in different regions. Unlike preceding studies, Blanchet's body of work undoubtedly placed a greater focus on the objects themselves but still maintained a somewhat traditional focus by contextualising his research within the scale and operational and economic dynamics of the provincial terracotta industry.

As a result, following studies generally remained focussed on cataloguing new assemblages of Continental finds to highlight the extent that pipeclay objects circulated across the Western Provinces rather than attempting to develop more analytical and interpretative archaeological investigations that could better assess their function and social significance. Documenting finds stored in Continental museums and new finds from production centres from sites in France (e.g. Vertet 1959, 1961, 1962, 1976, 1978, 1979) and other countries, such as the Netherlands (e.g. Evelein 1928, 1929, 1930; Boekel 1987: 201, fns. 28-30) and Switzerland (e.g. Gonzenbach 1986, 1995), subsequently continued until the later part of the century.

It was not until the middle of the twentieth century that the first systematic typological investigations of pipeclay objects began. By far the most important body of work conducted during this period was an influential collection of papers by Micheline Rouvier-Jeanlin (1962,



*Fig. 1. 5. Drawing of animal figurines, after Tudot 1860, pl. 62.*



*Fig. 1. 6. Drawing of monkey figurines, after Tudot 1860, pl. 63.*

1969a 1969b, 1971) that culminated in the publication of her ground-breaking book entitled *'Les Figurines Gallo-Romaines en Terre Cuite au Musée des Antiquités Nationales'* (1972). This innovative and definitive study assessed the collection of 1288 pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels, masks and plaques at the French National Museum of Antiquities (now the National Archaeological Museum) at Saint-Germain-en-Laye (Fig. 1.7). After a summary of previous work and an overview of their production, chronology, dating, distribution and iconography, the most significant aspect of the study is the extremely detailed typological catalogue that classifies the wide range of forms (deities, animals and humans), types (e.g. Venus, dogs, human males) and various sub-types (Roman numerals). Different groups (capital letters) and sub-groups (lowercase letters) are also defined by stylistic attributes such as garment motifs and hairstyles for deities, and feather arrangements for birds, for example, where appropriate. The subsequent studies that followed this work adopted less rigid and complicated typologies than Rouvier-Jeanlin did by simply grouping and describing different forms, types, sub-types and groups without her rigid framework (e.g. Boekel 1987; Gonzenbach 1995; Beenhouwer 2005). However, Rouvier-Jeanlin's systematic typology does form the basis of all these subsequent catalogues. Indeed, her well-illustrated book that includes an index of over 1000 plates is still the first stop for finding parallels of new finds.

In the following years, several studies followed Rouvier-Jeanlin's lead by classifying collections of pipeclay objects accordingly (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1973, 1975, 1989). Many of these focussed on the substantial collections in French museums, such as the Musée Rolin, Autun (Vertet & Vuillemot 1973), the Musée Archéologique in Dijon (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1986), the Langres Museum in Champagne-Ardenne (Vertet & Zeyer 1983) and the Musée Carnavalet, Paris (Camuset-Le Porzu 1985). Figurines, moulds and wasters found at newly excavated production sites in France also remained of interest, with one of the most notable being those

from the large kiln site located at Bourbon-Lancy in Saône-et-Loire located in the Allier Valley region of eastern France near the Loire River (Rouvier-Jeanlin *et al.* 1990).

At around the same time, however, a new generation of scholars started to break away from the museum collections that dominated previous scholarship and broaden the scope of study by cataloguing pipeclay objects from different regions and settlements across the Continent. In Germany for instance, Rüger (1980) and Schauerte (1985, 1987) compiled site-based typological catalogues of the pipeclay objects from Cologne and Nida-Hedderheim, while Lange (1989, 1990) collated and classified the finds from sites in Raetia, Noricum and modern Austria, including Salzburg, and Gonzenbach (1986) a typological catalogue of the pipeclay objects from Roman settlements, cemeteries, temples and burials in Switzerland. Although detailed contextual analysis is limited in these volumes, when combined they do start to present a far more detailed picture of inter-provincial consumption patterns across Roman Europe.

One of the topics closely associated with such typological studies is the important role that pipeclay objects have in terms of understanding the origins and development of provincial Roman art. Webster (1950: 22-80) and Higgins (1967, 1976, 1987: 64-118) have both been influential in this field in that they were the first scholars to observe that the style and imagery of many pipeclay objects - especially figurines - are broadly comparable in themes and style, and consequently arguably derive from the Hellenistic and Tanagran sculptural traditions. Bailey (1983), in addition, has briefly discussed pipeclay figurines in relation to how Venus imagery dates back to the influence of Hellenistic traditions of this form of Roman material culture and others, such as ceramic lamps. All of these studies are valuable from an art-historical perspective but unfortunately most usually focus on the imagery of the most iconic forms, especially Venus, which thus overshadows the classical backgrounds of other deity,





*Fig. 1. 7. Déeses-Mères Type IA mould (left) and figurine (right) from Toulon-sur-Allier, after Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 157, no. 306.*

animal and human forms. Neither do they give enough attention to the influence of, and interplay between, Hellenistic and ‘Celtic’ imagery inherently represented by pipeclay objects.

An attempt to do this, however, has been made by Green (1986, 1989), who utilises pipeclay figurines in particular to ‘decode’ the complex systems and messages of ‘Celtic’ imagery and symbolism to analyse the Roman influence on people’s beliefs throughout Europe. At no point in her work does Green address pipeclay figurines or other pipeclay objects as a collective group or analyse them in much contextual detail, but she does often use them as evidence to support her thematic discussions about male and female imagery in terms of water, fertility and healing cults. She also uses their imagery to highlight the important religious role that mother-goddesses and animals had for the people who practised ‘Celtic’ religion.

From the late 1980s more detailed and informative studies that combined typological classification with contextual analysis began to emerge. The first of these is Boekel's (1987) study of c. 350 pipeclay objects, including 45/6 masks, found in the Netherlands. Building on a previously unpublished thesis (Dheedene 1959) as well as her own work (e.g. 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986), Boekel begins with a thematic overview of pipeclay production in Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region that covers manufacturing methods and the output of individual modellers before moving onto the process of typologically classifying and analysing the distribution and find-circumstances of each object found in the Netherlands. In doing so, Boekel identifies the high proportion of deity figurines compared to other human and animal types and shows that these imported goods had varied religious functions as domestic trinkets, burial goods and votive objects at shrines and temples across the region (1987: 903-5). Boekel's subsequent work supplements this catalogue with new finds from sites and museum collections and looks more closely at the iconography of the forms and types (e.g. 1989, 1990, 1993, 1996).

In 1993 a new volume edited by Bémont, Jeanlin and Lahanier entitled '*Les Figurines en terre cuite gallo-romaines*' was published. This collaboration of papers focusses on the pipeclay production industry and contextually analyses all the objects found in Gaul. This work not only typologically classified new finds from the province and highlighted their multi-functional religious uses in the province, but also closely examined makers' marks to identify products of individual mould makers and potters to trace their work and influence in each production region. The latter represents one of the more successful attempts at chemical fabric analysis to trace specific figurine types to specific manufacturing regions and workshops and although only partially successful, the results add greater substance to the limited progress of previous efforts (e.g. Rabeisen & Vertet 1986: 201-10). As a whole therefore, the volume undeniably helped better understand the true nature and extent of pipeclay figurine trade and

distribution networks that operated between production centres and provincial markets. It also usefully summarises the distribution of pipeclay products in Belgium, Britain and Germany.

Perhaps inspired by the work carried out in the Netherlands and France, Gonzenbach's publication of *Die Römischen Terracotten in der Schweiz* in 1995 re-assessed the consumption and function of pipeclay figurines and masks in Switzerland (Figs. 1.8-9). Updating her original corpus of Gallic and Rhine-Moselle imports from 1986, her detailed examination of over 230 objects provides a typological-chronological catalogue of the objects from Germania Superior/Raetia during the early, middle and later Roman periods based on an analysis of their styles, contextual dating and Continental comparisons. After overviewing the production and supply of pipeclay objects to these particular provinces, the author closely examines their typological distribution and contextual deposition to identify their varied religious use in a number of Swiss regions and on a number of sites over time to identify more refined patterns of use and consumption than her predecessors. All of this is explained in unprecedented detail with maps, data-heavy concordance tables and hand-illustrated drawings that visualise all of her findings.

Another extensive study of pipeclay objects from the Continent comes courtesy of Jan de Beenhouwer (1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1993, 1996, 2000, 2001) and her PhD thesis of 2005. Based on the large collection of 1200 objects found in Belgium, this work delivers a comprehensive review of existing Continental research and antiquarian approaches to pipeclay studies. An important aspect of Beenhouwer's research is how it examines the manufacturing techniques of the industry in detail. For example, petrological analysis is combined with an evaluation of inscribed figurines to better identify the output of individual craftsmen and workshops, while seriation is used to understand production sequences and the development of styles over time. Contextual assessment of the geographic and contextual distribution of the assemblage identifies distinct regional and temporal variations in the use of different figurine types on a range of settlement types and religious contexts, like temples, sanctuaries and graves.



*Fig. 1. 8. Hahnmann figurine from Orselina, Switzerland,  
after Gonzenbach 1986: 34, no. 16 & Tab. 3(2).*



*Fig. 1. 9. Mime and goat composite figurine from Salzburg, Austria,  
after Gonzenbach 1995: 204, no. 23 & Tab. 142(4).*

The most significant part of this study though is how contextual and iconographic evidence are combined to give a more refined production date and circulation period for many pipeclay forms, types and sub-types that can be used to trace their chronological development and use.

The final useful study to note here is Drakeman's (2008) unpublished doctoral thesis on pipeclay Venus figurines from the University of Oxford that integrates an iconographic and archaeological assessment to examine their use and socio-cultural significance in the Northern Provinces from the first to third centuries. By identifying possible prototypes and evaluating their imagery, the author first shows how Venus figurines share certain features with Roman and 'Celtic' artwork but are in fact unique statuary forms, before typologically classifying each of the Venus types and mapping their distributions to highlight local markets and the exclusive Northern-provincial distribution of this most popular deity. Secondly, an in-depth contextual analysis of deposit types shows the variety of temple, grave, house and bath locations where Venus figurines are usually recovered, which is then combined with contextual information to associate these objects with mother-goddess cults and death rituals, and highlights their role as important grave goods. Overall, Drakeman sees Venus figurines as representative of a syncretic process of Romano-Celtic expression and objects that had multiple uses. It is unfortunate that she stops short of applying this method to other pipeclay forms and types but doing so, as my thesis does, undoubtedly reveals a great deal more about the functional and cultural significance of other deity, animal and human forms in addition to the dynamics of their trade and supply.

The work of Boekel (1987), Bémont, Jeanlin and Lahanier (1993), Gonzenbach (1995) and Beenhouwer (2005) in particular has considerably improved the study of pipeclay objects on the Continent. Their regional surveys combining empirical stylistic typologies with geographical and contextual analyses have facilitated detailed insights into their consumption and function that are considerably more representative than the museum collection-based

studies of the past. While invaluable resources, there are, however, several problems with some of them. The first is that several of the catalogues, such as those from the Netherlands and Switzerland, are based on the geographic boundaries of modern countries rather than Roman areas and provinces that might have had different cultural religious beliefs and practices. France, for example, covers only part of the multiple provinces that made up Roman Gaul. The Netherlands (see Boekel 1987), meanwhile, covers the *Limes* - which itself is not a Roman province - and only part of Germania Inferior, while Switzerland (see Gonzenbach 1986, 1995) covers Raetia and only a small part of Germania Superior, and Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005) only part of Roman Gallia Belgica. As such, for transparency, the rest of this thesis refers to each Continental collection by the modern countries they encompass. However, a separate review of pipeclay objects from each individual Roman province would be welcomed.

The second problem is more of a theoretical one and concerns the fact that many of the existing Continental studies stop short of fully considering what pipeclay objects can tell us about other important aspects of provincial life – such as the social and cultural identities of the individuals and groups that used them. Some general attempts have been made at this in terms of equating the gendered iconography of pipeclay gods and goddesses to the religious beliefs and practices of men and women respectively, for example (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 63; Boekel 1897: 238; Gonzenbach 1995: 387-428), but theoretical and methodological developments now mean that it is possible to understand much more about the identities of these people by studying the form and types of pipeclay objects and where and how they were used. This important topic of identity is one that has recently started to gain greater attention in terms of how pipeclay objects are studied in Britain and is a focal point throughout this thesis.

## **British Approaches to the Study of Pipeclay Objects**

While the study of pipeclay objects has progressed well on the Continent, the subject remains relatively under-developed in Britain. Aside from being noted in antiquarian site reports (e.g. Oswald 1911: 26; Winbolt 1924: 131; 1932: 29; Waterman 1941: 109) and specialist pottery volumes (e.g. May 1916: 102-3, pl. 39B), most accounts interpret pipeclay objects as part of the art-historical evaluation of Roman objects and artwork in the province. Toynbee (1962: 186-8, pls. 172-5; 1964: 419-24), for example, includes a small group of pipeclay figurines as part of her wider discussion of Roman statuary. A later investigation by Lindgren (1980) considers the degree to which the stylistic attributes of bronze and pipeclay figurines of Mercury, Mars, Minerva and Venus conform to classical representations of these deities to identify processes of cultural mixing in the province of Roman Britain. However, Lindgren only studies a small group of 16 Venus figurines in pipeclay from Colchester, London, Silchester and St. Albans (1980: 80-2, nos. 45-50) and draws rather vague conclusions. Her data are also presented in overly-complex flow-charts and diagrams. Some scholars, like Bailey (1983), maintained this historical art-based focus, but others have considered aspects of cultural identity. Webster (1997: 332-4, 2001: 220-1), for instance, offers a more insightful study by examining the imagery of Venus figurines to evidence the process of cultural amalgamation (creolization) in relation to the formation of Roman belief systems in the western Empire.

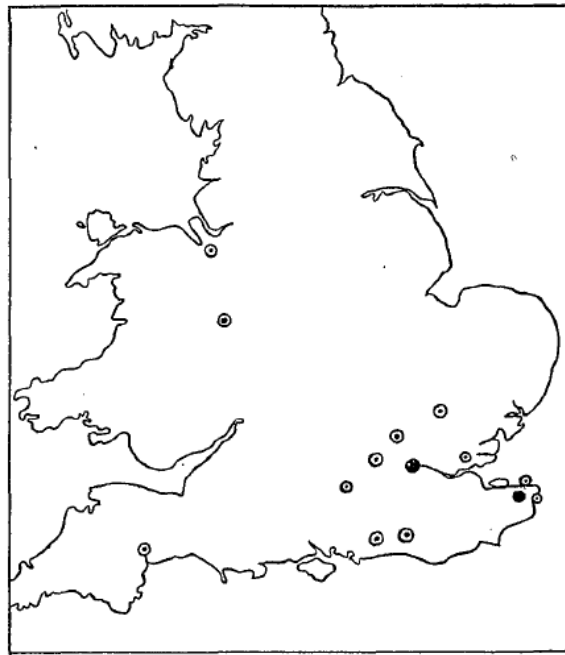
Pipeclay objects are also occasionally found in small numbers in British Archaeological Reports (BARs) published in the 1970s. As part of her studies of religious objects from civilian (1976) and military (1978) sites in Britain, Green includes a number of pipeclay figurines in her sweeping studies of bronze, stone and clay objects deemed to be 'Celtic' in style. Green's main point is that it is difficult to distinguish between material from civilian and military sites but that it is sometimes possible to identify the presence of local cults in certain civilian areas, such as the Genii in the Cotswolds (1976: 70). The problem with the catalogues is that each

object is recorded with only basic details with no description or context information. This limits Green's ability to better understand the use and function of these objects - aspects that Durham went on to explore more successfully for metal figurines in Britain (2010, 2012, 2014).

The third BAR is Hutchinson's (1986) study of the Cult of Bacchus in Britain in which the author surveys all the depictions of the god in the mediums of stone, metalwork, glassware, jewellery, intaglios and figurines in bronze and pipeclay. In doing so she posits that a number of other pipeclay types, including *Risus* and quasi-Priapic figurines, might also be associated with Bacchus. A closer look at their distributions revealed some interesting observations about the use of these figurines and busts in Britain. For example, the highest number of Bacchic-related objects are from military sites and large urban centres, while few derive from rural and villa locations. However, the variety and type of objects differs between these types of site (1986: tables 1-4). Moreover, an interesting observation is made about bronze and pipeclay figurines in that most are found on military sites, rural villages and shrines rather than large towns, and that this might relate to a personal rather than formal style of deity worship (Hutchinson 1986: 106-7; Durham 2010: 4). Examining new patterns of activity associated with other deities represented in pipeclay would therefore add to this picture and accompany the in-depth studies since carried out on metal figures (Durham 2010, 2012, 2014).

A series of papers by Frank Jenkins in the 1950s and '60s were the first concerted attempt to study pipeclay objects in Britain in detail. Published in the journal *Archaeological Cantiana*, Jenkins' work closely examined the iconography, geographic distribution and potential religious function and significance of different figurine types found in the county of Kent (Figs. 1.10-11), such as the Genius Cucullatus (1953b), a mother-goddess he calls the 'Nameless or Nehalennia' (1956), horse deities (1962b) and the cults of Dea Nutrix (1957a; Fig. 1.10) and Venus (1958; Fig. 1.11). Jenkins also wrote many small finds reports detailing new discoveries (e.g. 1984, 1986a, 2004) and insightful summaries on the role of the dog in

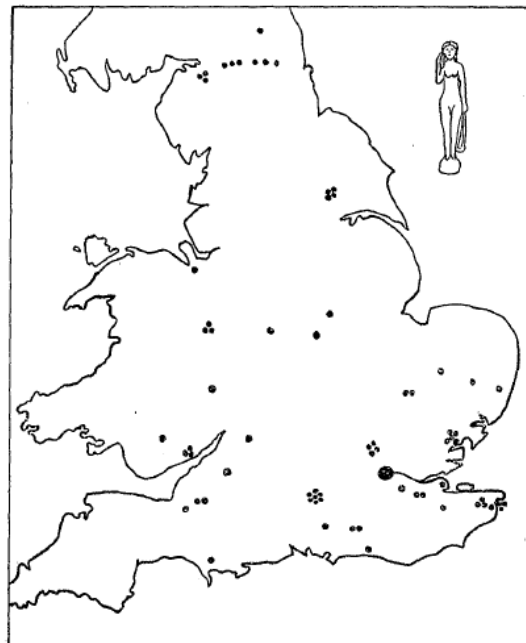




Map of Britain to illustrate distribution of clay figurines of the *dea nutrix* (see Appendix).

○ Single figurines. ● Several figurines.

Fig. 1. 10. *Dea Nutrix* figurine from Canterbury, Kent (left), and distribution of *Dea Nutrix* figurines in Britain (right), after Jenkins 1957a: 39, fig. and pl. III.



Map of Roman Britain to illustrate distribution of clay figurines of the "pseudo-Venus" (see Appendix). All types. The large number from London shown by a single symbol.

Fig. 1. 11. *Venus* figurine from Maidstone, Kent (left), and distribution of *Venus* figurines in Britain (right), after Jenkins 1958a: 69, fig. and pl. II.

Romano-Gaulish religion (1957b) and the cult of the mother-goddess in wider Britain (1962a) using pipeclay figurines as evidence. In addition he wrote two site-based papers examining some of the interesting pipeclay figurine types that had been found in London by the 1960s and 1970s (1969a, 1978a).

The most extensive and authoritative examination of pipeclay objects in Britain to date remains Jenkins' now very much out-of-date and sadly unpublished doctoral thesis completed in 1977. Combining and building upon his previous efforts, the real value of this work lies in the comprehensive typological catalogue of the *circa*. 390 pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks that had been discovered in the country by the late 1970s (Jenkins 1977: 280-416). Jenkins successfully collates, identifies and describes the wide range of different pipeclay forms, types and sub-types, noting the most common and rare types and draws parallels with Continental finds to contextualise the British material. The result was the first complete compilation and analysis of the pipeclay objects found in Britain but one that lacks the more detailed contextual data and analysis of later Continental studies.

Albeit useful, Jenkins' work is not without its problems. The first issue is that Jenkins uses his own modified typology and numbering system rather than adopting the existing conventions established by Rouvier-Jeanlin (1972): the best example of this is the alternative numbering system he uses to catalogue Venus figurines (e.g. Types 1a and b of Jenkins' are Types 1 and 2 on the Continent (Jenkins 1977: 305-15)), whereas Dea Nutrix figurines are organised by their different hairstyles rather than by the number of infants they hold (Jenkins 1977: 281-284a). The second issue is that like his Continental contemporaries, Jenkins was more interested in the output and economy of the Roman ceramic industry and thus focusses on the distribution of products from production centres and identifying the signed work of individual craftsmen in Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region rather than systematically examining the consumption, distribution and function of pipeclay objects in Roman Britain. As

such, Jenkins' evaluation of the function of pipeclay objects in the province heavily relied on pre-existing art-historical perspectives derived through the iconography of each type (1977: 417-527) rather than their spatial and contextual distribution throughout the province.

Since 1977 very little work has been conducted on the pipeclay objects found in Britain despite the growing corpus of material that is now available from the province. New discoveries are often published as interesting 'small finds' in regional and national journals, monographs and site reports (e.g. Crummy 1983: 141, nos. 4260-63, figs. 166-7, 1992a: 191-3, nos. 1699, 1700, 1705, figs. 5.60-61; Casey & Hoffmann 1998: 145-8, nos. 1-3d, fig. 17; Fulford and Timby 2000, 134, figs 185–186.3; Wilson 2002, 200, nos. 2–6, fig. 237; Allason-Jones 2009: 475-6, nos. 531-3; Hill and Rowsome 2011: 170-1, fig. 165), but these vary considerably in terms of the quality of their recording. Most catalogues just list and typologically identify each object using Rouvier-Jeanlin's (1972) framework and give a basic description of any notable features. Better accounts give more detailed typological descriptions and identify parallels in Britain and Europe, while the best go as far as to discuss aspects like their iconography, chronology and context, and note the types and distributions of other local and regional finds.

In all this, pipeclay objects are occasionally mentioned as noteworthy grave goods from interesting burials in Britain at sites like Arrington (Taylor 1993: 194-201), Baldock (Burleigh *et al.* 2006: 284-6), Colchester (Eckardt 1999: 60-6), Godmanchester (Taylor 1997: 388-91) and London (Barber *et al.* 1990: 9-10; Wardle *et al.* 2000: 186-9). Pipeclay busts and figurines have long been viewed as an interesting aspect of burial rites in Roman Britain (e.g. Alcock 1981: 50-1; Philpott 1991: 99), but relatively little is known about their function beyond a general association with fertility, healing, rites of passage and protection of the deceased (e.g. Taylor 1993: 196-7, 199, 201; 1997: 390-1; Crummy 2010, 51, 65, 69). Some efforts have been made to contextualise pipeclay objects from burials in terms of the age, gender, identity and social status of the individuals buried with them but a detailed study of these objects as a group

has not yet emerged. As such, conducting such a study is one of the main aims of this thesis and will build on my earlier work (Fittock 2015: 123-5) that started to assess the composition and social status of these burials to analyse the development of this funerary tradition in south-eastern Britain over time where it appears to be concentrated. The analysis of all the pipeclay figurines and vessels from burial contexts in Britain is conducted as part of a discussion about the ritual use of pipeclay objects in the province that makes up Chapter 9.

Over the past few years there have been only a few responses to the lack of publication activity in Britain. In 1993 a short account by Boekel summarised the distribution of 450 pipeclay objects in Britain, highlighting the high proportion of Venus figurines in the province and the large concentrations of objects at large urban centres as opposed to rural locations, notably London. She also noted the significant group of figurines and vessels from a child's burial in Colchester and the collection of figurine fragments from the rural-cum-ritual site at Ruxox Farm, Flitwick, in Bedfordshire (1993: 245-50), and gives a brief overview of their date. This study is based almost entirely on Jenkins' work from the 1970s and clearly does not take into account all of the newer published finds that were available at this time. Furthermore, even though a useful distribution map is provided, this plots each find spot rather than the number of figurines from each site (1993: 249, fig. 110). As part of a wider evaluation of pipeclay figurine production and exportation from Central Gaul the work fulfilled its purpose but really gave little new information about consumption in Britain.

Another notable study comes in the form of a very short article by Bristow (2012) who more usefully looks at the distribution of the various pipeclay figurines depicting deities and animals in Hampshire. Conducting the very first regional study in Britain as a snap-shot of wider provincial trends, she found that Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines are much more common than horses and cockerels and that pipeclay figurines are generally found on a range of different site types in the county. These cluster at *Civitas Capitals* such as Silchester and Winchester and

occur sparsely at small towns like Neatham, villa sites like Holt Down and the Roman temple at Hayling Island, where most finds derive from pits, ditches and occupation layers. In much the same way as Webster (2002), Bristow takes the view that the imagery of these personal objects may perhaps represent the blending of ‘Celtic’ and Roman ideologies with regards to religious practice (2012: 16). Overall, however, she sadly fails to draw concrete conclusions about exactly how pipeclay figurines were used based on the contextual evidence she painstakingly collected. Comparison with finds from another southern region would also have been useful for revealing any specific inter-regional similarities or differences in use.

My own work on pipeclay objects has made a more significant contribution to the field. Starting as a Masters thesis (Fittock 2013) and published thereafter as an article (Fittock 2015), my studies have conducted a typological assessment of the 168 pipeclay figurines of deities, animals and humans that have been found in London. A number of significant trends were identified; for example, Venus is the most common figurine type followed by Dea Nutrix, while a small number of exotic and unusual types, like the lizard and gladiator, may well be connected with incomers or high-status inhabitants. Comparing these consumption patterns from London with those evident from Continental collections additionally revealed distinctive patterns of consumption between Roman London, Britain and other Roman provinces. The contextual distribution of pipeclay figurines and busts on habitation, trade, religious and ritual sites indicates that these objects had multiple functions in *Londinium*. A fragmentation analysis of Venus figurines, the first of its kind on this sort of material, also revealed subtle breakage patterns that are potentially linked to ritual healing and/or fertility practices. This will be elaborated on in Chapter 10. Further research for this PhD already means that the collection of pipeclay objects from London can be updated with 74 additional objects taking the total number of finds from the settlement over 242.

As the first detailed studies since Jenkins' doctorate in the 1970s, Bristow (2012) and Fittock (2015) have started to re-align the study of pipeclay objects in Britain with Continental urban projects (e.g. R ger 1980) and the more modern contextual investigations conducted by Boekel (1987), Gonzenbach (1995) and Beenhouwer (2005). To build on this good start, this thesis will go on to investigate the full corpus of pipeclay objects that are now available from the whole of Britain. Some areas of the province may still be under- or over-represented in the archaeological record and more figurines no doubt await discovery, but by the time you reach the end of this account I hope that you will agree that the situation is now much better than 40 years ago when Jenkins first broached the subject of these enigmatic objects.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter has looked at the history of pipeclay research chronologically and methodologically both on the Continent and in Britain and highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of existing work to identify some new avenues of enquiry. It has also considered the themes of production, trade, and function that are inherent in the existing literature that will be a focus in following chapters. Over the past thirty years the study of pipeclay objects has developed considerably on the Continent where large assemblages are systematically analysed using detailed typological and contextual methodologies to reveal the complexities of their consumption, function and wider social significance. Such studies have stressed the importance of regional studies as opposed to museum catalogues and emphasise that it is time to re-evaluate the growing corpus of evidence that is now available from Britain where the study of these objects lags behind Continental progress. Consequently, this thesis will adopt a contextual approach to study the pipeclay objects found in *Britannia* that will focus on identifying patterns of consumption and useage. This will not only offer an insight into the character of this market

and the trade and production factors that affected consumer choice, but also the religious beliefs, practices and identities of the people who used pipeclay objects in Roman Britain.

## **Chapter 2. Material Culture and Identity**

This chapter considers the relationship between material culture and “Roman” identity. It will begin with the difficult task of trying to define identity in terms of social and temporal relationships while highlighting some of the problems that are associated with its study. Following this I will then discuss how identity studies, albeit not always explicitly, are integral not only to ideas about object consumption and Romanization, but also more recent concepts such as globalization theory. I will then move on from such ‘models of cultural change’ to consider how the material culture-identity relationship can now be thought of as a social practice. This will consider topics such as the social agency of objects, object lifecycles, object technologies and the symbolic use of objects, as well as evaluate how gender studies have become a key part of figurine studies in particular. Finally, after reviewing the vital role that contextual analysis plays in interpreting identity in the past, the chapter will finish by outlining how I will go about identifying Romano-British identities by studying the collection of pipeclay objects that have been found in the province of Britain.

### **Identity as a Concept**

Since the 1990s interest in identity studies has grown significantly across the social sciences (Jenkins 2004; Pitts 2007: 683), and this is also true in archaeology (Meskell 2001; e.g. Ginn *et al.* 2014 for prehistory). Yet the usefulness of the term identity has been greatly debated in recent years and it has arguably become a concept that is too ambiguous and all-encompassing for useful social analysis (Brubaker & Cooper 2000). There are also concerns about projecting modern notions of identity into the past (see below) and about the emphasis that is sometimes put on single aspects, like ethnicity (Jones 1997), rather than the multiple factors that actually



form identity, such as age, gender (Gowland 2001; Revell 2005), class, status, ethnicity, ideology and religion (Díaz-Andreu & Lucy 2005). Furthermore, how identity operates at various social scales is another aspect that is often overlooked. These issues remain problematic but have been addressed in Roman archaeology in recent years (Hill 2001; Eckardt 2014, Gardner 2002, 2007b, 2011; Mattingly 2004, 2011; Revell 2009, for examples).

Perhaps the biggest issue is that the term 'identity' is very hard to define. At its heart, identity is about the conflicting principles of sameness and difference within the context of time and space (Casella & Fowler 2004; Insoll 2007); identity is constituted through the social relationships between individuals, groups and societies. This relationship between individuals, groups and society operates at a number of levels and is constantly negotiated. Through subjective experience and action, individuals form a sense of 'self' and at the same time interactively relate, actively or passively, consciously or subconsciously, to the social conventions and rules of social groups and societal structures. As Díaz-Andreu and Lucy (2005: 1) put it, identity can "be understood as an individual's identification within broader groups based on differences socially sanctioned as significant [and is] inextricably linked to belonging".

Power and politics can play a very significant role here (Gardner 2011: 12; Meskell 2002; see Gardner 2004, 2007 for the Roman imperial context), especially as identities can be both ascribed by the self and ascribed by others. Slavery is just one example of an ascribed identity label in the Roman world (Bradley 1994; Webster 2010). These people had an imposed and limited socio-economic identity but they could still self-identify religiously, for instance, by worshipping specific gods, although slaves could not necessarily become members of the cults and guilds that their fellow citizens and freedmen could. At the same time, factors like gender and status differences also played a part in forming identity amongst this group.

The complexity and plurality of identity construction is therefore rooted in situational comparisons that are centred on how individuals and social groups encountered, experienced and perceived themselves as well as one another (Gardner 2011: 12; Jenkins 2000; Jones 1997). The Roman studies mentioned in the previous paragraph offer holistic and nuanced accounts that highlight the complex and fluid nature of identity between the different individuals and groups of ancient Roman society.

How identity changes temporally is a very important part of how it is constituted. As Gardner (2011: 12) has explained, while identities can appear essential and fixed, they are in fact fluid with the capacity to develop and be adjusted through time. Not only can the dynamics of social relationships change over time but, as a social construction, a combination of different social variables such as age, sex, gender and ethnicity can combine to form an individual or group identity, but certain facets can be emphasized and muted according to the requirements of different temporal and social situations. In this sense identity can be viewed as strategic, positional and conditional, as well as manifold and hybridised (Díaz-Andreu & Lucy 2005: 2). Importantly for archaeologists, identities are inherently interconnected but different aspects can be highlighted by examining different historical, social and temporal contexts in detail (Eckardt 2014: 5-6; and Casella & Fowler 2004 for a number of examples).

### **Identity and Material Culture Studies**

From the 1980s historical as well as sociological studies began to consider how identity formation and expression can be examined by studying patterns of material culture consumption (e.g. Brewer & Porter 1993; Douglas & Isherwood 1980). Building on fundamental ideas about the impact that production and supply have on the consumption of objects, these new ideas started to explore the ways in which the circulation of commodities (i.e. goods, gifts, services) can imbue objects with value and form social relationships while

considering the range of wider social factors (e.g. economics, politics, religion) that can influence their exchange (Appidurai 1986). This idea that value and meaning can be attributed through commodity exchange has been particularly important in prehistoric archaeology where an emphasis on the exchange of high-status and prestigious goods, such as hand-axes, has played a large part in attempts to understand social structures, relationships and identities in Mesolithic and Neolithic societies (Bradley & Edmonds 1993; Needham 2008). Conversely, it should be noted that this idea can also operate at the other end of the social scale whereby the selection and exchange of mass produced objects can equally constitute social acts that are instilled with value and meaning as defined by the conditions of their exchange.

In general, levels of production and supply influenced the amount of material that was used and deposited in Roman Britain (e.g. Going 1992 for pottery; Reece 1987 for coins). These factors clearly affected the importation, use and remains of pipeclay objects in Roman Britain and, as with other Roman objects, their changing quantities and distributions can be mapped and compared over time as an initial indicator as to where, how and why they were used. Examining the consumption patterns of pipeclay objects will therefore help highlight their social meaning as well as how they constituted and represented identity in Roman Britain.

In Roman archaeology material culture is closely linked with identity studies (Hingley 2009 presents a useful overview of this topic) and has been ever since Romanization was devised as a means to explain cultural change. The work of Haverfield and Collingwood (Hingley 2000) laid the foundations for Romanization in their initial discussions of how the provinces were incorporated into the political system of the Empire via the complete replacement of indigenous cultural and political systems for Roman ones. In the years that followed Romanization theory itself proposed the idea that elite Roman culture (political, religious and social) was emulated at first by the elite and then the non-elite people of Roman Britain (Blagg & Millett 1990; Millett 1990; Wood & Queiroga 1992) and that this formed part

of their identities. The main problem with Romanization theory is that it emphasises a narrow “Roman vs. native” dichotomy of ancient everyday life and culture (*cf.* Woolf 1997) and in doing so it has been described as an elitist ‘top-down’ view of social and cultural interaction in Roman Britain that underplays the complex relationship between conquered provincial people and the imperial Roman elites (Hill 2001: 15; Mattingly 2006: 13-16; Pitts 2007: 693; Revell 2009: 5-7). Freeman (1993) additionally points out that it is difficult to understand the meaning of material culture through the concept of Romanization because it effectively homogenises what material culture is and fails to consider the contexts of non-Roman societies and does not suitably take into account the various degrees of interaction between them and Roman cultural systems that can often be reflected by the surviving material culture they produced and used. Some, therefore, accept that Romanization is a valid concept but that it is arguably one that requires some modification to account for different levels of it that societies engaged on (e.g. Key & Terrenato 2001) while others have rejected it altogether (Mattingly 2006; Woolf 1998).

Romanization’s inability to account for provincial impetus and interaction has led to the development of some new theories that try to account for cultural change generally. These promote a more ‘bottom-up’ perspective that better emphasises the role that provincial people and groups had in interacting with Roman culture and forming their identities. Creolization (Webster 2001, 2003), for example, takes inspiration from social studies of colonisation in the New World and emphasises the process of cultural mixing between provincial and Roman culture. Mattingly (2006) on the other hand prefers the idea of ‘discrepant experiences’ that considers the impact of the Roman Empire across the social spectrum, looking at how this affected the lives and interactions from the perception of both elites and non-elites, including how this helped form and maintain their respective identities. Nevertheless, despite these new theories, Pitts (2007: 698) still argues that “there remains an inordinate degree of emphasis on cultural or ethnic identities, which seems rooted in the obsession with the concept of

Romanization [and] future research needs to focus on identity in its more holistic sense by balancing concern for the cultural with examination of class, status, and gender”.

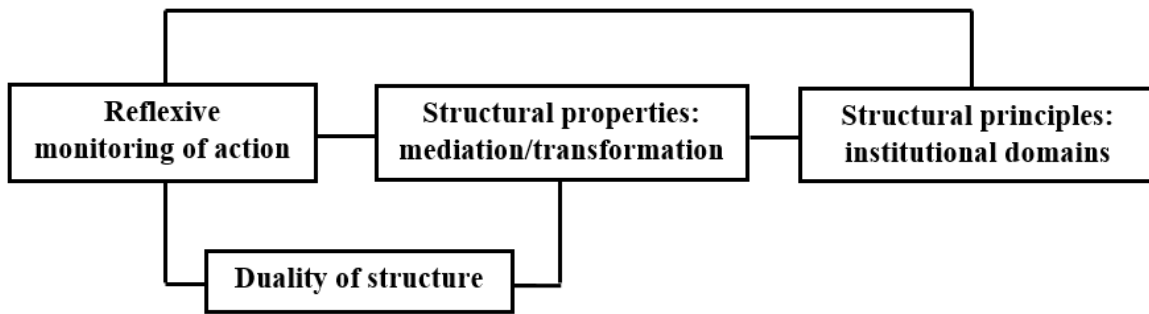
Building on post-colonial theory with its focus on the ‘peripheral’ rather than ‘core’ cultures, globalization theory considers the local effects of global systems and their impact on social practices. In the Roman context this model looks at how relationships (whether social, political, economic, cultural and/or religious) in the provinces were negotiated within the wider environment of the Roman Empire and its imperial character (Gardner 2013; Mattingly 2011: 26-30; Pitts & Versluys 2015; Versluys 2014). As Pitts (2008: 494) puts it, “globalization emphasises the interconnectedness of worldwide social relations “in which cultural change could be multidirectional and differentially negotiated in individual localities” and “provides a perspective that offers the potential for incorporating local experience and diversity into grand narrative”.

Globalization promotes the idea that we should not expect homogeneity within a widespread political or cultural group. Even in the modern world some global goods (brands like Coca-Cola and McDonalds) have a shared material culture but can vary locally, producing a global material culture as well as a regional variation of it (Revell 2009: 3). The Roman world, including the interactions between Roman and provincial culture it entails, can be viewed in a similar inter-connected way. In doing so Roman globalization studies move beyond the binary ideology of ‘Roman’ and ‘native’ that Romanization presents, providing a descriptive account rather than an explanatory framework of how objects were used to express identity in the past. With this in mind, it is important to consider how the availability of pipeclay objects and their use was affected by their supply from Central Gaul and the Rhine Moselle region and the character of provincial religion generally, as well as the extent that these objects reflect the religious practices and identities of Romano-British people on a more refined local scale by analysing and comparing the distributions of different forms, types, sub-types and styles.

## **Identity and Social Practice**

Beyond cultural change theory, the relationship between material culture and identity can be thought of in terms of social practice (Bourdieu 1977, 1990; Giddens 1979, 1984). In this sense, identity is again not imposed, fixed or pre-defined but rather constantly negotiated through the daily social actions, habits, interactions and experiences (*habitus*) of people in the past, between one another and within broader societal rules and structures (e.g. Dobres 2000; Lightfoot *et al.* 1998). Here, the dualities of sameness/difference and the relationship between individuals and groups/societies are still key parts of identity but practice is viewed as the mechanism that constitutes and perpetually mediates it (Fig. 2.1). Material culture is central to this process, with object practice helping to constitute and represent the social relationships between people, as well as people and objects/things in multiple and often inter-connecting ways as determined by context.

Material culture thus has the innate ability to help shape, change and challenge the identity and traditions of a culture, as well as the identities of the individuals and groups that mutually constitute it. Gardner (2011: 17) notes that “the activities that people undertake – eating, dressing, building, disposing of waste, writing, speaking, and so on – are the mechanisms by which people are categorised by others, or themselves, as they interact” which help form and negotiate identity. Using this approach Revell (2009: 110-49) has demonstrated how religious architecture can therefore be viewed as a form of religious and ritual discourse of ‘how to go on’ being Roman and that how this was practised varied in different Romano-British towns and settlements.



*Fig. 2. 1. A model of structuration theory, adapted from Giddens 1984: 191.*

Associated with the concept of practice is the idea that objects and things have agency. Moving away from the traditional anthropocentric view that only human agents enact objects, the concept of agency derives from materiality studies where emphasis is put on objects rather than human beings in forming relationships, social structures and, consequently, identities (e.g. Miller 2005). More recently, Hodder (2012, but see also Thomas 1991) has explained this as a complex network of object entanglement influenced by the actions of people but also defined by factors such as temporality and context that creates a “dialectic dependence and dependency between humans and things” (Hodder 2012: 206). Another popular approach is Latour’s (2005) Actor-Network Theory (ANT) that emphasises the capacity of non-humans (i.e. objects and environments) to actively participate in the construction and maintenance of social systems and relational networks. The main problem with entanglement and ANT theory, however, is that they are orientated towards identifying and describing connections between people and objects rather than explaining the meaning of such connections as social processes (Collins & Yearley 1998; Whittle & Spicer 2008).

Material agency theory itself proposes that the connection between individuals and objects is relational, in that “people act within relationships with things as much as with other

individuals and groups” (Robb 2010: 505-6; also Gell 1998; Dobres & Robb 2005; Chua & Elliott 2013). The fundamental principle within this theoretical framework is that material culture is not just a passive vehicle that adopts the required traits bestowed upon it by human actors (whether individuals and/or groups), but rather that the qualities of material objects help reciprocally construct and express social relationships and identities. In other words, “material culture is clearly central to creating agents and expressing agency” (Dobres & Robb 2000: 14). Consequently, what objects people used and how they used them are important factors here. For example, Gardner (2007a) has illustrated how people engaged with different types of material culture to construct different levels and spheres of social and individual identity in fort communities in Britain during the fourth century. At the same time, it should not be forgotten that the qualities of objects equally affect how they were made, used, exchanged, discarded and imbued with meaning (Dobres 2000; Robb 2010: 497). Gosden (2005), for instance, has shown how the form, genealogy and source of objects *en masse* affected both how Romano-British people related to one-another as well as how they related to their environment.

If material culture helps constitute identity by relationships between people and objects via practice then it is important to be aware of the different ways that the use and perception of objects can change. To do this I will highlight just two different views that have been prominent within archaeological discourse. The first one is provided by Appadurai (1986) who coined the term “regimes of value” to describe how the meaning of objects can change according to different situations and circumstances, particularly as they move between different people and cultures, or through time. Applying this to the example of relics, Appadurai (1986: 23) observes that the circulation and social value of a ‘found’ relic reflected an important aspect of communal identity and prestige during the Medieval period but that this value was clearly very different to the value of the object when it was made. Taking this discussion further Appadurai explains that as objects acquire their own specific biographies over time it is also important to identify



longer term shifts and larger scale dynamics that affects this. For instance, “a particular relic may have a specific biography, but whole types of relic, and indeed the class of things called “relic” itself, may have a larger historical ebb and flow, in the course of which its meaning may shift significantly” (*ibid.* 1986: 34). Similar changes in meaning could apply to the collection of pipeclay objects of the Roman period found in Britain and on the Continent.

Another way to show how relationships between people and objects can change is by studying object lifecycles. This approach explores how social relationships are negotiated through the step-by-step practices of object production, use, and disposal in the past (Dobres 2000) and the social implications of the multiple activities performed both with and by objects throughout their lives (Jones 2002: 83-144). The key here is that identity can be expressed in multiple ways, often at once, according to the simultaneous yet various meanings that were attributed to an object at the different stages of its life across time and space. As such, objects have the capacity to enact varying degrees of social practice and reproduction that help form identities and enrol people into social collectives (Dobres & Robb 2005: 163). Compared to Appadurai’s “regimes of value” view, the object lifecycles approach places greater emphasis on how objects constituted multiple social relationships and identities at each stage of their life.

Looking forward to my dataset, the act of making pipeclay objects such as figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks could well have defined the identity, and been shaped by the stylistic preferences, of the coroplasts who made them but their significance possibly changed as they were used in domestic and burial settings over time in Britain (see Chapters 7 and 9) and in different provinces, often far from the production centres of Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region. This “active participation” of artefacts idea has additionally been considered in relation to how fragmented objects, including ceramic and stone figurines, constituted social relationships and identities in prehistoric societies (e.g. Chapman 2000; Chapman & Gaydarska 2007) but the extent that material agency applies to broken pipeclay

objects – such as figurines of Venus (e.g. Fittock 2015; see also Croxford 2003 for Roman statuary) has not been explored yet, but is explored further in this thesis (see Chapter 10).

Additionally, it is important to think about how object technologies and materiality, specifically the physical form of objects, can influence social relationships like identity. Here, both Dobres (2000) and Hass (1996) have argued that object technologies and the practices related to their use help make objects the way they are and that this also helps form, express and reconstitute social values between people and communities. It is often perceived that the practicality and function of objects is sometimes given prominence over the cultural and social factors that influence their form. On the other hand, in her interesting studies, Swift (2014, 2017) has recently argued that in searching for Roman identities in object appearances, analysis of the non-functional features of objects have actually been favoured above the practical features that developed through craft practice, despite the latter equally affecting how objects were formed and used over time. This process is termed “affordance” and describes the “relationship between the properties of an object and the capabilities of the agent that determine just how the object could possibly be used” (Norman 2012: 11; Swift 2014: 203). The idea, then, is that both the changing functional and non-functional facets of objects helped constitute the identities of the people who made and used them, and that the relationship between these facets and identity is reciprocal.

Another, not necessarily opposing, idea takes a less pragmatic approach and considers that objects can be consumed symbolically to form identity. In contrast to the argument that some Roman objects had a wholly functional role and were selected simply due to availability and convenience (Cooper 1996), Hodder (1982) has used a series of ethnographic studies to explore how objects can have multiple symbolic meanings beyond their perceived practical function: “a ‘symbol’ refers to an object or situation in which a direct, primary or literal meaning also designates another indirect, secondary and figurative meaning” (Hodder 1982:

11). This clearly has implications in terms of the technological development of objects by suggesting that changes in object form were not always necessarily a result of changing, tangible, practical factors but of social and symbolic relationships. As noted below, the kind of evidence that Hodder relies upon for his ethnographic work is not always available in archaeology, but a full evaluation of an object's social and cultural context can nevertheless be a very useful exercise. With this in mind, I will argue in this thesis that pipeclay objects were not only overt religious symbols but that they also illuminate the economic, cultural and social practices that helped shape daily religious life and religious identity throughout Roman Britain over time.

Over the past twenty years gender has become a key part of archaeologies of identity where the term can be defined as the identification of socially constructed sexual difference within cultures (Foxhall 2011; Gilchrist 1999, 2004; Nelson 2007). While initial ideas about gender in the 1980s and 1990s were all about recognising women in the past and pointing out biological and social distinctions between men and women, modern studies have moved beyond such binary opposites to focus on aspects like sexuality, femininity, masculinity and the differences among and between males and females (Butler 2011; Gilchrist 1999: 1, 54-78; Scott 1986) to the point that gender is now viewed as flexible and on a spectrum (Butler 1999; Showden 2009). Moreover, as part of identity, gender is a personal, mutable expression rather than an attributed, fixed label (Nordbladh & Yates 1991), but one that is equally mediated by other identity attributes, like age, status and ethnicity. Sex, gender and sexuality are consequently all factors that formed the personal and social identities of ancient people and this can be accessed by studying the objects that people adorned, used and interacted with both individually and on a societal scale in the past.

In recent years gender studies have started to gain momentum in Roman archaeology (e.g. Allison 2006; Carroll 2012). From this it is clear that engagement with Roman religion

was highly gendered but in general the concept has only occasionally been integrated into studies of statuary and figurines. One of the few good applications of gender studies to classical statuary is provided by Foxhall (2000, 2011: 77-9, 151-2) who discusses a large group of metal deity, animal and human figurines from the Greek Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta. Many of the figurines from this site depict masculine forms, or are gender-neutral, and were presumably deposited as votive offerings, possibly by males, while another group of figurines deposited with weaving equipment and clothing (activities typically associated with females) were arguably deposited by women. From this it is suggested that the motives behind the choice and deposition of figurines were potentially influenced by gender-specific personal views as well as communal responsibilities. Similar gender arguments have been tentatively put forward regarding the depositional circumstances of some pipeclay objects – particularly figurines of gods and goddesses and their relation to men and women in Roman Britain and other Roman provinces (e.g. Boekel 1897: 238; Bristow 2012: 16) but these ideas remain underdeveloped and unsubstantiated, relying heavily on iconographic rather than contextual evidence.

Gender, alongside personhood and embodiment, has been used to study how prehistoric figurines reflect identity for many years (Bailey 2005: 1-25; Soffer *et al.* 2000). In this context personhood is understood as the conditional state of being a person in which the relationships and boundaries between people and objects is explored to form identity (Fowler 2010), whereas embodiment refers to how the body's physicality is utilised to construct identity via the assumed link between the body and person (Fisher & Loren 2003: 225). A good example of how gender is integrated with concepts of personhood and embodiment is Knapp and Meskell's (1997) study of anthropomorphic prehistoric figurines from Cyprus (Fig. 2.2). Here, the authors note that these figurines do not have any clear indicators of biological sex - some have male and female genitalia but others have none at all – and suggest that the figurines represent an embodied gender spectrum that allowed identity to be selected and expressed by the individual

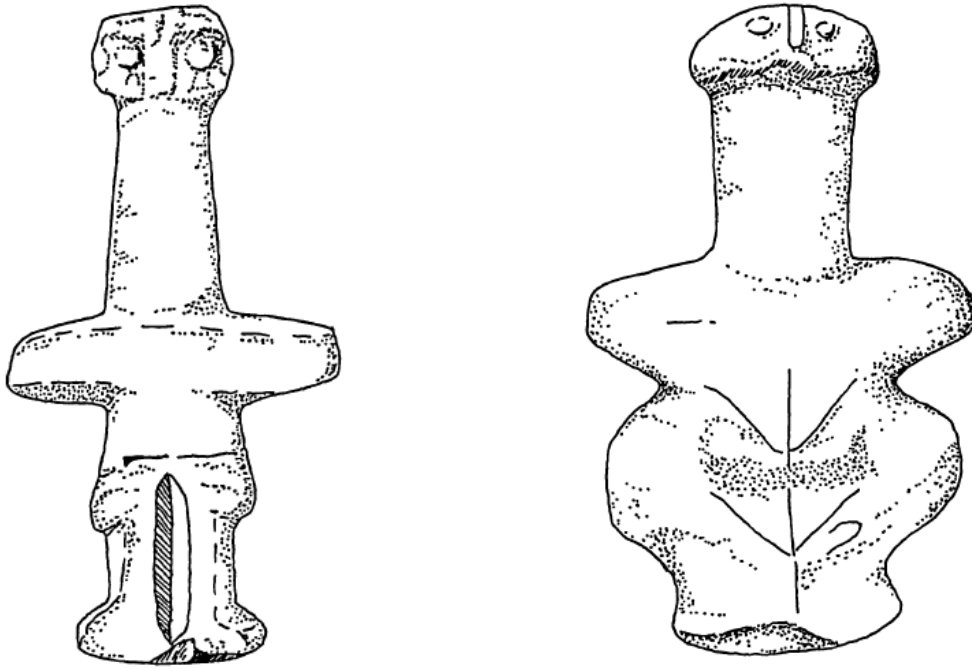


Fig. 2.2. Chalcolithic steatite cruciform figurine said to be from Souskiou, Paphos district, Cyprus (left) and Middle Chalcolithic limestone 'Lemba Lady' figurine from Lemba Lakkous, Cyprus (right), after Knapp & Meskell 1997, figs. 1 & 5.

that would be understood by the whole society. In their examination of Copper Age fired clay figurines from the Balkan settlement of Dolnoslav, Bulgaria, Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 113-42) similarly found that age and gender representation was a key characteristic of the figurine assemblage that included male, female and unsexed forms. From this they argue that male and female divisions were not integral to ancient Dolnoslavian society yet the mediation of gender through figurines contributed towards forming household and communal identity, as well as individual personhood (*ibid.* 2007: 136). With pipeclay objects depicting a range of gods, goddesses and animals, as well as human males, females and children, embodiment and gender may well have been important factors in the religious identities of the people that used them.

## **Identity and Contextual Approaches to Material Culture Studies**

In all of these theoretical approaches it is important to stress that contextual analysis of objects is vital to understanding the identities of people in the past. Back in the 1980s Hodder (1987, 1992) was the first to advocate a holistic approach to understanding the complex relationships between an object and its context in order to interpret its full functional and cultural role. The problem with archaeological material, however, is the relative scarcity of primary or closed contexts, such as burials and hoards, which can give us a more direct account of how people constructed and conveyed identity in the past. Indeed, most objects are found in secondary deposits that make it much harder to derive meaningful social interactions, although advances in both Iron Age (Hill 1995) and Roman archaeology (e.g. Ferris *et al.* 2000) have shown that secondary deposits, like rubbish fills, may also reflect structured actions and contain patterns of object deposition that are indicative of important social relationships. In recent years the contextual approach to identity in Roman archaeology has proven to be very fruitful, with the concept of identity embedded into the contextual study of many different object categories, from pottery (Pitts 2008) and coins (Creighton 2000, 2002) to brooches (Jundi & Hill 1998), lighting equipment (Eckardt 2002a) and toilet instruments (Crummy & Eckardt 2008).

A review of 'structured deposition' has recently been undertaken by Garrow (2012; see also Richards & Thomas 1984 for the breakthrough study) who gives a critical history of the concept and the various terms (ceremonial, deliberate, formal, formalized, intentional, non-utilitarian, odd, peculiar, placed, ritual, selected, special, symbolic, token and unusual deposits) it encompasses (*ibid.* 2012: 93). In doing so it is argued that too much emphasis has been placed on interpreting such material culture patterns as intentionally created by means of symbolic or ritual actions and that this has been done at the expense of better understanding the material signatures of normal everyday life and practices: "the 'ritual' side of interpretation has perhaps unfairly come to dominate the 'everyday'" (*ibid.* 2012: 114). Garrow concludes by suggesting

that in order to truly understand ‘structured deposits’ archaeologists need to fully consider and theorise the everyday *and* ritual processes that formed them. As we shall see, it is important to consider such ideas when interpreting how pipeclay objects were deposited in Roman Britain.

In many ways the growing interest in Roman identity is closely connected to modern conceptions of identity. Over the past few years new and changing ideologies about politics, economics, mass communication and individualism in a capitalist society have affected our modern ideas about gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion, power, class and status (e.g. Meskell 2001, 2002). It is important to consider these issues but in doing so we must be careful not to project modern notions of identity back onto the societies of the past too much. The social, political, and economic dynamics of today’s modern world are very different to those of Roman societies and the two should not be directly compared. Several studies have highlighted that we should be wary of this. Outside of Roman studies, Vandewettering (2015), for instance, has been critical about the emergence of reductionist colonial theories regarding prehistoric conceptions of gender representation and relationships when interpreting Venus figurines from the Upper Palaeolithic. Overall, however, the general consensus is that contemporary ideas and conceptions about identity have helped enrich the study of identity in the past by helping archaeologists think about this concept in new and revealing ways (Díaz-Andreu & Lucy 2005: 9-12; Eckardt 2014: 7).

There is always a concern that the study of one category of artefact alone can only contribute a small amount to any debate about identity and its construction and expression in the Roman world. However, much like how the link between the consumption of material culture and identity has been demonstrated through studying commodities both singularly and as larger interconnected groups that address the question of how and why people select and combine certain objects to construct and express their individual and wider cultural identities (e.g. Wallendorf & Arnould 1988; Arnould 2002; Reed *et al.* 2012), the same principle is also

applicable to the study of Roman artefacts in the western provinces. This kind of approach asks questions and provides answers on micro and macro levels. Initially, for instance, although studying pipeclay figurines and objects as one group seems narrow in scope, subtle differences in their forms, distributions and uses can highlight individual expressions of choice and identity. However, going on to compare these patterns to that of other forms of similar material culture allows us to tease apart finer nuances about the different social and cultural groups of people who used these similar but different objects. Theoretically it is also possible to take this approach further and combine and compare more disparate groups of objects to try and identify broader but still distinctive patterns of use and identity between different ‘suites’ of objects people used in the past on individual and societal levels (e.g. Cool & Baxter 1999 for glass; Biddulph 2005 for burial assemblages; van der Veen, Livarda & Hill 2008 on plant remains; Perring & Pitts 2013 and Pitts 2014 for combinations of ceramic vessels; and Pitts 2010 on combinations of several different artefact classes). It is, however, important to try and make their analysis as holistic as possible given these constraints, which in this case will involve directly comparing their different forms, distributions and uses to those of metal figurines in Britain to try and differentiate between the identities (e.g. the ages, genders and social statuses, where possible) of the various people and groups that used each of them.

### **Overview - Identity and the Study of Pipeclay Objects in Britain**

This chapter has shown that the study of identity can be carried out using a range of theoretical approaches, from its origins in Romanization to later ideas about agency, practice and consumption. For this thesis I am taking the general view that identity, in its various forms, is constituted by negotiation through the social practices of people in the past and that this is reflected in and shaped by their material culture. I hope to show that by examining pipeclay objects such as figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks, and their associated social



practices we can access the identities of people who used them in Roman Britain. My intention here is not to adopt any single theoretical standpoint (e.g. agency or consumption), but rather utilise context as the primary means of interpretation and apply theoretical concepts as and when they seem appropriate. For example, the position that the supply of pipeclay objects from Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle regions impacted provincial religious practice but that the forms and types of object that a person chose from the limited selection available could still be a way in which individual religious identity was represented includes aspects of globalization theory. Moreover, the study of pipeclay figurine fragmentation in Chapter 10 is fundamentally associated with theoretical views and ideas about physical and symbolic embodiment.

In all this it is also not my intention to focus on just one single aspect of identity but to consider the multiple aspects that constituted identity for the people of Roman Britain (e.g. age, gender, status, ethnicity, religion). To do this I firmly believe that the idea of forming identity through practice can be served well by considering it alongside traditional methods of object analysis such as typological classification, spatial distribution and contextual analysis to highlight the various ways that pipeclay objects represent the identities of individuals and groups in Roman Britain. Having said that, the methodology for how I will go about conducting such a study in relation to the pipeclay objects found in Britain is outlined in the next chapter.

## **Chapter 3. Methodology**

To understand the consumption, use, meaning and cultural significance of pipeclay objects in Britain a catalogue of figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks was compiled and a detailed contextual analysis of them carried out. Pipeclay objects from the whole province and across the entire Romano-British period were collated, and whole specimens, larger broken pieces and as many small fragments as possible were collected. A total of 946 pipeclay objects were recorded during the data collection process, as well as 17 objects previously misidentified as Roman. These, along with any additional information about them, were gathered from four sources: the catalogue of pipeclay objects in Jenkins' PhD thesis (1977: 280-416), publications (monographs and journal papers), the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database and unpublished material obtained by visiting museum collections and archaeological units.

### **Published and Unpublished Material**

Data collection began by re-examining the catalogue of *c.* 450 pipeclay objects recorded in Jenkins' doctoral thesis (1977: 280-416). This catalogue provided a comprehensive list of all the finds recovered in Britain up to the mid-1970s and usefully included information about some pipeclay finds that have since been lost or are now inaccessible. Jenkins' partial recording technique means that many of his entries lack important identification details, namely museum accession numbers, that consequently made it difficult - and in many cases impossible - to accurately cross-reference a number of his records with later publications and museum collections. The result of this is that the new database presented in this thesis (Appendix 9) may include up to as many as 100 duplicate entries. However, this number is, if anything, an

overestimate and the most important factor is that between them the range of sources consulted have roughly doubled the known corpus of pipeclay objects that are now known from Britain.

Published finds were collected by carrying out a thorough and systematic literature review of site and finds reports in monographs, national periodicals, such as *Britannia* and the *Archaeological Journal*, and regional county journals. Since Jenkins (1977) conducted a thorough search of older literature during his initial study, only national and regional journals published from 1970 onwards were reviewed, though all of the references cited by Jenkins were double-checked and recorded as well. A search of all the post 1970 sources provided over 400 new finds from Britain. The majority come from the area of south-east England where the counties of Kent and Essex provide the most compared with the relatively few discoveries from regions such as the Midlands, south-west England, Wales and Scotland. One of the main advantages of newer published material is the more detailed contextual and chronological information it provides compared to older publications, but even the quality of this more recently recorded data can vary significantly between sites and volumes.

The small collection of pipeclay objects catalogued in Green's surveys of religious objects from civilian (1974) and military (1978) areas of Roman Britain was cross-referenced with the newly compiled database but provided no new finds. The ability to accurately cite this information was severely compromised by the general lack of accession information available for the objects. These two volumes also contain very little in terms of useful contextual information. For completeness all of the objects that have been misidentified and previously published as Roman pipeclay objects that come from these, and other, published sources are recorded on the database but are grouped separately under the 'Misidentified Objects' heading.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database was also searched for any pipeclay objects. Since 1997 the PAS has vastly improved both the reporting and recording of

archaeological finds - mainly those made by metal detectorists (Brindle 2014). The objects recorded by this scheme are available on the open access Portable Antiquities Scheme online database ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)) and since 2004 this resource has been supplemented with a yearly round-up of all the PAS finds made each year, which is published in the journal *Britannia*.

A search of the PAS database yielded only four pipeclay figurines (nos. 849, 850, 851, 852), one of which, the depiction of Mercury from Piercebridge (no. 851), is a rare find in Britain. Two other entries were found on the database but these were very poorly documented with no typological detail, provenance or contextual information available and thus were not recorded. Reviewing the PAS yearly round-up in *Britannia* produced similarly few results. Indeed, the only find comes in the form of a rare Juno figurine (no. 746) found in Colchester (Fig. 3.1; Worrell & Pearce 2012: 377-8, no. 23). As ceramic objects undetectable by metal detectors the low number of pipeclay figurines recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme is not surprising and is certainly unrepresentative of their actual circulation levels in the province. Rare finds like those found here highlight the value of the scheme but the main downside of the PAS data is the general lack of contextual information that comes with the objects.

During the collection process it became increasingly clear that there is a potential bias towards the publication of complete figurines, substantial pieces, and more ornately crafted and decorated pieces rather than plainer fragments. This was especially the case amongst the older antiquarian catalogues that reflect the collection policies of antiquarian collectors that were very different from the systematic quantification methods practised during modern excavations. As a result, it is possible that unskilled antiquarian labourers either missed, discarded, or at very best, mis-identified smaller pieces of pipeclay objects as fragments of pottery or later medieval clay-pipes that were made of a similar white material. Overall, therefore, older publications may well under-represent the actual number of pipeclay objects that circulated in the province during the Roman period. However, it is encouraging that when



*Fig. 3. 1. Juno figurine (no. 746) found in Colchester reported to the PAS, after Worrell & Pearce 2012: 377-8, no. 23, fig. 23.*

these objects are noted in older reports they are often given the attention they deserve as important small finds that were, and are, vital for understanding Roman religion in Britain.

One of the major problems with published material comes when comparing sites with varying degrees of excavation and publication. Hingley (1989: 2-5) highlights that there may be a possible bias towards the publication of military and urban rather than rural sites in Britain. Another potential factor is the extent that Romano-British cemeteries have been excavated. It is interesting that far fewer pipeclay objects come from anything other than second and third century cemeteries in Britain (e.g. Burleigh *et al.* 2006) compared with the Continent when little large-scale excavation of first century cemeteries has been carried out in Britain that may well provide a few extra finds (*cf.* Philpott 1999; Eckardt 2002a: 28). Equally unclear is whether different levels of pipeclay object use between sites like Colchester and York actually reflect ancient patterns or just differences in modern excavation and publication levels. One way to

address this problem is to compare older reports with newer, more detailed reports. This generally appears to show that rarity and absence are not necessarily just a consequence of poor antiquarian excavation and publication practices but are indicative of actual levels of pipeclay consumption and use in Britain (e.g. Eckardt 2002a: 28). These patterns of consumption and use are analysed in detail in several chapters throughout this thesis in Chapters 5, 7 and 9.

Unpublished pipeclay objects were identified by sending a questionnaire to over 500 national and regional museums with Roman collections, as well as several archaeological units. Over half of these responded, providing 30 additional objects. In some cases museums and archaeological units with only a small number of objects were able to provide images for classification and contextual information via email that saved a costly visit. Information about 25 unpublished figurines was obtained in this way. Most came with some kind of additional context information but this again varied in quality, and was supplemented with any additional information from museum databases and published sources where it was possible to do so.

A number of the larger collections in museums and archaeological units were visited. These covered a wide geographical area. The largest and most significant collections visited are those at the Museum of London (MoL), the London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre (LAARC) covering London, Reading Museum (Silchester), Yorkshire Museum and York Archaeological Trust (York) The National Roman Legion Museum (*Caerleon*), The Higgins Bedford Museum (Ruxox Farm), Corbridge Roman Museum (*Corbridge*), and The Vindolanda Trust (*Vindolanda*). Material from the Glasgow Museum and the National Museum of Scotland provided a small number of finds despite the fact that existing published sources suggested an almost complete absence of finds in Scotland but the provenances of these are generally not secure and they may well be French finds that were donated to the museums.

In terms of the recording process, regardless of the source of information, each pipeclay object was entered onto a Microsoft Access database using a pre-prepared form. A visual assessment identified the form (e.g. figurine, bust, shrine (*aedicula*), animal vessel, mask or fragment), depiction (e.g. deity, human, animal, bird, composite) and type (e.g. Venus, Dea Nutrix, mother-goddess, man, woman, child, bull cockerel, horse) of each object. Further sub-types and sub-groups were established based on morphological variations and/or different stylistic traits, such as garment designs and hairstyles where possible and appropriate. This typology is broadly based on the typological conventions originally established by Rouvier-Jeanlin (1972: 91-405) that are traditionally used to catalogue pipeclay objects across Europe. During the recording process I also re-classified all of the finds categorised by Jenkins (1977: 280-416) to align them with Continental conventions and ensure cohesiveness between all of the British and Continental collections.

Other fields on the database record additional details like fabric colour, measurements, inscriptions, ventilation holes, secondary materials (e.g. burning, painted decoration), date, provenance and fragmentation group – see Chapter 10. In some cases a fuller description of the object or particularly interesting features are provided in the ‘Notes’ field following the ‘Parallels’ (identical or similar Continental finds) and ‘References’ sections. Where possible each object is illustrated by a newly taken photograph, or a photo, drawing or image sourced from an existing publication for classification and reference purposes.

The data collection process was completed in 2016 with the final visits to museums in April that year. This survey has been as exhaustive as possible but as with any category of material culture new excavations will always provide new finds that will add to the corpus. The complete database of objects with several queries set up is provided in Appendix 9 on the CD in Volume 2, while a more descriptive typological catalogue of each pipeclay form and type is given in Appendix 1. Throughout this thesis any typological patterns and consumption trends

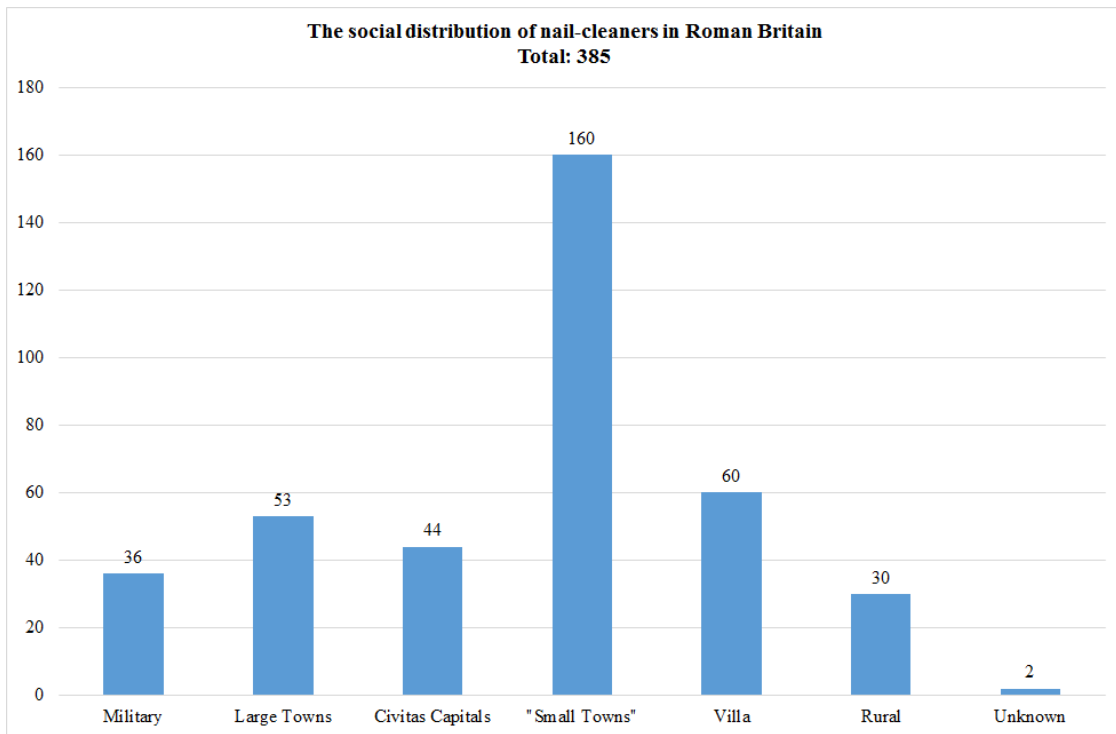
are illustrated by tables and charts showing, for example, the numbers and proportions of each form, type and sub-type, while maps illustrate their distributions.

### **Contextual Analysis**

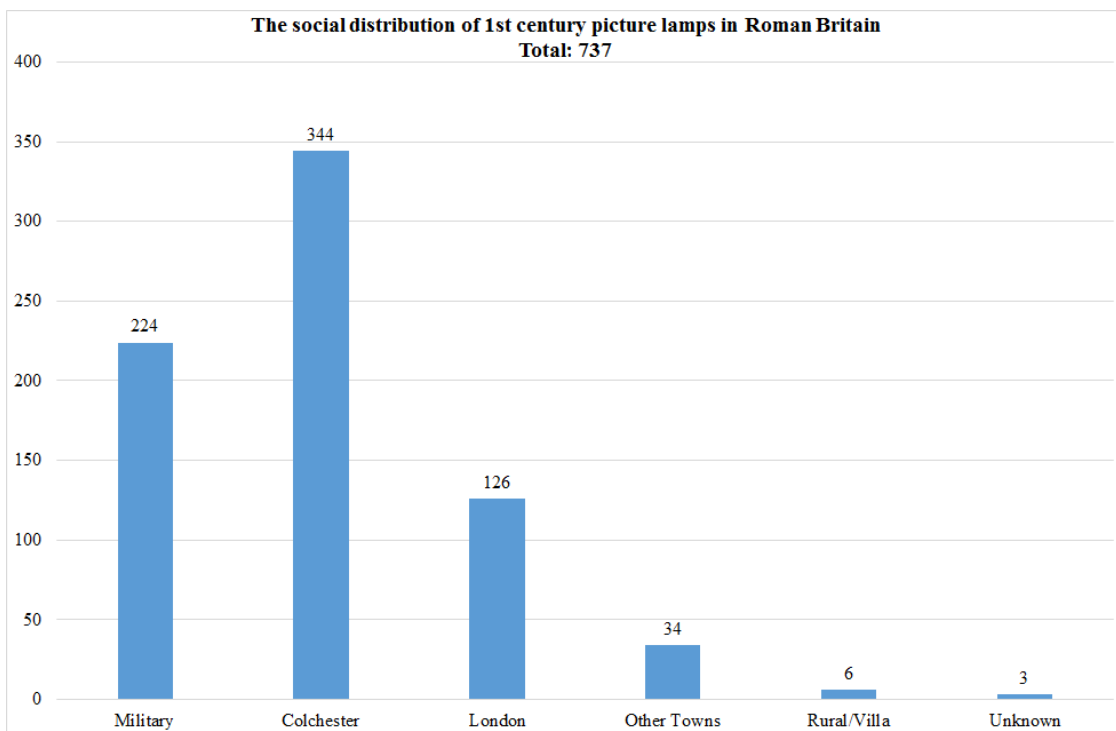
Using a contextual approach to study material culture is a useful method but one that has a number of problems. As Eckardt (2002a: 29) notes, one of the main concerns is that it can still be difficult to accurately assess some archaeological contexts and relate an object to a specific feature or date, not least because of past poor recording techniques, but also because it can still be hard to correlate between some site and small finds reports. Even in the most modern of site reports, a predominantly material based as opposed to functional interpretation of Roman small finds is taken that can still often limit our understanding of how an object or group of objects relates to the character of a site.

As well as this, it can be very difficult to gain a meaningful measure of the quantities of pipeclay objects such as figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks found on different sites. In most reports the number of pipeclay objects found on a site is stated, primarily due to their perceived religious significance, but it is possible that the total number of objects from a site may well be distorted by factors like mis-identification, mis-classification or discard. As well as simply counting the number of objects, it is thus useful to show the proportion of given pipeclay types as part of the whole assemblage. Showing the proportion of finds from different sites can also be a useful method of comparison when the number of pipeclay objects varies greatly between them and may give a useful indication as to their significance that may in turn be linked to site function (e.g. Figs. 3.2-4, after Eckardt 2005: 144-56, figs. 3a-d, 9a-b, 12). Much like Eckardt, throughout my study of pipeclay objects I

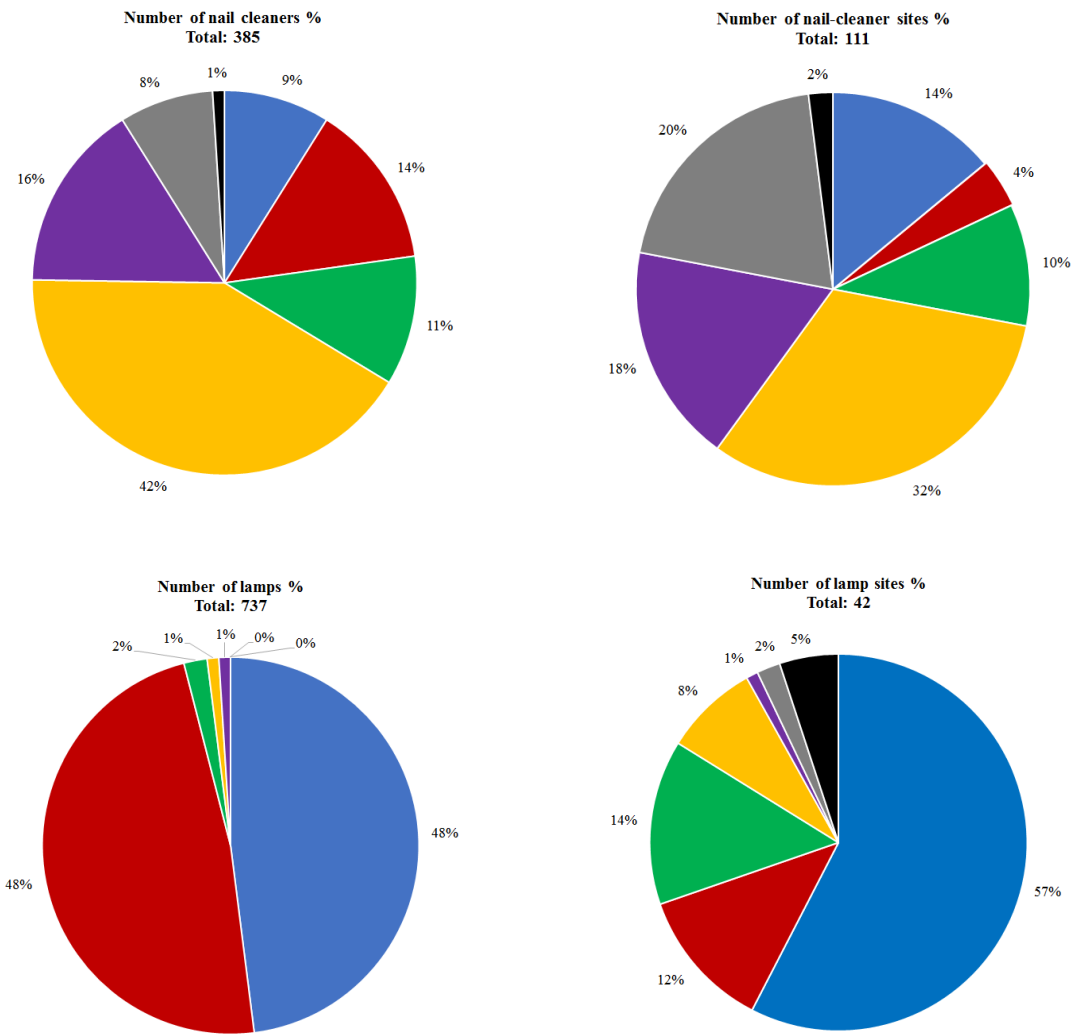




*Fig. 3. 2. The social distribution of nail cleaners in Roman Britain, adapted from Eckardt 2005: 145, fig. 1.*



*Fig. 3. 3. The social distribution of 1<sup>st</sup> century picture lamps in Roman Britain, adapted from Eckardt 2005: 145, fig. 2.*



*Fig. 3. 4. The social distribution of nail-cleaners and 1st century lamps shown in Roman Britain shown as a proportion of the total number of artefacts (left) and as a proportion of all sites (right), adapted from Eckardt 2005: 146, figs. 3a-d. (Blue=military, red=large towns, green=Civitas Capitals, yellow=London; purple=other towns, grey=rural/villa, black=unknown).*

have used total numbers and percentages for this purpose but other quantitative methods would be useful too. For example, the ratio of nail cleaner finds to site types would be one such way.

Another way to gain a significant measure of quantities on selected sites is to compare the number and distribution of pipeclay objects with sets of other well published material, like metal figurines, ceramic lamps and samian pottery (see Chapter 7). While metal figurines are closely linked in terms of use and function to pipeclay figurines, comparison with ceramic

lamps, for example, provides the opportunity to compare the distributions of objects that are not only made out of similar material (i.e. clay) but which were also imported to Britain having been produced in made in the same regions (i.e. Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle). Doing so not only looks at the trade and supply of different but closely connected object categories, but also the interchange between them that likewise helps improve our understanding of how and whether these objects were used similarly or differently in various social contexts, as well as the extent that this activity varied between different sites. This approach offers a much better understanding of the important relationships between different object categories than currently available from existing individual specialist reports (Eckardt 2002a: 29).

In order to facilitate social distribution and contextual analysis, the provenance and contextual information about each pipeclay object was recorded in a number of predefined database fields. These fields include the find circumstance (i.e. chance, field walking, excavation, unknown), the site name, the site type and location, the context type within the site, and specific context details such as the type of deposit, its date and any associated finds. Adopting Eckardt's (2002: 27-30; 2005) methodology, context was first defined by a broad social assessment of the site from which a pipeclay object came, with each site allocated to one of the following categories: military sites (covering legionary fortresses, forts, marching camps and mile castles); large urban centres (*Coloniae* and London - the possible *Municipium* at St Albans might also fit into this group but here it is included with *Civitas Capitales*); *Civitas Capitales*; small towns; villas and rural sites; and sites of other/unknown character. Sources like Mattingly (2006) and Wachter (1974, 1995) were used to determine site status when this information was not provided in the excavation report. Villa sites and rural settlements were identified using the Roman Rural Settlement Project database that is available on the Archaeological Data Service website (Allen *et al.* 2015; Smith *et al.* 2016).

Using general contextual categories like those above comes with a number of problems. The first is that they group together sites by their legal status or morphology, over-simplifying the complexities of site character and function. On the upper end of the scale there is little problem in classifying *Coloniae*, the *Municipium* of Verulamium and sites such as London as ‘large urban towns’, but classifying sites at the lower end of the settlement hierarchy can be considerably more problematic. The difficulties in defining what constitutes as a ‘small town’ or ‘villa’ are well known (e.g. Burnham & Wachter 1990: 1-6; Scott 1993: 1-7) and it is still unclear whether *Civitas Capitals* should be treated as an independent category or classified as a large or small town. This is exemplified by the interesting case of when Cirencester, initially a settlement with limited legal status, was chosen instead of the *Colonia* of Gloucester as the new provincial capital of *Britannia Prima* in the fourth century (Wachter 1997: 87). The rural/villa group is itself inherently biased as far more Roman villa sites have been excavated than rural villages, but there are now far more excavated rural farmsteads than villas.

Grouping sites by these convenient historically derived labels can additionally overlook if there are any characteristic patterns of material culture use associated with them. Indeed, recent studies have shown that grouping even the largest assemblages of material numerically like this is insufficient and that more considered site-based approaches can identify regional and status differences. One of the best examples of this is by Derks and Roymans (2002), who look at the distribution of seal-boxes on different types of urban, rural and military sites in the Rhine delta to combat the traditional view that the “lower classes” were not familiar with Latin writing in this frontier region. In Britain, Cool and Baxter have fully considered the benefits of such an approach in relation to glassware (1999), vessels, small finds and animal bones (2002), with Cool (1995) comparing the differences between the small finds from the fortress at York and similar assemblages from different sites to identify disparities within glass assemblages recovered from different site types. Elsewhere, Roman coins have received the same treatment

(e.g. Reece 1993, 1995). Allason-Jones (1988), meanwhile, has examined the subtle differences between different military sites by showing that the small find assemblages from turrets along Hadrian's Wall are a smaller subset of typical military assemblages with a narrower functional repertoire than the larger groups of similar material that are found in forts.

The pre-defined categories of Roman site types can be modified for each case study according to the character of the assemblage to assess it in the most practical and revealing way (e.g. Figs. 3.2-4). For example, while picture lamps in London and Colchester are separated from those from 'Other Towns' due to the large number of finds from these two urban settlements, this is not the case for more widely distributed nail-cleaners (Eckardt 2005: 144-5). In terms of pipeclay objects, the character of the assemblage lends itself to division by the more traditional historical division of site types as outlined above, but London is included as a separate category due to the large number of finds from the city compared with other urban centres so as not to over-represent this group. At the other end of the scale, small towns constitute their own group as a sufficient number of objects populate their category, while the finds from villas and other rural sites are counted together but are also discussed separately as part of the social distribution analysis in Chapter 7.

A general lack of contextually dated as well as the presence of residual material ensures that there are often problems in accounting for chronological changes in site function, (e.g. from a military to civilian phase), and distinguishing between the military and civilians on sites with a mixed population. In these cases the problem was resolved by attributing a joint site type, such as 'Fortress/*Colonia*' or 'Fort/*Civitas Capital*' for example, and splitting their value between the 'military' and 'urban' categories. Pipeclay objects from military or civilian contexts with securer context dating are counted within their respective groups.

Throughout this thesis the number of pipeclay objects from different types of site have been quantified and are summarised in graphs, charts and maps that plot the distribution of objects from different site types over time to identify any notable social trends. These should always be read alongside the tables detailing the specific deposit that each find is from.

The second stage of contextual analysis provides more assessment detail. Here a distinction is made between pipeclay objects from burials, temples, hoards, occupation deposits and unrecorded or unknown contexts, while the 'religious' finds from rural temples and shrines are counted separately. The 'Location type' field defines the kind of area a find came from (e.g. building, house, road), with any additional details recorded in the 'Location Details' field (e.g. specific building/area), while the specific kind of deposit (i.e. pit, ditch, occupation layer) is provided in the 'Context' field. This usually produces quite untidy data that does not group together easily for interpretation purposes but it is nevertheless still worth recording. The problem is that unfortunately roughly half (approximately 450) of the pipeclay objects come without contextual information or are from very poorly recorded or uninterpretable deposits that limits the degree of analysis and interpretation possible.

Any objects that were found with a pipeclay object in a deposit have also been recorded where possible and are sometimes discussed to reveal more about the character of a deposit. These are not discussed in any great detail in most cases other than to say that they vary considerably between deposits, except for Chapter 9 where they are analysed in more detail as possible indicators of high status funerary activity in relation to burials with pipeclay objects.

The quality of a context was evaluated with scores between 0 and 3. The value 0 refers to an uncertain or regional context (e.g. East Anglia); 1, field-walking or chance finds; 2, contexts like top or plough-soil and 3, finds from a known, sealed excavation context. Like metal figurines, most antiquarian finds of pipeclay objects fall into the 0 and 1 categories as

collectors often only provided vague, inaccurate information about their provenance. For instance, as noted by Paul Booth (pers. comm.), it is unclear if the lost figurine (no. 344) from Gloucester Green in Oxford found in 1841 and listed in the Catalogue of the Exhibition of Antiquities held at Buckingham in 1855 (Jenkins 1977: 415, no. 2) was actually dug up at the site or arrived in Oxford as part of an antiquarian collection.

### **The Bigger Picture**

As a whole, the assemblage of 946 pipeclay objects from Britain is small but it is still useful to analyse them contextually in detail to highlight where and when they were used and by which social groups. Analysing the distributions of different common and rare types, as is carried out in Chapter 7, can also highlight different social trends relating to the popularity of different beliefs amongst the population of Britain across different types of site. These distributions can then be compared to the Continental distributions of similar material to get a better picture of the extent that beliefs and the use of different pipeclay objects differed between the provinces. In this sense, it is hard to know how significant small numbers of particular types in any given province are but it is possible that they are linked with the beliefs and practices of small groups or individuals than larger collections of more common types that may have been more popular.

Having said that, the collection of pipeclay objects from Britain is a far more accurate representation of ‘real’ numbers compared to many of the Continental collections. For example, the objects recorded by Rouvier-Jeanlin (1972) from the National Museum of France consist of 1288 examples but as a museum catalogue it is evidently biased towards more complete and ornate pieces, and seems to include very few smaller fragments that are more commonly documented in later catalogues. Overall, a sample of less than 1000 examples may be thought to limit the statistical and interpretational value of the British material compared to the broader

trends evident from such large Continental catalogues. However, the collection of finds from Britain is much larger than the 343 figurines and masks found in the Netherlands (Boekel 1987) and the 232 pipeclay objects from Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986, 1995). Beenhouwer's (2005) work that records 1146 pipeclay objects, including all fragments, from Belgium, is a large, as well as the most representative, collection of finds from the Continent. The trends evident amongst this extensive corpus are hence perhaps the most useful against which to compare the relatively large collection of pipeclay objects that have been found in Britain.

Factors influencing the number of finds from each of these regions could include the amount of excavation carried out in each country. This is impossible to assess in this thesis, but the proximity of each Roman provincial area to the pipeclay production centres in Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region might have affected consumer choice and the economics of supply for each province. In this sense it is interesting that there are more pipeclay objects in Roman Britain than in the Danube provinces. The larger group of pipeclay objects in France is understandable given the presence of a production centre in the region but it is interesting that Britain has a greater number of pipeclay objects than areas such as Switzerland and the Netherlands that were closer to the manufacturing centre in the Rhine-Moselle region (I have not studied all the finds from the *Limes*, Raetia and the Rhineland, and there are no doubt now many more finds from the region of Gaul). It is hard to know the exact impact that modern excavation levels and the proximity of these Roman provinces to production centres have and had, but generally the quantity of pipeclay objects from Britain is much higher than one would expect from a frontier province. Whether this reflects a closer affinity with Gaulish culture and religion in Britain is a key theme of this research that is addressed during the following analyses, especially in Chapters 4 and 5.



## **Summary**

Overall, this study provides the first detailed study of pipeclay objects in Britain by combining a complete typological catalogue with a detailed contextual analysis to demonstrate the varied and changing character of their usage. Doing so highlights a number of significant geographic, social and temporal patterns that help us better understand how these small ceramic finds were used, perceived and reflected people's cultural and social identities in the province.

## Chapter 4. Making Figurines and Other Pipeclay Objects

While this survey suggests that pipeclay objects were quite a rare part of religious practices in Roman Britain (if their importation was spread over 200 years, c. 50-250, then the numbers into Britain per year totals less than five), there is, much like metal figurines (Durham 2012: 2.1), little or no evidence that they were produced in the province itself. Despite their widespread distribution in Britain (see Chapter 7), demand for pipeclay objects was clearly never considered enough to warrant moving away from the reliance on imports from Gaul and the Rhine-Mosel region and establish production centres closer to home. As a result, any discussion about the production of the British pipeclay assemblage must turn to what the objects themselves can tell us about how and where they were produced, supplemented with what we know about Continental production practices and sites. Indeed, looking at the British material in this way yields useful information about how and where the objects were made, the manufacturing processes involved and the dynamics of their supply to Britain.

This chapter consequently has three aims. The first is to consider how the pipeclay objects found in Britain were produced. This will include identifying whether they were made in clay or plaster moulds and assessing if any objects were made from the same moulds and imported in batches. The second aim is to identify where the objects in Britain were produced by assessing their style and, to a lesser extent, fabric colour, and by identifying Continental production centres through the identification of identical moulds. A useful approach here would have been to conduct systematic fabric analysis by destructive XRF or non-destructive portable-XRF like that pioneered in the 1970s and early 1980s (e.g. Lahanier & Rouvier-Jeanlin 1977; Lahanier *et al.* 1991 and Lahanier & Dennery 1993). However, time constraints and the often-inconclusive results of applying such methods to ceramics (Hunt & Speakman 2015, and

specifically Lahanier & Revel 1993 on ceramic figurines of the Roman period) made it impractical to do so on this occasion. This section will also include analysing any maker's marks on figurines to get a better idea about who made them, how workshops were organised, and the extent of any mould copying. All three sections contribute towards the final aim of evaluating how the pipeclay market in Britain was supplied and the extent that this affected their availability, selection and consumption in the province.

### **Pipeclay Production Centres**

Terracotta objects were produced extensively across the Roman Empire, at large and small-scale production centres located in many provinces. Large-scale operations are evidenced, for example, in the modern regions of Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt where centralised workshops typically produced a wider range of different wares that included pottery, lamps and figurines in distinctive local clays and styles (Bailey 1983: 193-9). In Italy, improvements in excavation techniques have recently allowed archaeologists to more accurately identify and survey very small scale kiln sites in busy urban settings like Modena, Ostia, Pompeii and Verona (Martelli 2013a: 260-71; Peña and McCallum 2009a; 2009b), allowing them to better understand how these smaller businesses competed against the provinces' larger industrial kiln sites (Martelli (2013a: 260, citing Stoppioni 1993; Cuomo di Caprio 2007; Olcese 2012). Overall the production of pipeclay objects across the Continent was relatively large in scale and no doubt contributed to their widespread distribution, consumption and use by several different provincial communities.

Pipeclay objects found in Britain and on the Continent were made in production centres located in Central Gaul, with the largest centres at Vichy, Champ Lary, La Forêt and Moulins in the Allier Valley region of central France (Tudot 1860; Esmonnot 1856-8; Bertrand 1863-4; Jenkins 1977: 17-32) in the first and second centuries AD, where numerous moulds, discarded

wasters and finished products have been found (Figs. 4.1-2). A second substantial industry also developed in the Rhine-Moselle region between the first and the fourth century. The largest and most influential of the production centres in this particular region were the two at Cologne and Trier (Fig. 4.3). Boekel (1987: 203-13, who provides a useful summary of all of the Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle production sites) suggests that production might also have occurred at several other, variously sized sites as well, including Worms, Mainz, Nida-Hedderheim and Frankfurt.

Typological and stylistic analysis have shown that most of the pipeclay objects in Britain were made in the Allier Valley in central France (see Chapter 5). Many types have identical or broadly similar parallels, moulds and wasters in this region, many of which are contextually dated to the first and second centuries (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 91-405; Gonzenbach 1995: 85-285). A small group of figurines and masks was produced in the Rhine-Moselle region between the first and third centuries given the distributions of similar contextually dated parallels and wasters in and around this particular region (e.g. Rüger 1980: 37-118; Boekel 1987 – see Beenhouwer 2005: 337-803 for an extensive catalogue of pipeclay forms and types from both of these two regions). Details about when and where the pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks, and their various types, were produced are provided in Appendix 1 along with lists of any parallel objects from the Continent.

The lack of detail on site plans from what were mainly the antiquarian excavations of these sites makes it hard to tell what the ceramic figurine workshops in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region looked like exactly, and if they differed from one another in any way. The general impression given by existing reports and the overall distribution of moulds and discarded products is that most pipeclay objects were made at centres that consisted of several workshops and kiln structures. Smaller scale urban and rural production as evidenced by excavations (e.g. Höpken 2005, including an early Roman pottery site in the Oppidum

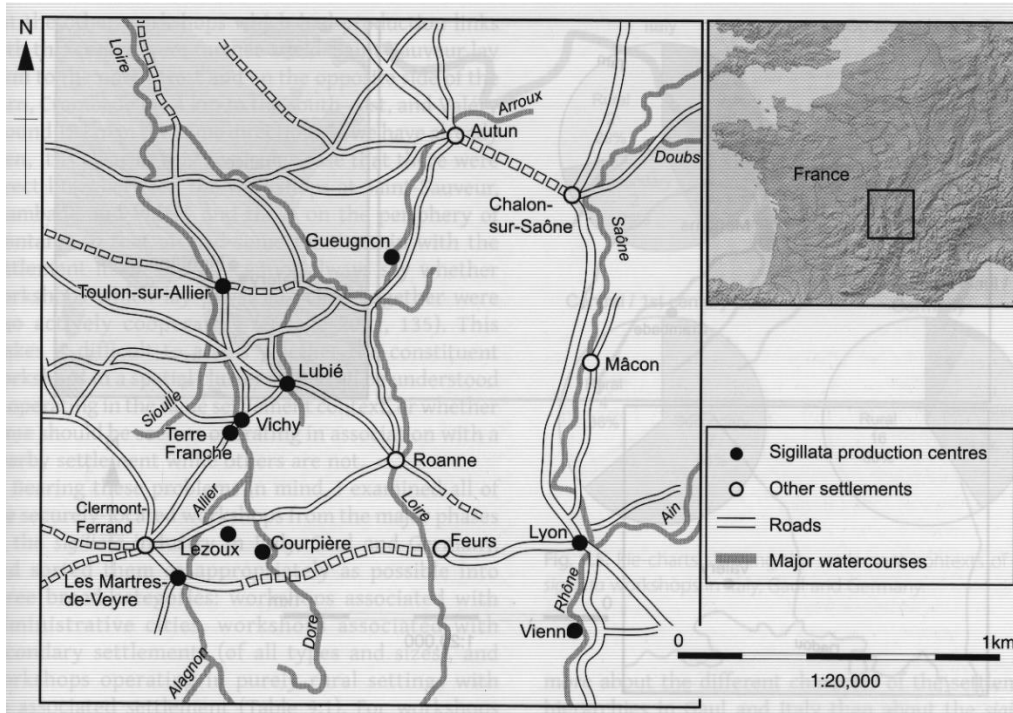


Fig. 4. 1. Samian production centres in Central France, after Goodman 2013: 125, fig. 9.3, as well as many sites where pipeclay production is evidenced.

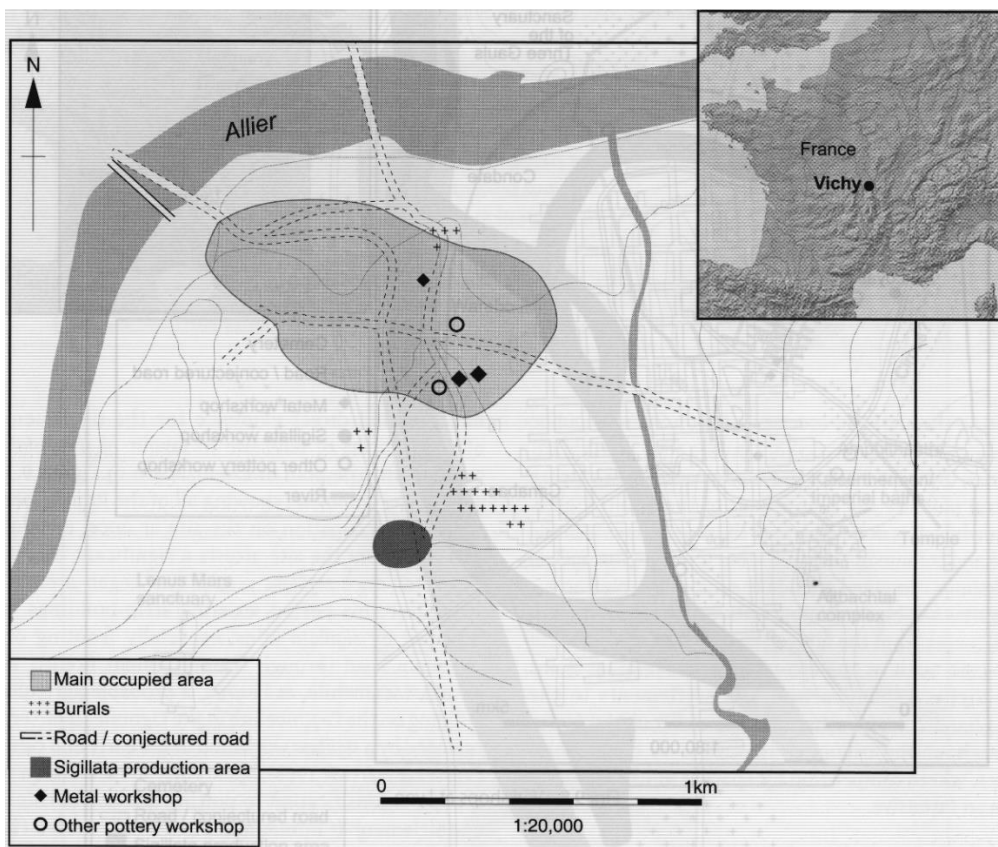
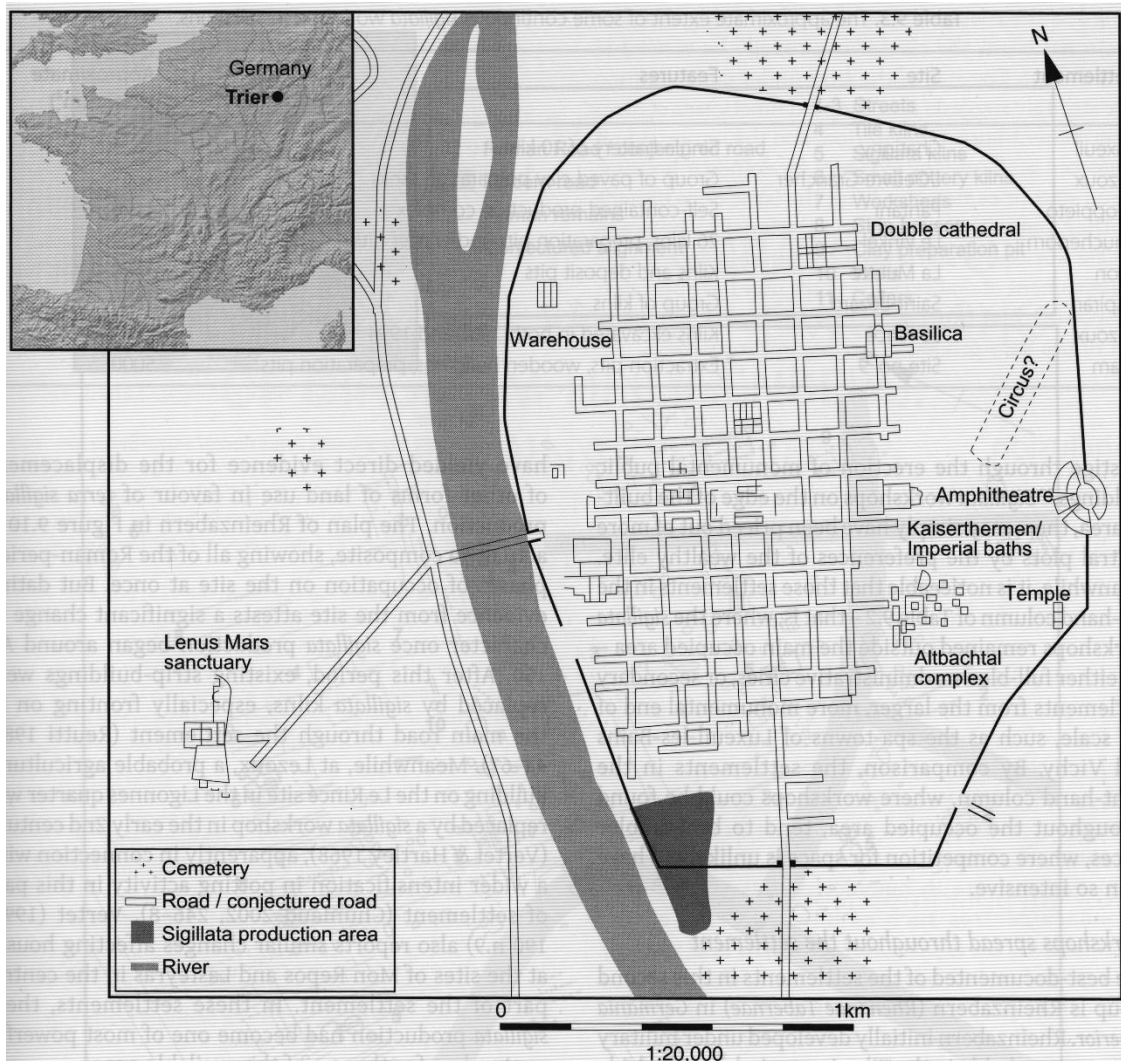


Fig. 4. 2. General ceramic production region at Vichy, after Goodman 2013: 131, fig. 9.7.



*Fig. 4. 3. Ceramic workshop locations at Trier, after Goodman 2013: 133, fig. 9.9, where some pipeclay objects were also produced.*

Ubiorum, Cologne (Carroll 2005)) is also possible, but this appears to have been less common for the pipeclay industry overall. Many factors influenced the development of each regional centre of pipeclay production but in general it seemed to develop where other forms of local pottery were already being produced (i.e. other wares and sometimes possibly samian Goodman 2013: 125). In general, however, the distributions of their workshops suggests that pipeclay and samian production was probably not closely related, if at all. In Gaul, as well as in the Rhine-Moselle region, the development of most pottery and pipeclay production centres incorporating kilns and workshops occurred on the peripheries of existing settlements.

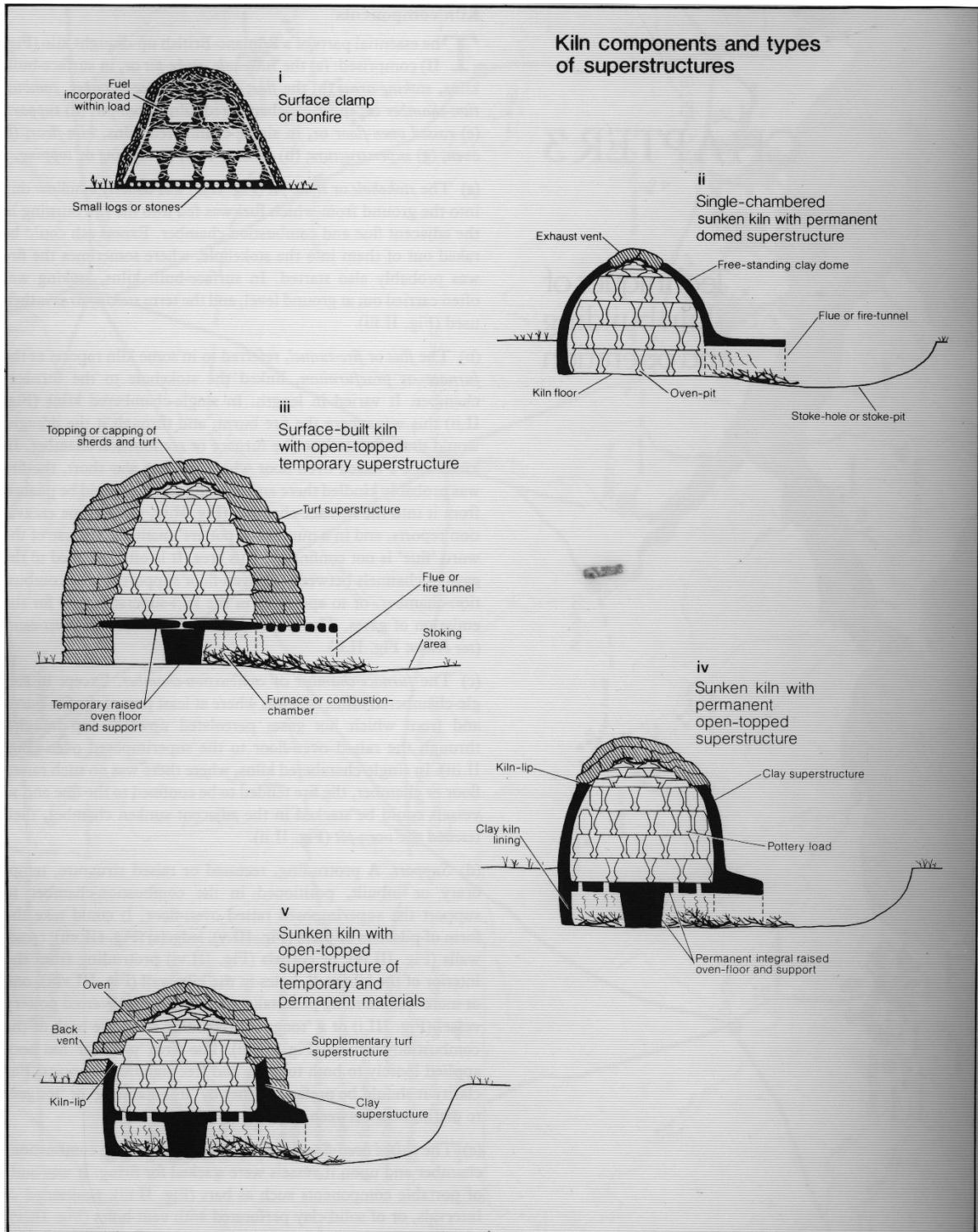


Fig. 4. 4. Plans of kiln structures, after Swan 1984: 30, fig. II.

In this region, this was enhanced by an excellent transportation network of roads and rivers connecting the various workshops of the region to one another and the wider world. Good

transportation links also existed for the pottery industry in the Rhine-Moselle region but this was arguably more a mix of large and small-scale urban workshops (e.g. Goodman 2013).

While surviving products, moulds and wasters from numerous kiln sites throughout the Allier Valley and the Rhine-Moselle region attest that that pipeclay objects were usually made and fired alongside other ceramic objects, there is little direct evidence for – and still much debate about – whether any specific production sites specialised in the making of pipeclay objects alone (see Boekel 1987: 203-11). What is clear from these kiln sites, however, is that pipeclay objects were usually fired in similar circular or rectangular up-draught kilns as the ones that are found in Britain (Fig. 4.4; Peacock 1982: 67-73; Swan 1984: 29-42; Jenkins 1977: 16). These kilns usually measure between one and three metres in diameter and were typically formed of two sections. The lower substructure housed the furnace or fire pit with an open flue or fire tunnel providing the necessary oxygen as well as access for stoking the flames; this was usually situated below ground level although ground level furnaces were not uncommon (Jenkins 1977: 16-7). Inside furnace supports held up a flat perforated floor that separated the flames, but not the heat, from the oven cavity above. It was within this upper compartment that goods ready for firing were stacked ensuring that air could circulate around them freely, with pre-baked clay stackers, bricks and discarded pieces of pottery used to cover gaps and level layers (Swan 1984: 40). Although Figure 4.4. only shows pots stacked into these kilns, it is possible that quite a few small pipeclay objects could have been fired all at once in one go in their own separate firings from time to time in-between firings of other pots, but it is also easy to imagine that these smaller pipeclay figurines and shrines might have been fired with other wares, perhaps filling the smaller gaps between the larger stacked circular pots. A domed roof superstructure – a temporary, freestanding structure made of turves, straw and clay supported by branches (e.g. Corder 1957: 14, fig. 3) with a ventilation hole in the ceiling - sealed the kiln ready for firing.



Modern reconstructions of kilns have shown that despite their complicated design, they were, in fact, not that efficient. The inability to accurately measure and sustain temperatures required for certain qualities in the finished products would have led to many failed firings and wasters – the likes of which are often found discarded in large piles on such sites. Maintaining kilns was also a constant task with the perpetual loading and unloading of goods and constant repairs of the structure necessary to maximise the chances of a successful firing. In this respect, more permanent clay superstructures were probably preferred to the less durable turf and straw superstructures that were often used (Peacock 1982: 72-3; Swan 1984: 34-6).

### **Pipeclay Production in Britain?**

At present there is no evidence that pipeclay objects were made in Britain despite the extensive regional ceramic production that occurred in the province (see Tyers 1996 for an overview of all Roman pottery types and production sites in Britain). Evidence of similar mould-made production methods is known from Britain but it is rare. The lamp factories at Colchester and London, for instance, are only indicated by the relatively small number of open lamp, picture lamp and Firmalampen moulds at each of these sites (Hull 1963; Bailey 1976; Eckardt 2002a: 343-9; Eckardt 2002b: 77-9), while there is also some evidence of mould-made samian production at Colchester (Hull 1963, Rodwell 1982). However, all of these production centres and kilns used local clays rather than the pipeclay that was usually used to produce our figurines, shrines and animal vessels that is not widely available in Britain, and seemingly produced few, if any, figurines, even in local clays. Two pipeclay figurines of Apollo (no. 235) and Mars (no. 240) do come from small kiln sites in Bedford, Bedfordshire, and Mucking, Essex, respectively (Wilson & Wright 1969: 224; Jenkins 1977: 364-6). However, both of these figurines are of styles that are typically associated with production in the Rhine-Moselle region and are made of yellowish-white fabrics that correspondingly identifies them as imports that

are distinctly different to the greyer, more friable, local pottery wares that were produced at these two Romano-British sites. As such, the production of figurines generally does not appear to have been a priority for many workshops and kilns in Britain and suggests that demand for these objects in the province was insufficient to justify building local kilns to produce them and that this demand was adequately served by the relatively low quantities of imported Continental goods instead.

### **Pipeclay Manufacturing Techniques**

Clay moulds were used to make most of the pipeclay objects from Gaul found in Britain and across the Continent (Higgins 1976; Boekel 1987: 217-21). The use of plaster moulds was more common in the Rhine-Moselle region (Boekel 1987: 221-30, especially 226-30) – possibly as a quicker and more cost-effective method of production – but interestingly none of the objects from this region I have seen from Britain has any of the small raised blisters or globules that typically formed on seams or in recesses when wet clay filled air pockets trapped inside the plaster as it was mixed and poured into a mould (*ibid*: 226-7). This does not mean that plaster moulds were not used to make some of the pipeclay objects that have been found in Britain - plenty of other pipeclay objects with these indicators exist across the Continent despite the moulds themselves usually not surviving in the archaeological record – but it might mean that coroplasts took a little bit more time and care to craft plaster moulds that would result in unblemished products, and that this was especially the case for rarer types.

To create a figurine, bust, shrine or animal vessel, cast wet clay was pressed into the interior of prepared moulds (e.g. the front and back; Fig 4.5), which were pre-coated with silica or clay slip; the moulds themselves were made by pressing clay around an existing archetype such as an existing figurine (see Higgins 1976: 105-8). The edges of the wet clay were then



*Fig. 4. 5. Figurine moulds from kiln sites in the Allier Valley, France. From left to right: Venus from Moulins (Rovier-Jeanlin 1972, no. 2); a couple embracing from Vichy (Gonzenbach 1995, Tafel 139.4); Dea Nutrix from Toulon-sur-Allier (Rovier-Jeanlin 1972, no. 306); and a pigeon from Moulins (Rovier-Jeanlin 1972, no. 1147).*

flattened onto the edges of the mould, scored and brushed with slip before the two halves were aligned and secured together to form a hollow cast inside the mould. Masks were made by pressing clay into just one mould and cutting out eyes, nose and mouth holes (Boekel 1987: 807). Drying casts to a leather-hard state caused them to shrink, allowing their removal from moulds. At this stage casts were touched-up by hand to remove any excess clay, smooth the edges and remove fingerprints from the exterior. Any separately moulded bases and appendages were then applied and sometimes a ventilation hole cut into the cast (e.g. by the buttocks of Venus or in the side of the wickerwork chair on Dea Nutrix figurines) that allowed hot air to escape during firing and reduced anomalies in the finished piece. Finished casts were kiln fired at a temperature between 900 and 1000 degrees centigrade. After the object had cooled, some objects were occasionally decorated using paints or lead-based glazes, but these finishes rarely survive.

It is hard to tell exactly how many moulds were in use for each type of figurine, bust, animal vessel and mask but their distributions generally suggest that multiple moulds were in

use for the more widely produced common types, and fewer for rarer types often only made in a few workshops (see the distribution map of Thorn-Puller moulds below for an example of this). Interestingly there is usually little variation between individual examples of the same object type in terms of general depiction and decoration, but there can often be more variation between the size and overall of individual objects – especially amongst common types. This probably means that multiple moulds of common types were in use in several different workshops and were probably being replaced on a more regular basis, while some of the rarer types were probably made in fewer locations less often using fewer moulds.

Made using clay or plaster moulds that produced a hollow cast, pipeclay objects were made slightly differently to figurines of metal that were created by pouring liquid metal into a sealed clay or plaster mould that resulted in a solid finished product without hollow cavities. These casting techniques are not only different because of the properties of each material that affected how each one needed to be treated and used to make something, but also probably because of the different economic value that each material had for producers and consumers. On one hand, a greater volume of more valuable metal was needed to make solid figurines that were thus probably more expensive to produce and purchase. On the other hand, producing a hollow pipeclay figurine, for example, only needed a relatively small amount of what was in contrast quite a cheap and readily available material in the areas of central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region they were made, which probably made them cheaper to make and buy. However, their exclusive availability from these regions should not be overlooked and may have given them greater cultural value. Overall then, pipeclay figurines were indeed probably less valuable than metal figurines in the economic sense of production and trade, and this may very well be related to the different wealth and social status of the people that bought and used them. However, at the same time it should also be remembered that each material and the objects made from them probably had different uses and social values for the people of Roman

Britain, and it is this topic that will be further explored and discussed in more detail throughout the rest of this thesis.

Although several workshops probably made some pipeclay products such as figurines in large batches, the varying size and quality of the finds in Britain suggest that they were imported in smaller quantities. Few of the objects from Britain are identical, suggesting that only a small proportion of any given batch was sent to the province. Greater variation within the Venus figurine group suggests that mould copying of this popular design was more common within or between workshops than the less popular types (e.g. Dea Nutrix, Minerva, single horses, dogs). Evidence of *surmoulage* (the wear and degeneration of moulds over time that affected the quality and appearance of cast figurines - effects that were compounded when existing figurines were used to make 'copy-cat' moulds (Nicholls 1952; Muller 1994; Martelli 2013b: 110)) has only been observed on some British finds but may well have been a factor that affected some of the objects that are more crude and unrefined in their appearance.

For example, two Venus figurines from St. Martin's le Grand (no. 100) and Copthall Court (no. 173) made of similarly coloured fabric are also similar in design but the one from St. Martin's le Grand is smaller. Unfortunately, neither of these finds are from dated contexts, but the fact that copied moulds taken from figurines will get progressively smaller because of *surmoulage* and clay shrinkage may suggest that the figurine from St. Martin's le Grand was probably made after the Copthall Court figurine and from a mould that may well have been copied from a figurine in the earlier batch. The similar fabric colour of the two figurines might also suggest that this occurred in the same workshop, or in two different workshops located close to one other that used clay from the same clay pit and produced similar designs. However, it is also possible that they were made in identical but different moulds given that it is a common type with several moulds that have been found widely across central France.

Some pipeclay objects were clearly made in the same moulds, probably at the same time. The most obvious example of this is the group of unguent animal vessels from the first century Colchester Child's Grave which includes an identical pair of crouching lions (nos. 315-6), three crouching hares (nos. 312-4) and three near identical monkeys (nos. 317-9), alongside a boar (no. 321) and an ibex (no. 320), that are made out of a similar fabric. Most of the other pipeclay objects from Britain appear to have been made in separate batches, even if they were made using the same mould. A good example of this are the two Venus figurines from Austin Friars (no. 446) and One Poultry (no. 455) in London (Fig. 4.6). Both are identical in design and size but the slightly blurry design on the figurine from Austin Friars suggests that it was made when the mould was more worn. The variation in fabric colour also suggests that the One Poultry figurine could have been part of an earlier batch (see below for more about fabric colour).



*Fig. 4. 6. Venus figurines from One Poultry (no. 455) and Austin Friars (no. 446), London, both of which appear to be made from the same mould but probably in different batches.*

## Identifying Production Centres and Workshop Locations

Identifying where pipeclay objects were produced and imported from can be a difficult task but it is possible to do this for many of the British finds (see Appendix 1 and the map illustrating the supply of types from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region at the end of this chapter (Fig. 4.20; see also Figs. 4.7 and 4.8)). The Continental distributions of identical parallels, whether archetypes, moulds or wasters, is perhaps the best way to identify the provenance of pipeclay types. Most of the pipeclay objects in Britain have either exact parallels on the Continent meaning that they can at least be associated with production in Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle, if not always down to the level of individual workshops. Types with provincial distributions indicative of Gaulish production include most of the Venus and all the Dea Nutrix figurines (two Venus figurines were possibly made in the Rhine-Moselle based on their hairstyles (nos. 73 and 797), so most of the other Venus figurines from Britain are probably of Gaulish origin), and all of the shrines (*aediculae*) and unguent animal vessels. Pipeclay types with exact parallels with distributions suggestive of manufacture in the Rhine-Moselle region include the Bacchus head from Flitwick, Bedfordshire (no. 236), the Type 6 Venus with Amor from York (no. 127) and the Mars figurine (no. 240) from Mucking, Essex.

Pipeclay types without identical Continental parallels can occasionally be attributed a production region on stylistic grounds (for example, the general morphological form (i.e. body shape, stance and the position of limbs and appendages) as well as the decorative designs of hairstyles, garments, and some animal parts - such as wings - seen on the objects from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region are distinctly different - see Appendix 1 for details between types from different regions) or broadly similar parallels. This is not always as accurate a method as using typological distributions, but in general the different stylistic traits evident between, say, the figurines made in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region does at least make it possible to attribute many unparalleled objects to one of these two areas. For example, figurines



*Fig. 4. 7. A selection of Gaulish types. Top left to bottom right: Venus, Dea Nutrix, Minerva, a hen, a dog, the Two-Horned Bull, Woman Type 2, Risus and the Long-Haired Boy.*





*Fig. 4. 8. A selection of Rhine-Moselle types. Top left to bottom right: Venus and Amor, Cybele, Juno, Luna, Mars, Matrona, Cloaked Figure, Boar and Mask*

stylistically identified as made in Central Gaul include the Type 5 Venus figurine from London (no. 133) and Brougham, Cumbria (no. 816), the depictions of Diana (nos. 220-1), the lizard (no. 539) and the panther (no. 541), all from London, the doves from London (no. 522) and Exeter (no. 590), and the unique depiction of Fortuna (no. 920) from York. Figurines stylistically attributed to Rhine-Moselle production include the Type 4 Venus from St. Osyth, Essex (no. 131), and the boar from Burnswark, Scotland (no. 847).

Identifying more specific production sites based on the Continental distribution of moulds and wasters is a difficult task, and can only occasionally be done to the level of individual or groups of workshops. This approach can provenance a number of the pipeclay figurine types we see in Britain but it is more difficult for common types like Venus and Dea Nutrix (and their various sub-types) that were evidently produced in multiple locations, as well as, obviously, those types with few or no Continental parallels. Factors like mould copying also affect the reliability of this method but in certain cases it can accurately pinpoint where a figurine type was manufactured and exported from. Chemical analysis of the fabrics of figurines and other pipeclay objects could provide a more detailed picture by identifying more accurately where each form and type was made down to the level of individual workshops or the clay pits used. The problem is that this method is not only destructive but is also known to provide inconsistent results (e.g. Lahanier & Rouvier-Jeanlin 1977; Lahanier *et al.* 1990; also Hunt & Speakman 2015 for the problems of applying such techniques to ceramics in general), meaning that on this occasion such methods have not been carried out on the British assemblage. Instead it is better to look for pipeclay types with Continental parallels, whether in the form of moulds, wasters or figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks that are associated with particular workshops.

Figurines of *Spinario* (the Thorn-Puller) are one of the better examples of how this can be done. Four such figurines are known in Britain (Fig. 4.9), while they also have a significant

distribution in a number of Continental provinces. The distribution of their moulds and wasters (Fig. 4.10), however, strongly suggests that their production was mainly centred in and around Champ-Lary in Toulon-sur-Allier, France (Jenkins 1978: 157). Other Gaulish object types in Britain with recognised provenances include the 21 animal vessels that were only made in workshops at Gannat, Saint-Rémy-en-Rollat and Vichy in the first century (Boekel 1987: 776-7; Gonzenbach 1995, 314-18), and the first century Type 7 *Vénus-à-Gaine* figurine that comes from either Vichy, Rezé or Tréguennec, France (Jenkins 1969a: 318-9, citing Coutil 1899). Another figurine, this time the depiction of Fortuna from York (no. 920), may have been made at Saint-Pourçain-sur-Besbre or Toulon judging by similar finds from both of these production sites (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 188-9, nos. 427-32; Beenhouwer 2005: 357, Serie 196).

A number of figurines in Britain are exclusive to workshops in the Rhine-Moselle region. For instance, the *Matrona* figurine at Arrington, Cambridgeshire (no. 708), as well as two similar heads from Colchester (no. 59) and Corbridge (no. 867), are part of a well-known group of figurines that were only made in Bonn and Cologne (Fig. 4.11; Green 1989: fig. 85; 1993: 194). The clothing and dress of the figurine from Arrington indicates that it is from Cologne and that she is dressed in Ubian costume, probably making her one of the local Ubian ancestor goddesses, of which there were many versions depending on clan and family; hence the figurine from Corbridge with slightly different dress might belong to a different family or clan. This costume would have been recognisable to some people in Britain, meaning that these figurines may have belonged to travelling soldiers, merchants or migrants, and a way that they displayed and affirmed their cultural and familial roots in what was a foreign province - perhaps even in a personal and sentimental way. The *Bacchus* head (no. 236) at Ruxox Farm, Bedfordshire was also probably made in Cologne where there is a small group of identical objects from the second century (Jenkins 1977: 212, 366, 485). Other figurine types unique to

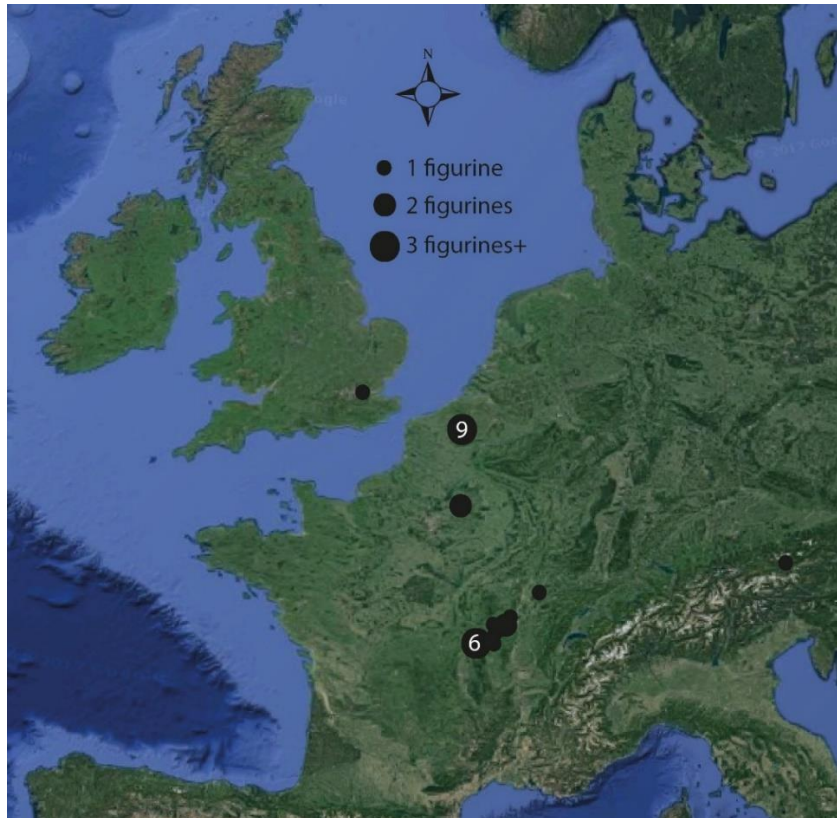


Fig. 4. 9. Distribution of Thorn-Puller figurines in Britain and Europe.

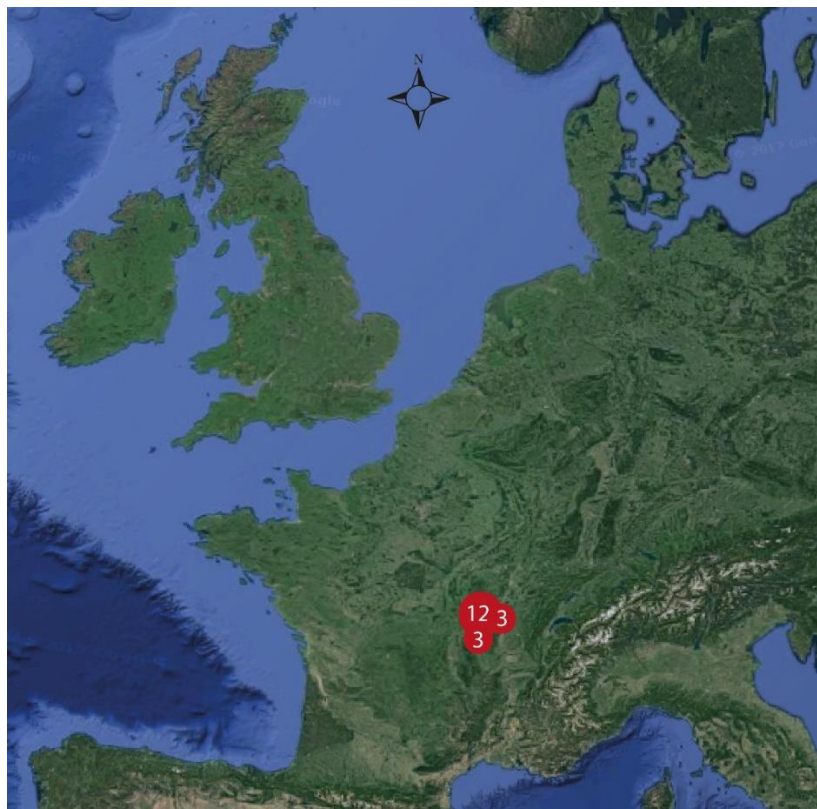


Fig. 4. 10. Distribution of Thorn-Puller moulds in Central Gaul.



*Fig. 4. 11. Distribution of Matronae figurines in Britain and Europe.*

Rhine-Moselle workshops are the second century Seated Mother-Goddess/Female Figure with Dog (no. 62) with moulds from Bertrich near Trier (Jenkins 1956: 192; Boekel 1987: 440-6), and the figurine of Luna Lucifera (no. 221) from London that was probably made in Cologne where there are similar moulds of this type and comparable bronze versions (Jenkins 1978: 157; e.g. Boekel 1987: 380).

That nearly all of the common deity, animal and human figurine types in Britain derive from Central Gaul implies that direct trade with workshops in this region began in the first century and grew into the second century. Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines (in their various types) are the most obvious examples but most depictions of Minerva, horses, women busts,

dogs and cockerels, as well as less common and rarer types clearly originate from Central Gaulish workshops as well. Some of this trade was probably organised by the Roman state or merchants as part of larger trade agreements regarding samian and other wares, but rarer types suggest that individual selection and small-scale trade were also important ways in which figurines, and probably other pipeclay objects, were supplied to Britain. The smaller number of rare figurine types that derive from Rhine-Moselle region-based workshops may have been part of formal or, more likely, informal, trading arrangements. As well as the finds mentioned above, this group also includes the other seated and standing Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures (nos. 59-63), Cybele (no. 860), both the Juno figurines (nos. 518, 746), the Double Horse (no. 292), the Cloaked Figure (no. 712), the Boy with Cucullus (no. 260) and the Draped Boy (no. 254), as well as the theatrical masks (nos. 137, 766, 769-71, 824, 952).

### **Fabric Analysis**

Assessing fabric colour is another way that can help attribute provenance but is an approach not without its problems. Many Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle workshops made pipeclay objects out of similarly coloured but non-identical clays (Fig. 4.12) which are very hard to differentiate visually without microscopic and chemical analysis. This is especially problematic when an object, like a fragment, is not identifiable stylistically. Occasionally, the colour of a fabric can be a strong indicator of where it was made. For example, although few figurines from Britain are made of clays other than the common yellowish-white types typically used in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region, Venus no. 491, made of grey clay, could be from the Gironde region, while the red clay of Minerva no. 230 noted by Jenkins (1977: 359, no. 9) indicates Trier as a possible origin, just like the small base and feet (no. 751) from Angel Court, London. Overall though, these colours do not feature strongly in the British collection and also make up only a small proportion of Continental finds.



*Fig. 4. 12. Figurine fabric colours. Left to right: white, yellowish-white, yellowish-brown, brown and grey.*

Without more accurate chemical analysis, a rudimentary analysis quantifying the fabric colour of figurine types produced in the same region can still highlight some interesting dynamics regarding workshop organisation in these areas. For the purposes of this study only figurines I have seen or those with a colour photograph clearly recording the fabric colour have been included. The analysis has been simplified somewhat because slightly different shades of similarly coloured clay that may come from different batches of clay from the same pit or pits located nearby have been combined. It can also be hard to distinguish between colours like yellowish-white and yellowish-brown, while sometimes it can also be difficult to differentiate clay colour from darker deposition residue which can make white and lighter yellowish clays look a darker yellowish-brown colour, or the grey colour of burnt clay. Wear on figurines can also affect the perception of fabric colour, and many of the British finds are heavily worn.

The first part of this analysis quantifies the fabric colours of all available figurine types: deities (312 figurines in total), animals (21) and humans (9), from Britain. The second part analyses the fabric colour of some identical types produced in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region to provide an even more detailed impression of workshop organisation in these areas. Due to the lack of data for most pipeclay types, this study focusses on the Venus figurines

produced in both Gaul (total=208) and the Rhine-Moselle region (total= 4), and the Dea Nutrix figurines that were made exclusively in Central Gaul (t=74). In each case the fabric colours of each type (e.g. Venus Types 1-9; Dea Nutrix Types 1-2) have been quantified. Where possible the fabric colours of certain sub-types (i.e. Venus garments) have also been quantified but in general the lack of data at this level makes analysing them in any meaningful way very difficult.

The figures that follow generally show that figurines in Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region were made of different coloured clays. It is unlikely that one fabric colour represents the output of a single workshop or just one group of workshops; indeed, even the same producer might have sourced their clay from multiple locations while different producers probably sourced some of their clay from the same pits as their neighbours within each region. Varied colouration does, however, suggest that the same (or similar) clays were probably used to make many different figurine types and that this included a mix of deity, animal and human forms.

In Figure 4.13 it is only possible to glean anything meaningful from the two largest groups. For instance, white clay is dominant for Venus figurines, with smaller proportions of yellowish-white, yellowish-brown, brown and grey clays. This compares to the more mixed proportion of white, yellowish-white, yellowish-brown and brown clays of the Dea Nutrix figurines. White clay is also only seen in Gaul, while the yellowish-white colour also appears to be strongly associated with the province.

Figures 4. 14 and 4.15 show a more mixed picture for animal and human types, although the numbers of these are much smaller. White and yellowish-white are again the most common colours for Gaulish products, but these colours hardly feature among the human types where the colours are relatively evenly spread, with marginally more Gaulish types that are yellowish-brown in colour. The important point here however is that while the fabric colours of the white



horse, white hen, yellowish-brown boar and Type 4 woman bust all visually suggest that they were made in Gaul, they are in fact all stylistically attributed to production in the Rhine-Moselle region where the colour of the clays look very similar to those from Central Gaul.

Consequently, a visual assessment of clay colour is not in itself a good indicator of a find's provenance and is only really useful once we know for certain where a figurine type came from through an assessment of its style. Once we know this and produce charts like those discussed here, we can start to make some suggestions about what they might mean, like the possibility that similarly coloured types from the same region might have been made as part of the same batch, or successive batches, using clay from the same pit. Likewise, identical types made of different coloured clays were probably made in different workshops sourcing clay from different pits.

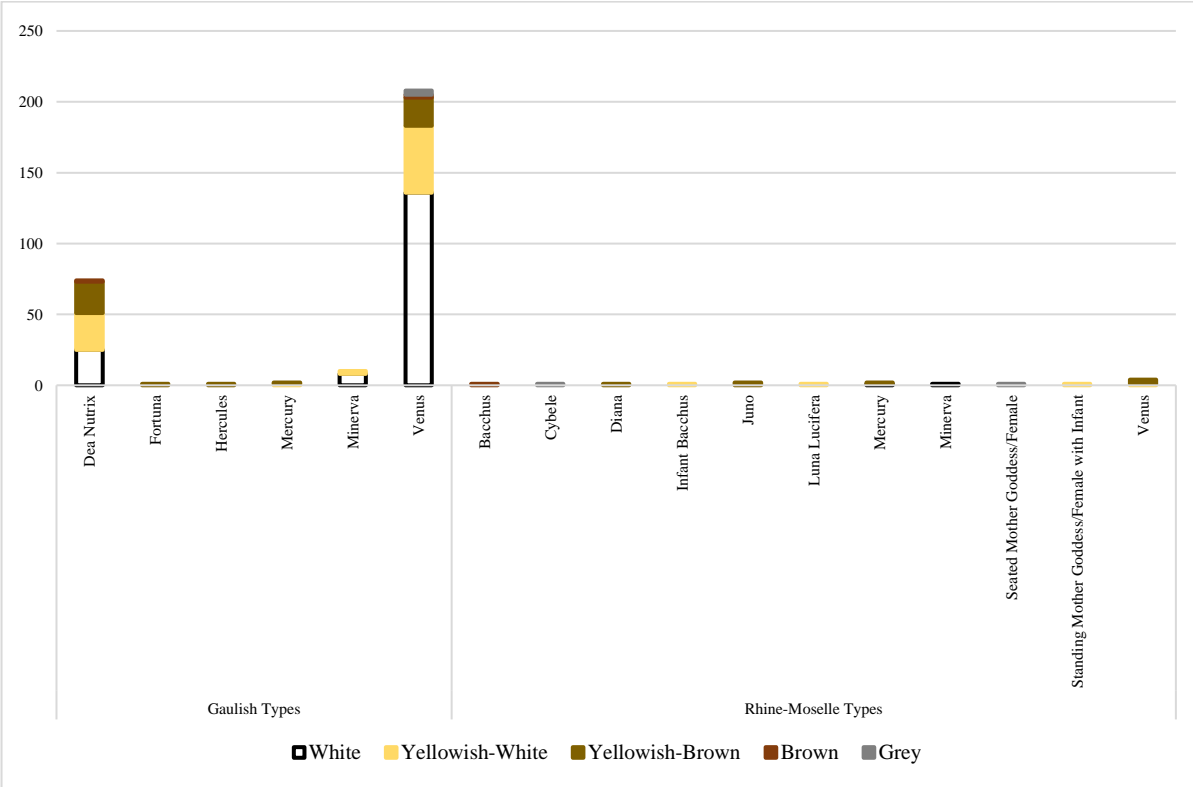


Fig. 4. 13. Fabric colours of deity types in Britain (t=312).

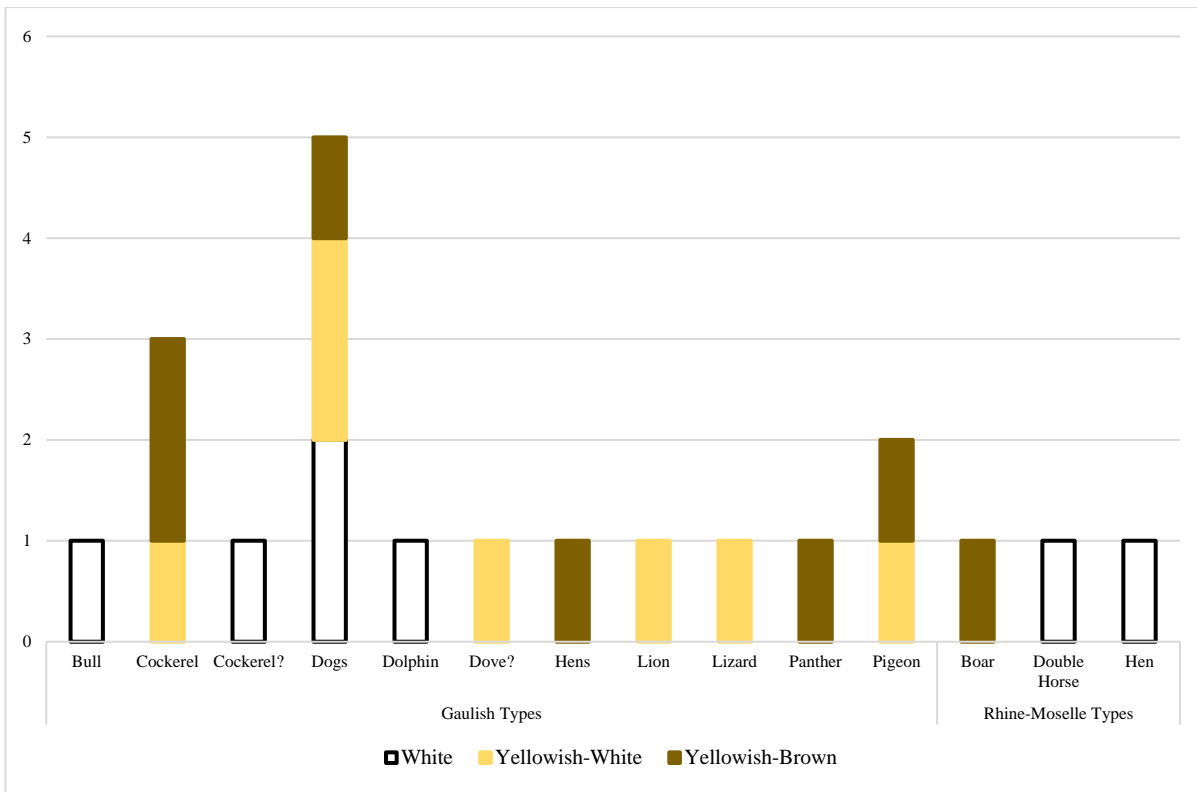


Fig. 4. 14. Fabric colours of animal types in Britain (t=21).

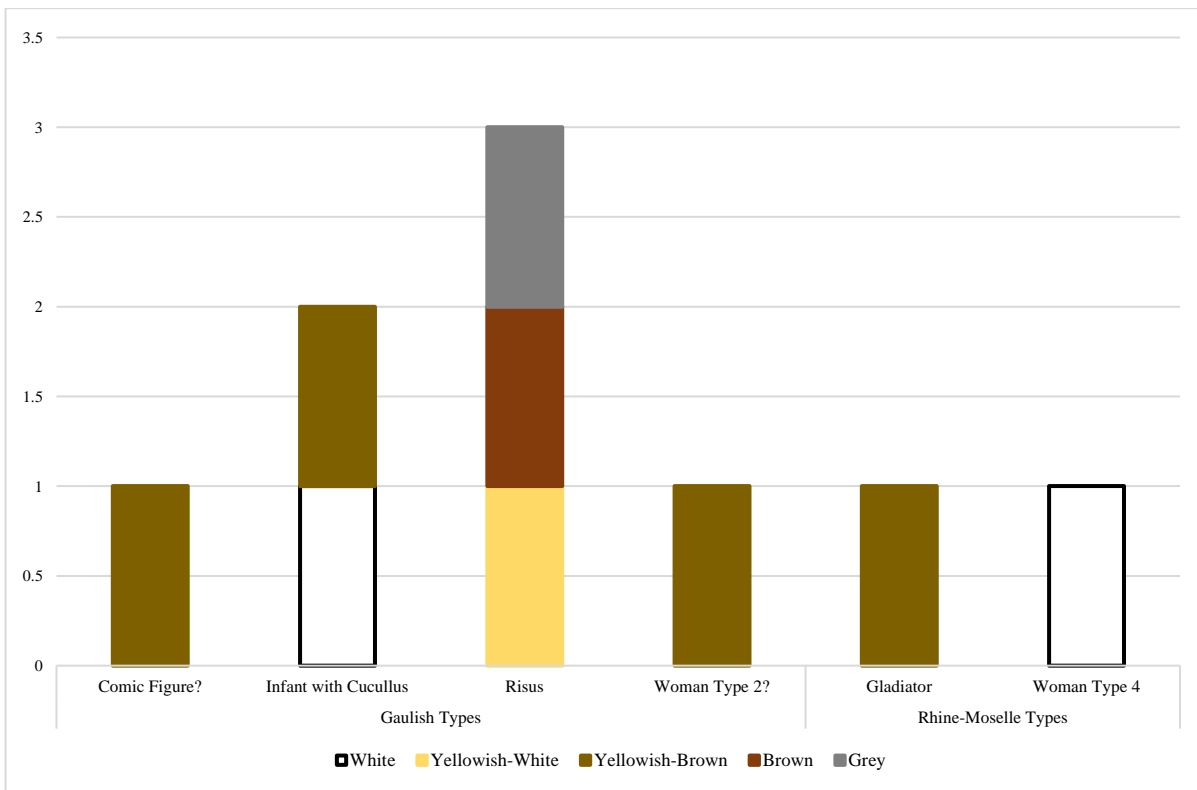


Fig. 4. 15. Fabric colours of human types in Britain (t=9).

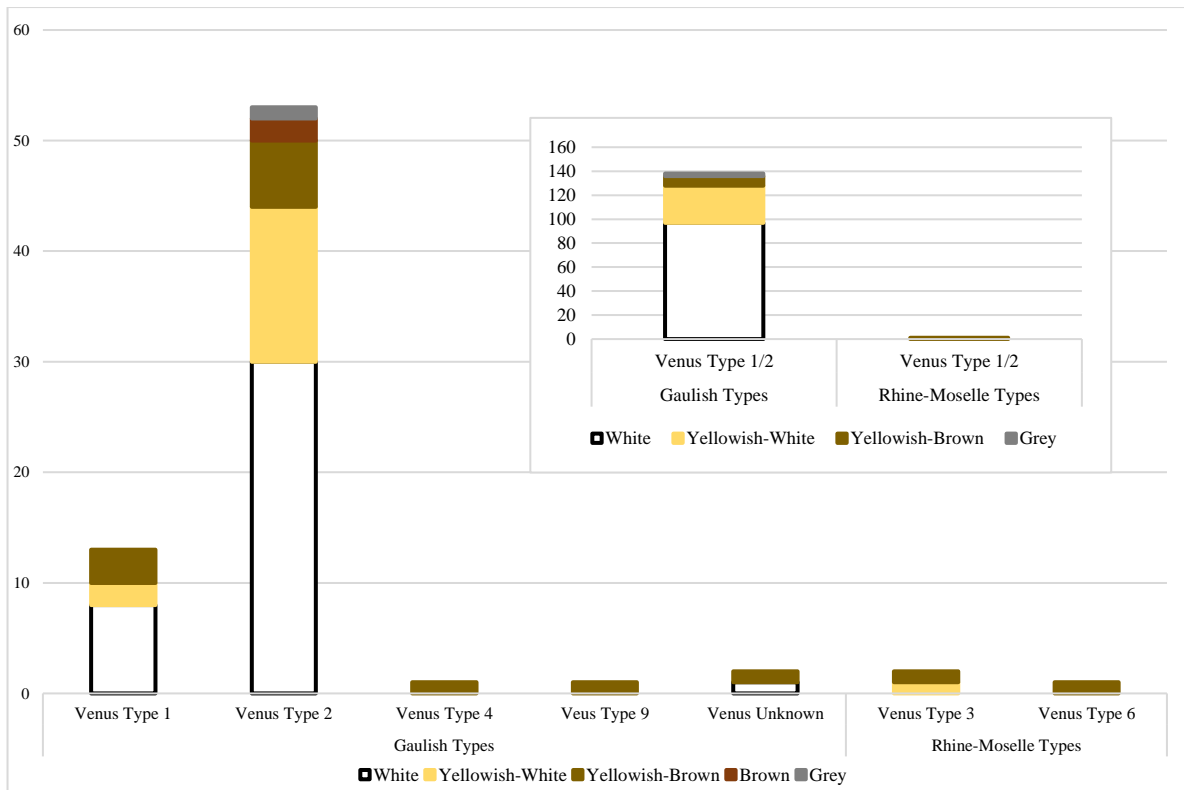


Fig. 4. 16. Fabric colours of Venus types in Britain (t=208).

A similar pattern of batch production is likewise demonstrated by the breakdown of fabric colours associated with Venus types (Fig. 4.16) whereby the most common Type 1 and 2 figurines appear in more colours than all of the rarer types. Again, white clay is most strongly associated with Type 1 and Type 2 Venus figurines made in Gaul, the remainder of which are also quite varied in their fabric colour. Meanwhile, the Rhine-Moselle region products are yellowish-white or yellowish-brown in colour only. This could simply mean that common Gaulish Venus figurines were produced in more workshops and batches than the rarer types made in this area or the Rhine-Moselle region. Yet there is always the possibility that this could also mean that some might not actually be from Gaul at all – especially any fragments without defining characteristics that are, by and large, typically classified as such.

The likelihood that identical figurine types were produced *en-masse* in multiple batches or different workshops compared to the limited scale of rare types can be further evidenced by

analysing the fabric colours of Venus figurines with different garment designs (i.e. Venus sub-types ( $t=53$ )). The fabric colours of the small number of finds in most groups illustrated in Figure 4.17 are probably meaningless, but again, white is strongly associated with many types, all of which are Gaulish in style. The most interesting types are Garments G and I. These are two subtly different designs but each has a different proportion of finds in white, yellowish-white and yellowish-brown clays, with Garment G also having a small number of finds made of brown and grey clays. This could mean that these two popular types were made in multiple batches, possibly by the same workshop using different clays, or, more likely, that several different workshops were making them. This might also imply that Venus sub-types in few colours (i.e. A, B, C, D, H, K and M) were only produced in a small number of batches or in a small number of workshops, and were probably made for a much shorter period of time.

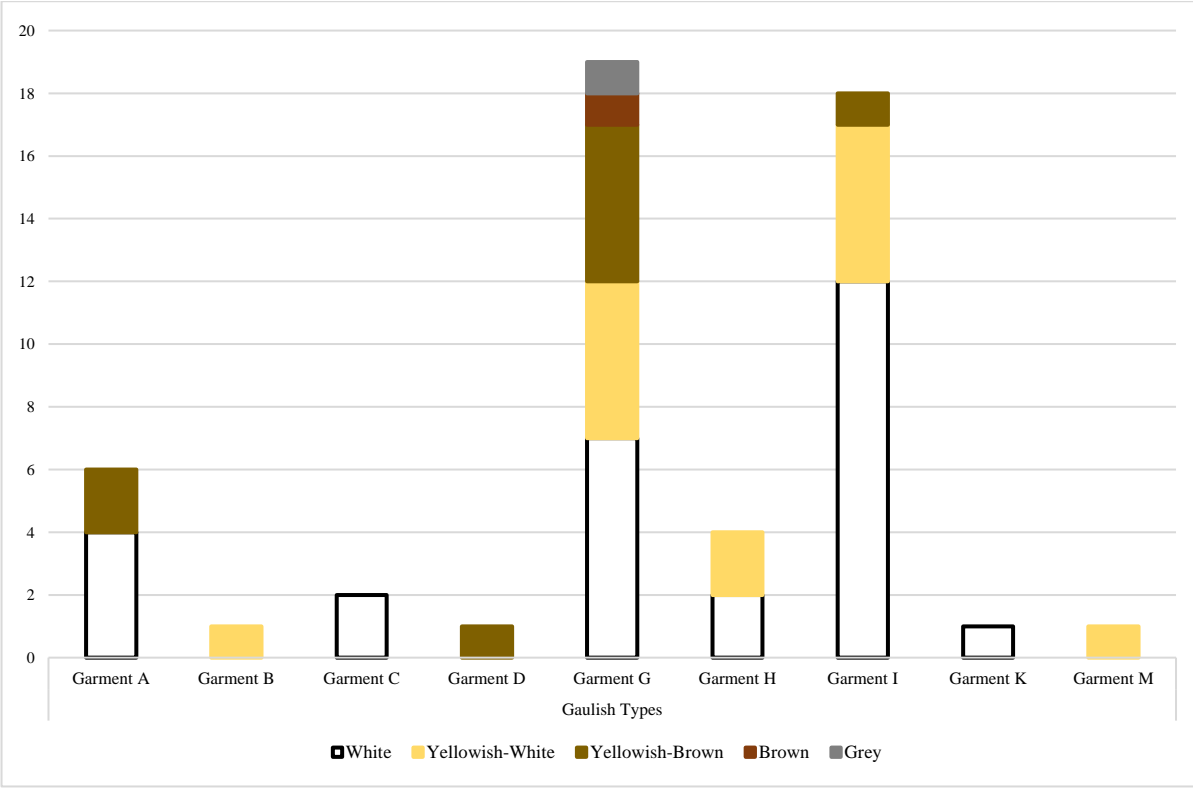
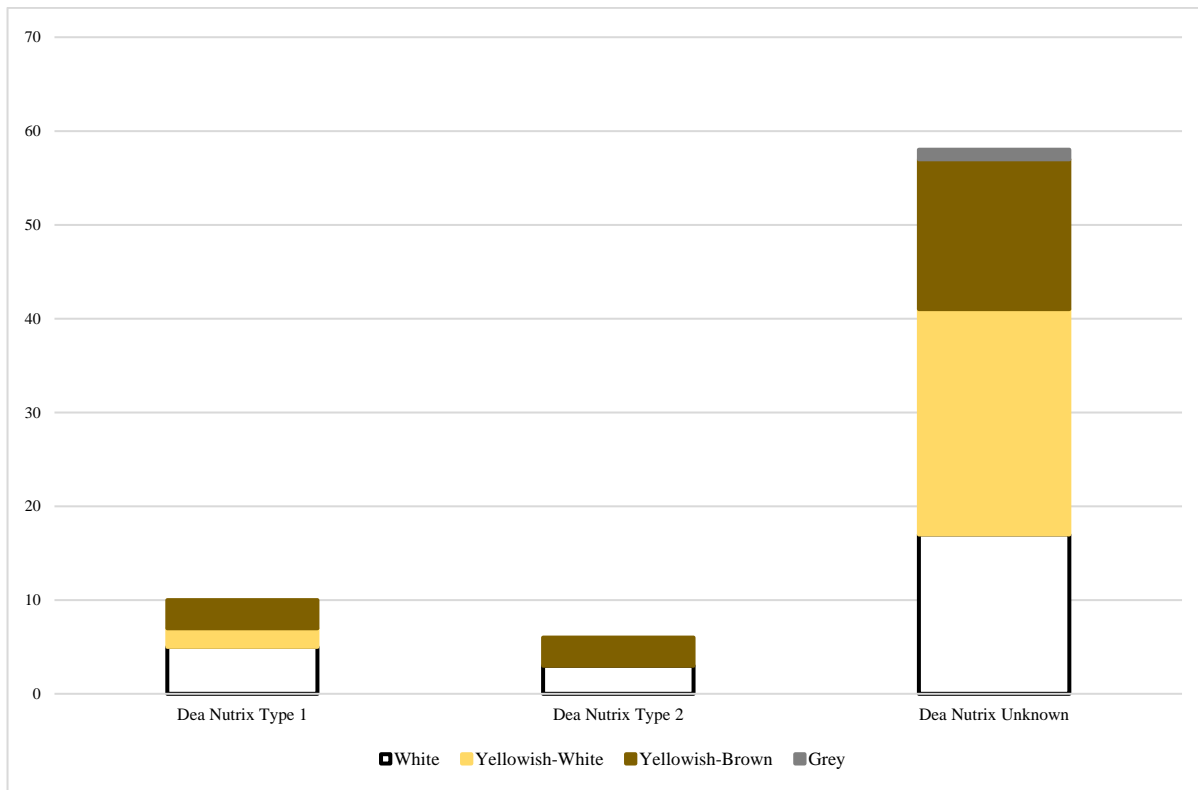


Fig. 4. 17. Fabric colours of Venus sub-types (by garment design) in Britain ( $t=53$ ).



*Fig. 4. 18. Fabric colours of Dea Nutrix types in Britain (t=74).*

The colour of Dea Nutrix fabrics (Fig. 4.18; t= 74) suggests a much more concise production regime for this particular type. This figurine type was exclusively produced in Central Gaul and thus unsurprisingly has a strong association with white coloured clay. Yellowish-white and brown clays are also common for Type 1 and most unidentifiable types, but interestingly yellowish-white is not present amongst the Type 2 figurines. This could just be because yellowish-white and yellowish-brown clays can appear to be very similar, making it easy to mistake one for another during the course of recording. But it could also mean that Type 1 figurines were perhaps more widely produced than those of Type 2, in either more batches or in more workshops than Type 2 figurines. Indeed, widespread workshop production is further evidenced in the large group of Dea Nutrix figurines that cannot be attributed a specific type in that a small proportion of these are alternatively made out of grey clay.

## **Summary and Discussion**

Consequently, although the overall number of pipeclay objects in Britain (less than five per year on average) suggests that demand for them in the province was never that high (see Chapters 5, 6 and 7) or could not be met, this typological-fabric analysis has shown that their export to Britain from workshops was quite a small-scale operation, with most workshops probably only exporting a small proportion of goods from successive batches they produced rather than exporting large quantities from the same batch or batches. Within this, however, there are also many nuances in terms of the consumption and popularity of the different forms and types found in Britain that may well be significant in terms of highlighting differences in people's beliefs in this region and why people used them here (topics explored more in Chapter 5 and throughout this thesis). An important issue to consider here, however, is what such patterns of pipeclay types and fabrics can tell us about how and why they were supplied to the province, as well as the kind of relationships there were between Continental suppliers and the various groups of consumers that selected and used them in Britain. In particular, for instance, which of these two groups was maybe more influential on their availability here?

Given their small numbers, it is possible that the availability of different pipeclay forms and types exported to Britain may have been more influenced by their low popularity levels amongst consumers in the province who only needed a small supply rather than any kind of high-volume exportation and trade decisions initiated by producers and workshops. If anything, any larger-scale organised exportation of pipeclay goods more likely included common forms and types such as Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines rather than the rare ones. However, even the average imported quantities of these per year suggests that these were rare imports too and were probably not necessarily part of any substantial trade; as is more clearly the case for the rarest pipeclay types in Britain too. Interestingly though, some of the rare pipeclay types in Britain were clearly made in quite large quantities in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region to meet local

demand but were evidently not part of any sustained trade with Britain, making it more likely that they arrived with people who acquired them elsewhere.

However they travelled to the province, the analysis that is carried out in Chapter 5 shows that there was a clear preference for pipeclay figurines of Venus, and to a lesser extent Dea Nutrix, in Britain, but what was the appeal of these depictions to the people who used them in the province? One idea is that although the demand for such pipeclay depictions in Britain probably did not have a direct influence on the forms and types that were ultimately produced in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region in the same way that demand probably did in these Continental areas, it was primarily only the most common Gaulish types that usually made it to Britain. As a result, most of the imported pipeclay forms and types that we see in Britain may broadly reflect the quite limited selection that most consumers here had to choose from.

Alternatively, it is also possible that the availability levels of pipeclay forms and types in Britain may be to some extent related to the specific choices that consumers made about the objects they wanted too. In this sense, it is conceivable that the prominence of common Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines in Britain may well be a result of consumers wanting these most. Why this was the case is unclear, but one idea is that it could be related to the otherwise general absence of these two goddesses in other forms of material culture in the province – especially in this ‘Gaulish’ style. Venus, for instance, is overall quite rarely depicted in other forms of artwork in Britain (see Appendix 8, and Lloyd-Morgan 1986, 185, figs. 18-19 for mosaics at Low Ham, Somerset, and Durham 2012, 3.31; for metal Venus figurines in Britain, including one from Southbroom (Durham 2014, 216)), and is in fact most commonly depicted in pipeclay – and this is also true of depictions of Dea too. As we will see in Chapters 7, 8, 9 and 10, these pipeclay depictions were also used in different ways and for different purposes than other works of art depicting them; it was, for example, not possible to break metal depictions of Venus in the same way as is possible in pipeclay. Consequently, much like the Etruscan use of Athenian

pottery (Osborne 2001), some such consumers in Britain may well have consciously chosen such types for specific reasons and contexts of use.

Associated with the supply of pipeclay figurines and other objects are important questions about the dynamics of how workshops were organised and how they supplied products to provincial markets – markets in this case being broadly defined as a group of consumers who bought and sold goods (Temin 2001). As will be evidenced by analysing makers' marks on figurines below, competition (Bang 2008) between producers within and between regions is one factor that probably played some part in this and influenced the types of goods found in each provincial market, but factors such as fabric colour, for example, raise some further interesting questions about how workshops were organised and the commercial relationships that existed between them. For instance, did workshops operate independently or as collective groups that were bound by casual agreement or contract? Likewise, did all workshops own their own pits and even the mould designs that they used to manufacture their goods, and what was their relationship with other workshops who perhaps used their pits and designs under licence? Furthermore, were some workshops copying common types to try and undercut and compete with their competitors, and what was the extent of this? Poor quality moulds and figurines may well suggest that this was the case but this is not firm evidence.

Inter-workshop organisation is a complex area of samian research where the limited data about land ownership and workshop organisation makes it hard to identify, let alone define, these relationships. Hartley and Dickinson (2008-12, Volume 1: 22) point out that most potters probably did not own the land they worked on or the clay pits they used and often shared with other potters. We do, however, know that there was some degree of organisation through the surviving firing lists and stamps that workshops used and kept. The level of organisation varied from centre to centre but in most workshops it seems that master potters hired their own bands of coroplasts and subordinates and kept a close eye on the output of their wares by using lists



and stamps to record the names of their potters and how much they produced (*ibid*). Some of this might apply to the production of pipeclay figurines and other objects as well but again, there is no surviving evidence to confirm it.

Elsewhere, Harris (1980) has argued that the cheapness of some mass-produced commodities, such as ceramic lamps, means that the cost of long-distance trade was less desirable and that the organisation of such industries was thus one based on a preference for local production centres managed by agents (*institores*) operating on behalf of commercial businesses spanning provinces rather than individual and independent traders. Some ceramic production centres have been identified in Britain, like the one Eckardt has discussed at Colchester (2002b), and these sit in stark contrast to the almost total absence of evidence for the production of pipeclay objects in the province. This could therefore suggest that some pipeclay objects were possibly more lucrative than certain other ceramic commodities, such as lamps, that perhaps needed the establishment of local production centres to stay profitable.

As well as the possible arrangements between pipeclay producers, traders and merchants, the way that pipeclay objects were physically transported to Britain as well as other markets (e.g. Fulford & Durham 2013; Goodman 2013) is another aspect to consider. One possibility is that some pipeclay objects came to Britain in large organised shipments along with other goods such as oil, wine and grain, and that some suppliers and traders may well have benefitted from the cheaper cost of transport that ‘piggy-backing’ off the trade routes from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region allowed them to enjoy. Studies of shipwrecks in the Mediterranean have shown that mixed cargoes were completely normal and that objects of all different types and sizes would have been transported together to maximise space and payable duties (see Taylor & Cleere 1978, Parker 1992 and Rice 2016 for general discussions); for example, Symonds (1992) demonstrates that colour-coated beakers from Trier were transported to Britain in the same shipments as wine from the Moselle region. Then again, there is no direct

evidence of this for pipeclay objects, and their overall small numbers perhaps suggest that large-scale organised trade was not undertaken; indeed, as we have already seen, many pipeclay objects may have arrived in Britain as personal possessions instead. Some first century types might have arrived in Britain as part of military supplies and cargoes at sites along the Roman frontier, much like the large deposits of pottery known from Hadrian's Wall, for example (Fulford 2007), but even here it may be significant that while pottery was more likely a necessary requirement for the army, pipeclay objects were probably non-essential personal objects of devotion. Despite the lack of archaeological evidence in relation to pipeclay goods, what we can do (see Chapter 5) is plot the spatial distributions of forms and types that might reflect some or parts of such arrangements (e.g. Weber 2012: 46). Overall however, it does seem that pipeclay objects were not as desirable and commercially viable as other ceramic objects that were produced in the province and elsewhere, which in turn meant that producers and suppliers were not interested in setting up substantial long-distance trade networks or indeed more local infrastructure to meet the demand in Britain.

### **Inscriptions and Stamps on Figurines**

Inscriptions and stamps are another way to determine where and by whom some objects - namely figurines - were produced, while also offering a useful insight into how pipeclay production was organised. The first interesting point here is that out of the 946 finds from Britain, only 12 (1.2%) have been marked with what are simple, identifiable stamps that are probably makers' stamps or parts of them, while there are three finds that have more untidy, illegible handmade inscriptions that may be dedications, graffiti or possibly damage. It is unclear why these few pipeclay figurines were marked like this when so many others are not. Perhaps, like on samian, stamps were a way to mark and monitor the output of a worker or workshop for the intended accounting and/or for kiln management – especially if several

workshops shared or used a commercial kiln (Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12, Volume 1: 8-11; Martelli 2013a: 312). Some might also have been a form of advertising aimed at customers seeking the wares of a designer or modeller (Brodrribb 1987: 117; Martelli 2013a: 300).

The twelve pipeclay objects with what appear to be stamps or part of stamps in Britain include ten figurines of deities (four of Venus, a Seated Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures, a Dea Nutrix and one unidentified deity (no. 611), a bust of a Draped Boy (no. 254) and one unidentified piece (no. 735). The figurines with other stamped markings that are parts of stamps or maybe damage are two Venus figurines (nos. 688, 900), while the finds with what appear to be hand-made inscriptions are a Venus base (no. 580) from Canterbury, a Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 575), also from Canterbury and the Matrona figurine from Arrington (no. 708). Some of these figurines are shown in Figure 4.19 and are also listed in Table 4.1.

In addition to the Roman period finds, there is also a crude marking on one of the post-Roman Young Male Holding Fruits (no. 267; Fig. 4.19, top left). The style of the piece suggests that it is Medieval rather than Roman in date (see Appendix 1). Jenkins (1978c) suggests that the inscribed rather than stamped name on the back of the figurine might read 'SVLPICI' and is perhaps intended as SVLPICI[NI], and could have been an attempt by a medieval artisan to mimic the name of an well-known Gaulish pottery maker who widely exported his wares across the Empire between AD 85 and 110 (Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12: 367-72). Although the figurine does appear to be Medieval in date, I, however, am dubious about this interpretation, firstly because it is unlikely that a medieval potter would have known about this Roman name, and secondly, because even using it would have had little benefit in a Mediaeval society that would have been unfamiliar with it as well. An illegible name or workshop marker inscribed by a medieval chloroplast and misinterpreted by Jenkins is therefore a more likely scenario.

That most workshops and coroplasts chose not to stamp figurines may mean that they had a lower production cost and market value than other ceramic products, like samian and lamps. Comparing the number of stamps as a total proportion of the figurine assemblage shows that while there are only 15 signed or marked figurines out of 946 (or 1.5%), there are over 300,000 records of stamped samian noted by Hartley and Dickinson (2008-12, Volume 1: ix). Generally speaking, Hartley and Dickinson's study shows that samian was signed quite regularly and that this was probably for the purpose of tracking the amount produced, suggesting that it was a valuable product that producers and kilns wanted to monitor the output of. On the face of it, the fact that only 1.5% of pipeclay objects are inscribed or stamped and 95% are unstamped or uninscribed suggests that they were less valuable than samian that was more regularly signed by craftsmen and workshops. The greater amount of samian produced overall means that the proportion of signed samian is actually probably lower overall. However, that so few pipeclay objects were made and signed comparatively probably means that this was a rare practice carried out only very occasionally on a low value low quality product that was less tightly controlled at production centres. At La Graufesenque, for example, large quantities of samian vessels could be fired in one firing alone to meet demand so signing them was a vital practice for their makers (e.g. Bémont *et al.* 1987), but the comparatively small quantities of pipeclay objects made on the Continent and found in each region again probably means that control over and demand for them was not as high as samian overall, and that the two industries were probably not that closely related.

Much like pipeclay figurines, there are only a few (two) metal figurines with inscriptions from Britain. However, the reason so few of these are signed is probably very different as to why so few pipeclay figurines are signed. The first reason might have something to do with how difficult is it to stamp or inscribe metal figurines during the production process. Inscribing or stamping a hard metal is extremely difficult, although makers' mark could have been crafted

into their moulds so that they appeared on the finished product. The second reason relates to the likelihood that metal figurines were more valuable goods than pipeclay ones that producers did not want to mark because it might reduce their value, and if this is the case then metal figurine makers might have tracked their output in alternative ways that did not mark the objects themselves. As such it is consequently also possible that metal figurines were made by a smaller group of skilled craftsmen in specialised metalworking workshops where the sharing of workspace and kilns was less common, reducing the need to sign their products. Moreover, the length and content of the inscriptions on the metal figurines suggest that they were more to do with conveying the personal messages of the figurine owners rather than tracking the possible output of the workshops and craftsmen that made them. Both of the inscriptions on the metal figurines from Britain are personalised dedications which possibly suggests that they

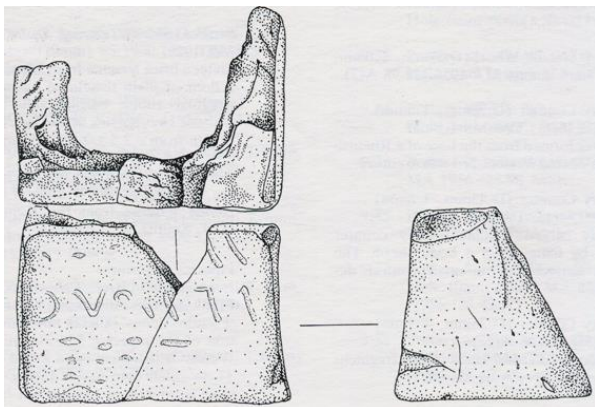
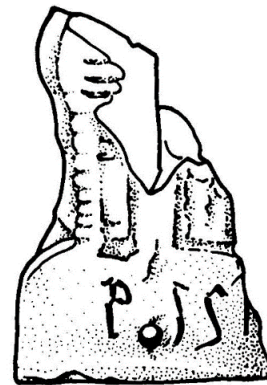
<b>NAME</b>	<b>TYPE OF FIGURINE</b>	<b>NO.</b>	<b>PLACE FOUND</b>
<b>PISTILLUS</b>	Dea Nutrix	3	Sun Street, Canterbury
<b>SERVANDUS</b>	Seated Mother-Goddess/Female Figure	59	Colchester
<b>SERVANDUS</b>	Seated Mother-Goddess/Female Figure	60	Church Street, Lancaster
<b>IOPPILLO</b>	Venus	92	St Albans
<b>LVBRI</b>	Venus	143	Hill Farm, Gestingthorpe
<b>TETI</b>	Venus	181	London
<b>FECIT LA</b>	Draped Boy	254	Copthall Court, London
<b>SULPICIUS?</b>	Young Male Holding Fruits	267	Chelmsford
<b>PISTILLUS</b>	Dea Nutrix	575	Marlowe Carpark, Canterbury
<b>NESTOR</b>	Venus	580	Marlowe Carpark, Canterbury
<b>SERVANDUS</b>	Unknown	611	South Shields
<b>UNKNOWN (V-SHAPE)</b>	Venus	688	Wallsend
<b>SERVANDUS</b>	Matrona/Female Figure	708	Inhumation burial, Arrington
<b>VERIANUS</b>	Venus	734	Chester-le-Street
<b>AGESSILI</b>	Unknown	735	1 Watling Street, Canterbury
<b>L OR F SHAPE</b>	Venus	900	Vindolanda

*Tab. 4. 1. Names of makers' marks from Britain.*

were commissioned by people who were wealthy and literate (Durham 2012: 2.1, nos. 31, 646). The overall impression then is that the figurines made of more economically valuable metal with inscriptions are rarer than even signed pipeclay figurines and are probably more associated with the social status of the owners of them rather than the people who produced them.

A total of nine different makers are represented by the stamped or inscribed figurines of the Roman period (Tab. 4.1). Most names only occur once (i.e. Ioppillo, Netor, Sulpicius?, Teti, Vernaius), with only two names appearing twice (Servandus and Pistillus). Some of these names are those of Gaulish (e.g. Pistillus, Nestor, Teti, Vernaius) and Rhine-Moselle region (e.g. Servandus) modellers that are already known to us in samian (see Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12, Volume 8: 237) but it is unlikely that they refer to the same makers.

It is hard to know what the different names on figurines actually refer to and in turn what this can tell us about their production. Like samian, the name that appears on a figurine, whether stamped or inscribed, may well belong to a single potter, but could equally represent a larger group of modellers, a workshop, or even a group of workshops. It can also be hard to tell whether the name that appears on a figurine refers to the original mould maker or just the individual, group or workshop that used a pre-designed mould to make finished figurines. Tracking the use and movement of names across the Continent is also difficult given the general lack of figurines with stamps from the Continental provinces overall. Hartley and Dickinson have shown that different potters sharing the same name worked at different workshops and at different times, and the same could be true to some extent in relation to pipeclay figurines made across the Continent too. However, as with a number of the British finds, it is possible to get an idea about where some were made through the distribution of similarly signed moulds and figurines. For example, signed moulds and figurines suggest that Fabricius and Lucius were both mid-second century modellers based in Cologne at around the same time as Servandus



*Fig. 4. 19. Stamped or inscribed figurines from Britain: medieval figurine (no. 267) from Chelmsford (top left); Venus (no. 92) from St Albans (top right); Venus base (no. 580) from Canterbury (centre left); Dea Nutrix (no. 575) from Canterbury (centre right); unknown figurine (no. 611) from South Shields (bottom left); Matrona (no. 708) from Arrington (bottom right).*

was working there (Boekel 1987: 892-3, as well as 892-5 for other figurines by Rhine-Moselle region modellers found in the Netherlands).

While the first part of this chapter points out that there is some evidence that some pipeclay products were made at the same sites and fired in the same kilns as other ceramic wares, the stamped and inscribed figurines add little to this picture. Although some of the same names that appear on pipeclay figurines do occur on samian as well (e.g. Servandus), they are probably not related and it is best to assume that they were not made by the same potters or workshops, particularly as the designs and spellings of stamps with such names vary. Some of this variation could be accounted for by modellers and workshops using different dies on different products, while Hartley and Dickinson (2008-12, Volume 1: 11) point out that die designs and standards of lettering varied between potteries and over time, and that copying dies could generally account for some of the variations in stamp design and accuracy, especially if this was done by less literate workers. However, it is generally unlikely that pipeclay and samian production was connected (*cf.* Vertet & Vuillemot 1973: 5; Vertet & Zeyer 1983: 8-9), not least because the overall pipeclay industry seems to have been a relatively minor part of the Roman economy (e.g. Bowman & Wilson 2009) with limited economic importance in comparison to the larger-scale production, trade and supply of samian goods to Britain and other Roman provinces, but also because the stamps on each product are slightly different. It is also unlikely because of the fact that samian was made from iron-rich clays that were only available in certain places with the largest reserves around which the largest kilns were located (e.g. La Graufesenque, Millau, Rheinzabern), but not in places such as Cologne or Trier where iron-poor clays were used to make local ceramics such as our figurines and other pottery (M. Carroll pers. comm.). As such, and what will become clear more so in Britain as this thesis goes on, is that the nature of samian trade, supply and economics, and its impact on provincial markets and societies (e.g. Fulford & Durham 2013, and Willis 2005, 2011, 2013 for Britain),



differed greatly from the economic, social and cultural impact of the pipeclay industry in these regions.

Two figurines (no. 580 (Nestor) and possibly no. 708 (Servandus)) are inscribed with the names of known figurine makers rather than stamped. Interestingly these figurines are inscribed with cursive script rather than set stamps. This might have been done before each of the potters started using more formal stamps that they then used on samian but it is impossible to know for certain. No samian vessels signed by these potters are signed in the same cursive script as the figurines that would suggest that this kind of signature-like signing was not a regular practice. It is thus very hard to tell if these hand-inscribed markings are ad-hoc decisions by the modellers or if they are forgeries made by counterfeiters.

### ***Rhine-Moselle Producers***

The only Rhine-Moselle producer evidenced on pipeclay figurines in Britain is the chloroplast Servandus – one of the most successful and best represented producers of this region, who, judging by the distribution of his signed and stylistically attributed figurines, was a well-known modeller based in Cologne in the second half of the second century. His status as one of the most prolific figurine producers and exporters is attested by the fact that many more figurines in Britain (three stamped and one hand-written inscription) and on the Continent feature his name than any of the other modellers from the Rhine-Moselle region (Jenkins 1977: 106-16; Boekel 1987: 894-5). He and his workshops, or at least his designs appear to have dominated the production and supply of the pipeclay industry and market in the Rhine-Moselle region and had a significant impact on the British market as well.

The finds featuring Servandus' name from Britain include four pipeclay figurines. Three are of Seated Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures. The first, from Colchester (no. 59), is,

according to Haverfield (1913: 675, no. 1356) and Jenkins (1977: 299, no. 1), stamped ‘SERVANDVS CCAA FECIT’ (*Servandvs Coloniae Claudiae Arae Agrippinensium Fecit*) on the back of the headdress, with the abbreviated ‘CCAA’ referring to Cologne where Servandus (FECIT) made this. The second find, from South Shields, Tyne and Wear (no. 611), is a different shaped stamp with similar text on the front of an unidentifiable figurine base. The similar spelling of the stamps could suggest that both figurines were made by the same person or workshop. The different shape of the stamps though could indicate that they were made at slightly different times during the second half of the second century but it is not possible to say exactly when. It is not a help that both are from undated contexts.

The third figurine stamped by Servandus is a Seated Mother-Goddess or female figurine from Lancaster (no. 60) but this one has a slightly different stamp that reads ‘SERVAN|DVS CCAA|[A]D FOR|[V]M’ (*Servandvs Coloniae Claudiae Arae Agrippinensium ad Forum*) on the back of the plinth (Collingwood & Wright 1965: 204, no. 608; Jenkins 1977: 299-300, no. 2). Jenkins (*ibid*, also Jenkins 1977: 100-2) suggests that there might have been a third row on the stamp that did not fit on the plinth that read HORDIA[RIVM]FE[CIT] (*Hordiarium Fecit*), stating that the figurine was made in Cologne ‘at the barley market’ - although this reference to the barley market could be where he sold rather than made his products as workshops and kilns for pottery were generally situated outside the walls of a settlement rather than in the centre of town due to the fire hazards involved (Carroll 2001: 91). This may well have been the same workshop where the other two stamped figurines with his name on are from but unlike the stamps on those two, this is the only one to mention a location.

Finally, there is one hand-written inscription on the figurine of a Mother-Goddess (Matrona) from the grave of an infant at Arrington, Cambridgeshire (no. 708). The style of the figurine from Arrington attributes it to Servandus of Cologne, as does the second century context from which it came, but why it is signed by hand when his other figurines from the

Continent are stamped is unclear. The signature is in cursive script (Burnham *et al.* 2000: 438) and given the similarities with the figurine from Colchester (no. 59) could have been written by Servandus or a modeller in his workshop during production prior to firing – perhaps as an ad-hoc decision - or perhaps the figurine was copied and fraudulently signed by a contemporary modeller. However, there is another more likely explanation. Green (1993: 194) points out that the inscription is in fact quite indistinctive and thus it could have been misinterpreted and may in fact have been etched onto the figurine after it was fired, meaning that it might therefore be some sort of previously overlooked personal message or dedication. This kind of practice was usually for dedications in votive contexts such as temples, but in this case it appears to have been used in a burial context instead.

Other figurines in Britain also attributable to Servandus on stylistic grounds probably include the figurine of Apollo from Hacheston, Suffolk (no. 234), the head of Bacchus from Flitwick (no. 236), the figurines of Diana (no. 219), Juno (no. 518) and Luna (no. 221), all from London, the depiction of Mars from Mucking, Essex (no. 240), as well as the Type 3 Venus figurines from Caerleon, Dover, London and Springhead (nos. 128-9, 165, 168, 645), and the Type 6 Venus figurine from York (no. 127).

The current evidence from inscriptions and other figurines stylistically associated with Servandus suggests that he was a dominant pipeclay figurine supplier to Britain and was probably different to the Servandus that produced samian in the Rhine-Moselle region (e.g. Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12, Volume 8: 237); they were more likely just different people using the same name. There is also little evidence that samian was produced in Cologne where iron-poor clays are more common. Indeed, the signatures of Servandus that do exist on samian in Britain were probably made in Rheinzabern in the second to third century (AD 160-260) where there are only the iron-rich clays needed for this, and all of these goods are signed differently in terms of the lettering used. It is possible that the same Servandus was moving

between Cologne and Rheinzabern and only made figurines in Cologne where he signed them in an alternative way to his samian products, but a more likely interpretation given that these sites are quite far apart (about 280km) and in two different provinces (Germania Inferior and Germania Superior) is that they were two different producers. As potters did not have exclusive rights to certain names, coincidence is perhaps the simplest explanation for this and it is thus perhaps not too surprising that the same names sometimes appear on slightly different stamp designs on different products made in far-apart workshops (Carroll 2001: 84-101).

### ***Gaulish Producers***

Five figurines bear the stamps or signatures of known coroplasts who operated in the workshops of Central Gaul. Two of these figurines from Britain are marked with the name of one of the best-known figurine modellers in this region – Pistillus - whose signed moulds and figurines suggest he was based at Autun around the end of the first century (e.g. Boekel 1987: 447; Jenkins 1995, 1180) – though this was probably not the same person as the samian potter. The first example is an inscription on the Dea Nutrix from Canterbury (no. 575 that is inscribed rather than stamped ‘PIST’ (PISTILLUS) on the front of the base (Fig. 4.19, centre right). Again, this inscription is quite unclear and look as though it could have been etched after firing and is potentially not directly related to their production or the potter that made them, but rather one that was possibly made later by someone for another reason that has been misinterpreted. The second signature, probably a stamp, is on another Dea Nutrix figurine from Canterbury (no. 3). Haverfield (1894: 282-3) originally published this as ‘SILI’ believing it refers to the maker Silius. The figurine has since been lost so it is not possible to check what it says, but Jenkins (1977: 53) suggests that it may in fact read ‘STIL’, noting stylistic similarities with Continental finds also signed by Pistillus (Jenkins 1977: 53).

Stamped figurines by Pistillus were mainly distributed to this potter's local Gaulish market and only occasionally made their way to provinces like Britain but Continental figurines signed by this modeller are known from sites like Lostorf, Switzerland and Trier, Germany, (1977: 43-53, Map 3) as well. Like Servandus, Pistillus' name appears on many different Continental figurines showing that he too made various types, but most of these are of Mother-Goddesses, indicating that he mainly played to the widespread beliefs of his local Gaulish customers. Yet interestingly these objects rarely reached Britain, suggesting that he either chose not to engage with the British market or did not have the means to do so.

Samian signed with the name 'Pistillus' also reached Britain between AD 155 and 185 (Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12, Volume 7: 154-5) in much larger quantities than figurines but this again was probably not the same producer's goods. However, what the proportions of pipeclay products signed with this name in Britain may generally imply is that the Pistillus who supplied them to Britain either just did not sign his goods that often or was not as successful as some of his competitors from the Rhine-Moselle or the Pistillus who supplied samian to Britain.

The name of another Gaulish figurine maker, Ioppillo, is stamped on the back of a Type 2 Venus figurine from St. Albans (no. 92). Jenkins (1977: 67) has noted that the same name appears in relief on a Venus mould at Toulon-sur-Allier that is also inscribed on the back with the name 'ATILANO', suggesting that Ioppillo was the original modeller. It is not clear where Ioppillo made pipeclay figurines in Gaul, but Jenkins (1977: 40) identifies a few other figurines signed by Ioppillo, including a *Risus* bust at Toulon-sur-Allier to suggest that his workshop may have been located at this site, while there is also a mould of this bust type signed by the same modeller in the museum at St. Germain-en-Laye - (*ibid*: 219, 511). Schauerte (1985: 140-2, V 1.3.1; 144-5, V 1.3.3; see also Boekel 1987: 896) has alternatively suggested that Yzeure-Saint-Bonnet might be another possible location. Few of these finds are well dated but the

British figurine is from a second to third century context (Wheeler & Wheeler 1936: 203), suggesting that Ioppillo was operating sometime during this period.

A Venus figurine from Canterbury (no. 580) is crudely marked with the hand-written name of 'Nestor F' (NESTOR FECIT) on the base. This could again point to the post-firing marking of the figurine and a misinterpretation of the haphazard inscription that is not necessarily related to its production but later use. No other figurines from Britain bear his name and none of the Continental catalogues I have searched record any either so only this one is known. A Gaulish potter did export signed samian wares on a relatively regular basis to Britain and some Rhineland areas from La Graufesenque during the Neronian period (Hartley & Dickinson 2008-12, Volume 6: 231-2) but it is unlikely that they are related.

The name 'TET' stamped on the front of a Type 1 or 2 Venus figurine base from London (no. 181) probably formed part of the original mould and is more likely associated with its production (Jenkins 1977: 340). The only other 'TET' stamp like this is from another Venus figurine - also on the base - discovered in Lezoux, France (Jenkins 1977: 340). Jenkins' report says that this find is in St. Germain-en-Laye Museum (Inv. No. 65156) and that the stamp may be the name of a Central Gaulish potter or a workshop that was based here. Yet it could equally be a short-hand version of another figurine producers' name who worked in this region or one nearby (e.g. TETIO, TETIONIS, TETO, TETTO, TETURO?).

### *Other Stamps and Inscriptions*

One other figurine is stamped with recognisable text; the bust of a draped boy from Copthall Court, London (no. 254). This bust is signed on the back with a partial stamp reading 'FECIT LA [S]' (HE MADE [THIS]) but the rest of the modeller's name is missing. As noted in Appendix 1, the signature probably belongs to a mould-maker rather than the original modeller,

while the basic type is generally accredited to being the work of the Cologne-based modeller Donatus in the first half of the second century AD (Boekel 1987: 631-2, fig. 119).

Three other figurines are marked with probable stamps rather than inscriptions that unfortunately cannot be checked. The first, from Canterbury, Kent (no. 735), is on a small plate of white clay that possibly comes from a figure sat on a curved chair, and reads 'AGESSILI' (Agesillus). The second is a Venus figurine from Gestingthorpe, Essex (no. 143) marked 'LVBRI', or 'LV B' on the underside of hollow plinth (Jenkins 1985: 86). Whether this is a name or some other marking related to, say, firing, remains to be seen but it may demonstrate a degree of personalisation for identification. The third example is a Venus figurine from Chester-le-Street, County Durham (no. 734) marked 'VERIANVS' (or VERSIVS) on the back of the drapery (Frere *et al.* 1984: 342, no. 23). This is clearly a name – presumably of a potter. Like the Gestingthorpe find, this may be a product of lesser known producer who did not often use stamps but did occasionally sign figurines. There are few, if any, similarly signed Continental figurines but it is possible that some of these lesser known figurine modellers did produce and export other unsigned common figurine types as well.

The two remaining figurines have more simplistic markings that may or may not be maker's marks or damage caused during or post production. This group includes the base of a Venus figurine from Wallsend, Tyne and Wear (no. 688) with a v-shaped incision above the dome, and another Venus from Vindolanda, Northumberland (no. 900) with an 'L' or 'F' shape incised in the middle of its back.

### ***Discussion***

To summarise, although the few obvious makers' marks readable suggest that stamping low value figurines was not a common practice, the few that survive can tell us a little more about

where they were made, who made them, and how the trade and supply of figurines to Britain differed between Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle. Most of these names, whether stamped or hand-written, are of a small group of known Central Gaulish coroplasts who evidently only exported signed figurines to Britain on an occasional basis but likely exported many more unsigned figurines as well. Most names only appear once (i.e. Nestor, Ioppillo) but the various names suggest that multiple producers supplied the British market, but some, like Pistillus, slightly more than others. Servandus, on the other hand, is the only identifiable figurine maker represented from the Rhine-Moselle (specifically Cologne). His work, of which there are multiple signed examples and others stylistically attributed to him in Britain, suggests that this modeller was one of the largest suppliers of the British market from the Rhine-Moselle region. Although Servandus produced slightly different figurine types than the workshops in Central Gaul (rarer types as opposed to the more common depictions of Venus usually made and signed in Gaul), this no doubt put him in direct competition with them.

It is also worth considering where stamps and inscriptions on figurines are placed and what this might tell us about how and why they were used. The stamps and inscriptions on the British figurines are found in several different locations, but the majority (eight) are on the back rather than on the front (four) of figurines, suggesting that stamp use especially was probably more for workshop production purposes rather than something that was of interest to the consumer who probably would have positioned the figurines facing forwards so that the stamps would not have been visible at all. Some stamps do appear in slightly different positions, like on the back of the head (e.g. one figurine of Servandus (no. 59)) or on the back of the garment (Verianus (no. 734)), while some potters (perhaps master-potters) evidently had some discretion on where to put a stamp that might account for some of the marks found on the front plinths of some figurines (e.g. nos. 181, 575, 580, 611). In general, however, stamping the back of figurines appears to have been the regular practice and was probably an agreed production



convention designed to easily track production output without impacting on the aesthetics of a figurine's design. Inscriptions, meanwhile, some of which may be dedications, appear most often on the front of figurines where they were probably more likely to be seen and read – especially if the object was displayed in some way. More work on the position of stamps on Continental figurines would help clarify these patterns further.

## **Conclusion**

Combining this information about production centres, fabric analysis, makers' marks and the relationship between consumers and producers forms a detailed picture of how the pipeclay market supply to Britain differed between workshops in Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region (see Fig. 4.20). To create this map as many of the 946 pipeclay objects from Britain as possible (684 figurines, 29 shrines, 21 animal vessels, seven masks and the remaining fragments where possible) were assessed to identify where they were produced, the results of which are shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3. For accuracy, most of these data are based on my own visual inspection of each object and the typological classifications outlined in Appendix 1 and Chapter 5 that also references parallels in Continental catalogues and their distributions that can help identify where each pipeclay form and type was manufactured. Not all of the objects in Britain were available to view, and in such cases existing illustrations or photographs were used instead. Where photographs or illustrations were not available, existing classifications in reports were taken as correct despite the risk of inaccuracies. Reassuringly, nearly all the previously identified finds I viewed and cross-checked were correctly identified.

Although this map gives a representative impression about the way in which this diverse and complex market was generally supplied, it is harder to get a more detailed picture and



*Fig. 4. 20. Pipeclay types and flow from Continental production regions.*

always identify at which workshops each figurine type was produced. Chemical fabric analysis could advance this field but such destructive methods make their application unlikely, while

**PRODUCTION REGION**

	Gaul	Rhine-Moselle	Unknown
<b>DEITIES</b>	541	32	54
<b>ANIMALS</b>	66	2	24
<b>HUMANS</b>	37	6	15
<b>OTHER</b>	52	7	110
<b>TOTAL</b>	696	47	203

*Tab. 4. 2. Quantity of pipeclay objects from Gaul and Rhine-Moselle production regions.*

**PRODUCTION REGION**

	Gaul	Rhine-Moselle	Unknown
<b>DEITIES</b>	Dea Nutrix; Epona; Fortuna; Hercules; Leda and Swan; Mercury Type 2; Minerva; Venus Types 1/2/5/7/8/9	Apollo; Bacchus; Infant Bacchus; Cybele; Diana; Juno; Luna Lucifera; Mars; Mercury Type 1; Minerva (nos. 230, 683, 836); Seated/Standing Goddesses/Matrona/Females; Venus Types 3/4/6	
<b>ANIMALS</b>	Bull; Triple-Horned Bull; Cockerels; Dogs; Dolphin; Doves; Hens; Eggs; Single Horses; Pigeons; Lion; Lizard; Panther; Rams; Wool	Boar; Double-Horse	Horse and Rider
<b>HUMANS</b>	Standing Comic; Seated Comics; Recumbent Figures; Thorn-Pullers; Partially Draped Boy; Long-Haired Boy; Risus Busts; Woman Busts Types 1/2/3/5	Cloaked Figure; Boy with Cucullus; Draped Boy; Woman Bust Type 4	Gladiator; Infant with Cuculli
<b>OTHER</b>	Animal vessels; Shrines	Masks	

*Tab. 4. 3. Pipeclay types from Gaul and Rhine-Moselle production regions.*

previous Continental studies have not always been conclusive (e.g. Lahanier *et al.* 1991; Lahanier & Dennery 1993). However, a visual inspection of fabric colour within individual types (i.e. Venus and Dea Nutrix) does suggest that many different workshops made common types, while rarer types were probably only made by an individual or a smaller group of workshops. Maker's marks can also occasionally identify more precise production sites - especially for well evidenced modellers like Servandus of Cologne, or Pistillus who worked at Autun in Gaul – but sadly few stamps occur on figurines because of their low value.

Overall, 73.5% of the pipeclay objects in Britain were produced and imported from workshops located in Central Gaul in the modern region encompassing the Allier and Loire valleys – a group that includes figurines, busts, shrines and the unguent animal vessels. Most of the common figurine types from Britain were produced here (i.e. Type 1 and Type 2 Venus figurines, as well as depictions of Dea Nutrix, Minerva, human busts, and most of the common animals and birds), as were a selection of rare types that include the Comic Figures, Thorn-Pullers, the lizard and panther figurines, and shrines. The general principles of fabric analysis and the makers' marks on some of these finds indicate that a variety of different workshops probably produced common figurine types and exported them to Britain, while a smaller number of workshops probably made and exported the rarer types. The existence of any commercial relationships between different workshops, suppliers and traders that produced pipeclay goods in Gaul remains to be seen but overall, the distribution of moulds and wasters suggests that this industry produced many types of product that mainly served local markets but was also the source of most of the pipeclay products found in Britain.

In contrast, only 5% of the pipeclay objects (including figurines and masks) derive from workshops that were situated in the Rhine-Moselle region. All of these finds are rare types in Britain and Gaul, emphasising the greater influence of the Gaulish industry overall, but the fact that some of them made it to Britain does highlight a degree of cultural and religious influence from the Rhine-Moselle region in Britain from the second century. How many different workshops produced these objects is unclear as for most finds a visual inspection could not be carried out for even a rudimentary fabric analysis, but it is both clear and interesting that many types from this region are attributable to just a single modeller (i.e. Servandus of Cologne). However, several contemporary but thus far unevidenced producers may well have produced and exported some pipeclay products from this region as well.

## **Chapter 5. Consuming the Gods in Roman Britain**

### **Introduction**

In total 946 pipeclay objects made up of 777 figurines, 34 busts, 29 shrines, 21 unguent vessels and seven masks have been found across Britain (Fig. 5 1). The figurines and busts include 627 deities (599 female and 13 male gods), 92 birds and animals as well as 58 humans (32 males and 21 females). The remaining 78 objects are fragments and circular and square bases. The preservation of these finds varies considerably, with only 46 complete specimens surviving. This chapter will explain how the pipeclay objects from Britain have been identified and some of the problems encountered when doing so. An overview of the different types and quantities is outlined to provide an insight into their trade and supply to Britain and to explore how they may relate to the various beliefs of the Romano-British population (the complete typological catalogue with a description of each type and summaries of their iconography and date is available in Appendix 1, along with references to Continental parallels). Following this, the assemblage is compared with four collections of pipeclay objects from the Continent to highlight any differences in consumption patterns, trade and regional beliefs. Finally, the British assemblage is compared with the collection of metal figurines from Britain to examine whether there are any differences in religious beliefs and practice, as well as social status.

### **Identification Conventions and Problems**

Where possible the identifiable figurines and busts of deities, animals and humans, and shrines, animal vessels and masks, have been categorised into groups of depictions as well as types and sub-types based on morphological and/or stylistic variation. For example, Venus figurines can be divided into types by how they hold their garments, and sub-groups based on their garment

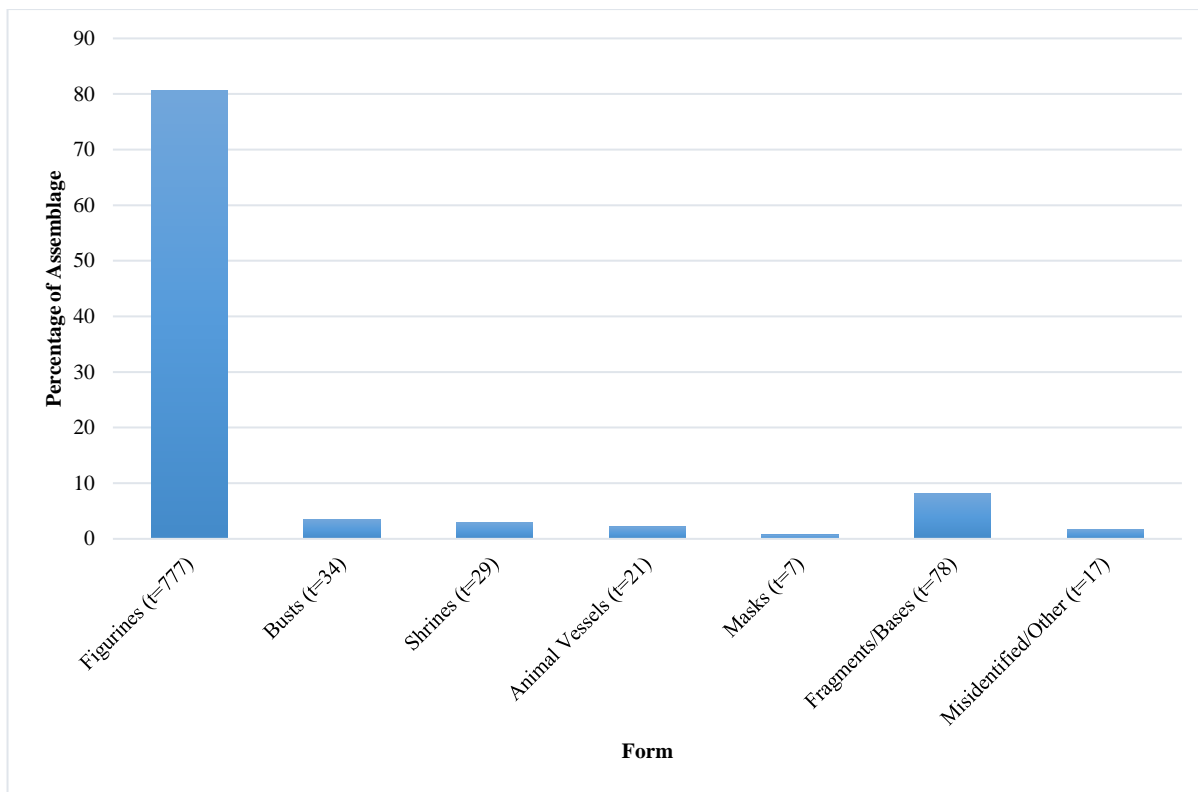


Fig. 5. 1. Proportion of pipeclay objects in Britain (t=963).

designs and hairstyles, while cockerel figurine types are defined by their different stances, and sub-types by their various feather decorations. In general the classification of the British material is based on the broad typological categories that were first established by Rouvier-Jeanlin in 1972 and that are commonly used to classify other assemblages from Europe. Like Boekel (1987), Gonzenbach (1986, 1995) and Beenhouwer (2005), I have taken a broad-brush approach to this task and only use sub-typological groupings where it is absolutely necessary for clarity (e.g. Venus garments and hairstyles).

Several factors make it difficult to identify pipeclay objects accurately. Identification is less likely when finds are incomplete or in poor condition, and especially when distinctive body parts and stylistic attributes are missing. In some cases the general shape/stance of an object can help classify it. Venus figurines, for instance, can usually be recognised by their rounded

hips, bust, buttocks and bent right arm held up towards the head. The body shape and stances of many animals, such as horses and dogs, are also distinctive. However, some figurines have similar stances, making it hard to differentiate between different types, such as the various different forms of Venus, while certain Minerva figurines also hold up their right hand to their head, just like Venus. Human busts are another good example as different types of males, females and children can be difficult to tell apart - especially if they are lacking their diagnostic heads, while hemispherical bases could be attributed to Venus figurines or human busts.

Identifying particular attributes can help classify more complete objects and small fragments - even those in very poor condition. These can be distinctive features or characteristic stylistic motifs. For example, the upright oval shield and gorgon breastplate of Minerva figurines and the lyre of Apollo are particularly distinctive features, as is the crescent moon that is often associated with Luna and the herring-bone pattern that represents the wickerwork of the high-backed chairs of Dea Nutrix figurines. Again, some different figurine types can exhibit similar or identical attributes. For instance, Boekel (1987: 486) points out that some separately moulded figurine heads (e.g. Dea Nutrix and human busts) were used on several different types. The fragmented heads of Venus and Dea Nutrix are also very similar stylistically and are often confused, while the wickerwork pattern can appear on Dea Nutrix as well as other mother-goddess figurines. Furthermore, some deity and human figurine types have similar drapery patterns and many bird figurines have identical patterns demarcating feathers on their wings and tails. In these cases, other diagnostic features would need to be present to identify such figurines accurately but these are much less likely to feature on smaller fragments, reducing the likelihood of accurately identifying them.

As a result, stance, drapery and attributes, or a combination of these aspects, can all be considered to help identify different pipeclay types as well as smaller pieces and fragments, but wear and corrosion can impede the ability to do so conclusively. In such cases objects have

been classified only to the most secure typological degree. For example, it is not possible to classify a Venus figurine as a Type 1 or Type 2 if the hand and garment are missing, or a Dea Nutrix figurine as a Type 1 or Type 2 if the infants are not present. More complete objects and fragments that are not identifiable at all are classified as 'unknown' but potential identifications are suggested in the 'Notes' field of the database where it is possible to do so.

Another problem is that it is sometimes difficult to tell if the identifications of older finds are correct. The catalogue I have compiled incorporates the *c.* 450 figurines from Jenkins' 1977 PhD catalogue. In many cases it was possible to check his identifications by consulting the original sources that Jenkins cites or the images he provides, but a small number (*c.* 40) of unreferenced and/or unillustrated entries could not be verified in this way (e.g. nos. 19-21, 245, 247, 295-6, 338-9). I have yet to come across any incorrectly identified objects from Jenkins' referenced and illustrated finds and in general it can probably be safely assumed that his identifications of the unreferenced and unillustrated objects are also correct. I, no doubt like Jenkins at times (e.g. nos. 33, 80, 199?), have also had to rely on some identifications given in some older antiquarian reports but it is perhaps safer to assume that these are not always correct.

Finally, some finds identified and/or published as Roman pipeclay objects are either not identified correctly or not Roman in date. This group includes two candlestick holders (nos. 287, 948; e.g. Eckardt 2002: 243-51), a statue head (no. 238), and eleven non-Roman objects (nos. 64, 255, 345, 596, 796, 908, 910, 923), including four Medieval figurines of young males holding fruits that are not similar in either form or style to any other pipeclay figurines of the Roman period in Britain or on the Continent (Fig. 5. 2; nos. 266-9; see Wallace 1992 and Appendix 1). These objects have been recorded on the database and as such there are 963 entries, but they are not included in the quantitative analysis of the 946 Roman period pipeclay objects. Descriptions of these non-Roman objects are given at the end of Appendix 1.

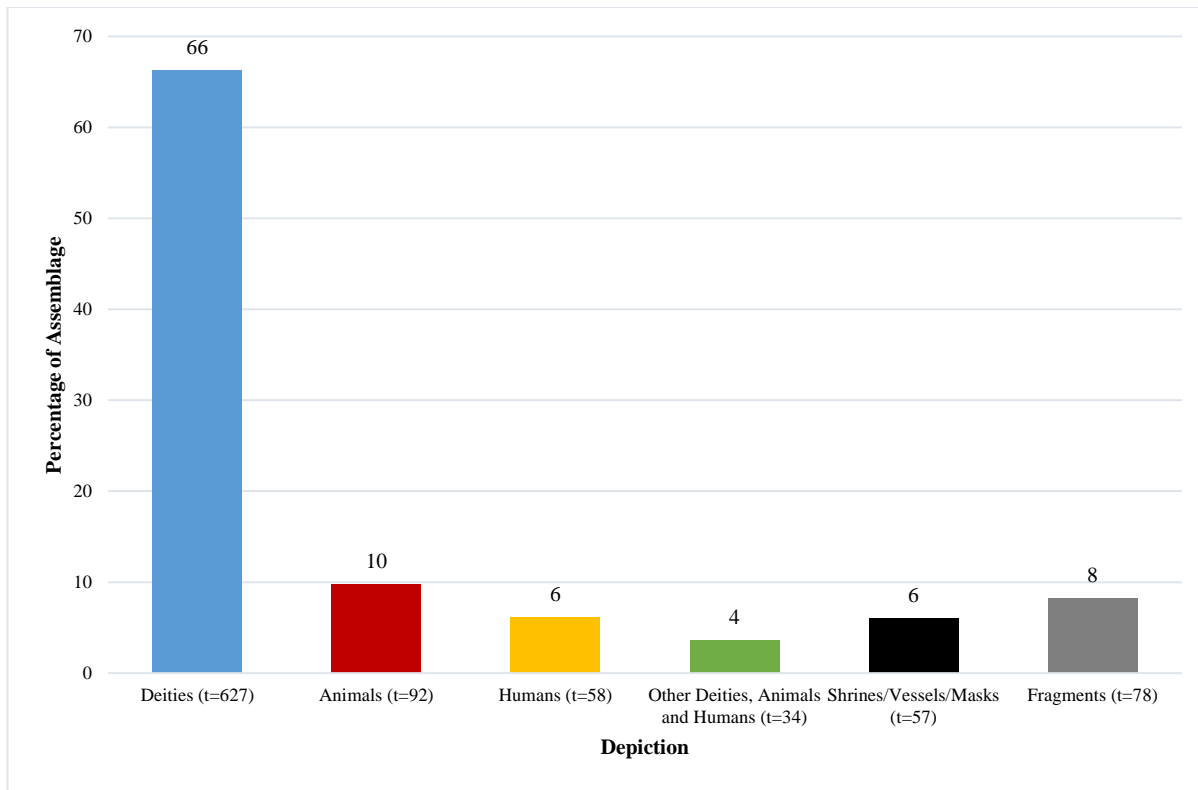




*Fig. 5. 2. Medieval figurines of a Male Holding Fruits. Left – no. 268 from Leigh-on-Sea, Essex (Jenkins 1978c, pl2B.1.). Right – no. 266 from Bootle, Cumbria (courtesy of Tullie House Museum).*

### **Typology and Quantitative Analysis**

The number of figurines/busts depicting deities (627), animals (92) and humans (58) provides an initial insight into the role and significance of pipeclay objects overall, with the most common deities - making up 66% of the total assemblage (Fig. 5. 3) - strongly suggesting that they were primarily religious objects of some kind. Their religious character is also reflected by the smaller group of animal figurines from Britain (10%) in that many are of creatures that have particularly close associations with certain gods and goddesses (e.g. doves with Venus; cockerels with Mercury; dogs with mother-goddesses or females; horses with Epona). Most of the human figurines and busts from the province (6%) also appear to have religious associations, with many reflecting Romano-British beliefs about life and death. Further details about the iconographic meaning of all the deity, animal and human types are provided in Appendix 1, while Chapter 7 shows that their use and deposition very often also relates to the



*Fig. 5. 3. Proportion of pipeclay depictions from Britain (t=946).*

religious beliefs and practices of the people of Roman Britain. The rest of this chapter will therefore assess the different pipeclay types that have been found in Britain to see which deity, animal and human depictions – and thus beliefs - are most represented in the province.

### ***Deities***

The 627 deity figurines from Britain are represented in very uneven quantities. Figure 5.4 highlights how rare most deities are but interestingly female goddesses were the most commonly imported and used in Britain, with 599 figurines (95.5%) depicting goddesses compared with a mere 13 (2.1%) depicting male gods. Figure 5.5 shows that the female group is dominated by one deity - Venus (401 finds) - the most numerous deity (63.9% of all deities), as well as the most numerous pipeclay type in Britain overall (41.6% of the British assemblage) - followed

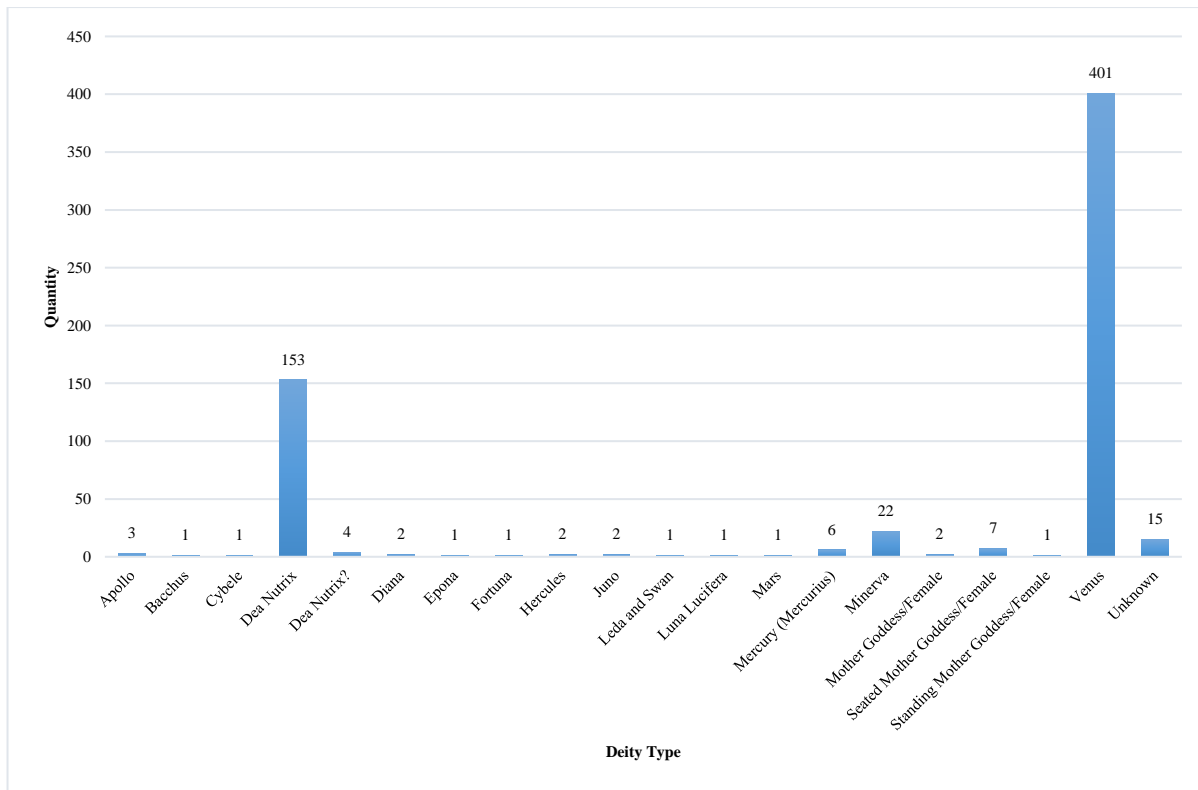


Fig. 5. 4. Quantity of deity types in Britain ( $t=401$ ).

by Dea Nutrix, Minerva and Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures, and the rarer types of Diana and Juno, Cybele, Epona, Fortuna, Leda and Swan, and Luna Lucifera. By contrast, whereas in the male figurine group (Fig. 5.6) Mercury is the most common type (six), there are no overwhelmingly favoured types amongst the generally low numbers; Apollo being only just ahead of Bacchus, Hercules and Mars. As suggested on the Continent (Boekel 1987: 238), this high proportion of female deities may indicate that figurines were mostly used by, and reflect the beliefs of, women in Britain (e.g. Jenkins 1958: 70, Boekel 1987: 238 and Bristow 2012: 16 all suggest this). However, there is no clear contextual evidence that this was true, and it is possible that they were used by both men and women. Yet there are some interesting iconographic differences between the two groups that may in fact reflect gendered religious beliefs and practices. On one hand the vast majority of female types have links with fertility,

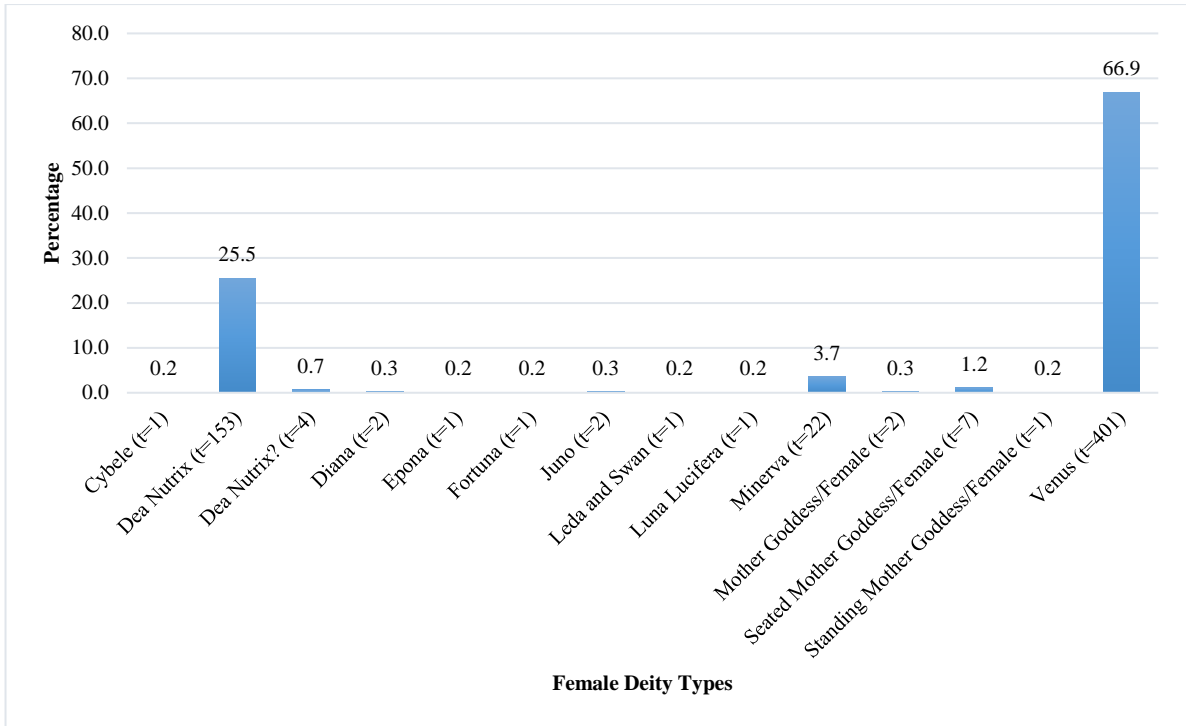


Fig. 5. 5. Proportion of female deities in Britain (t=599).

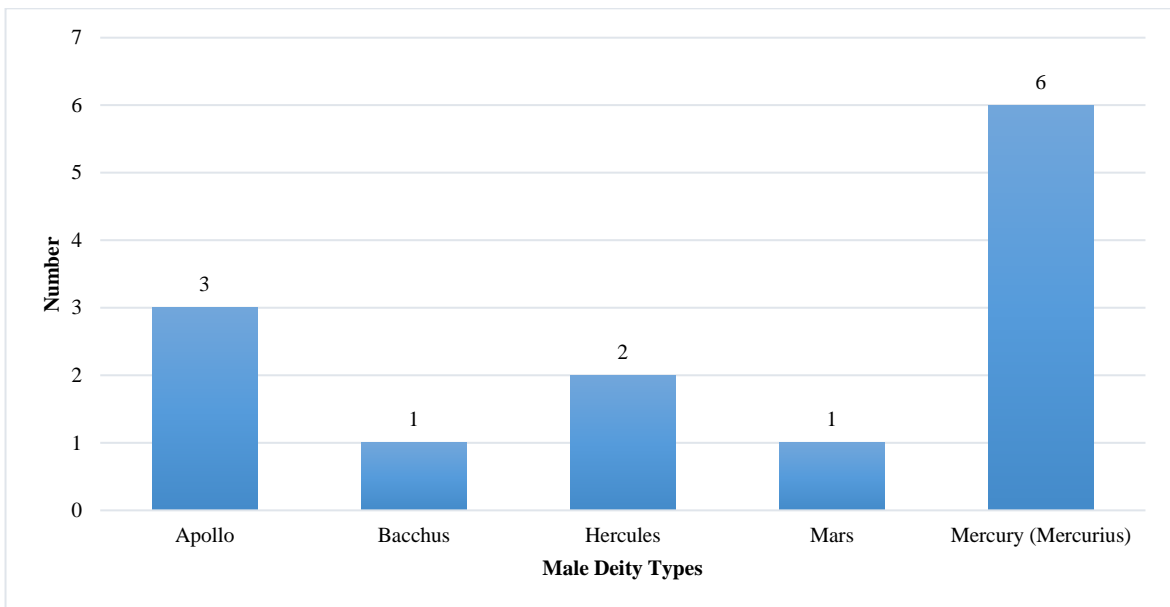
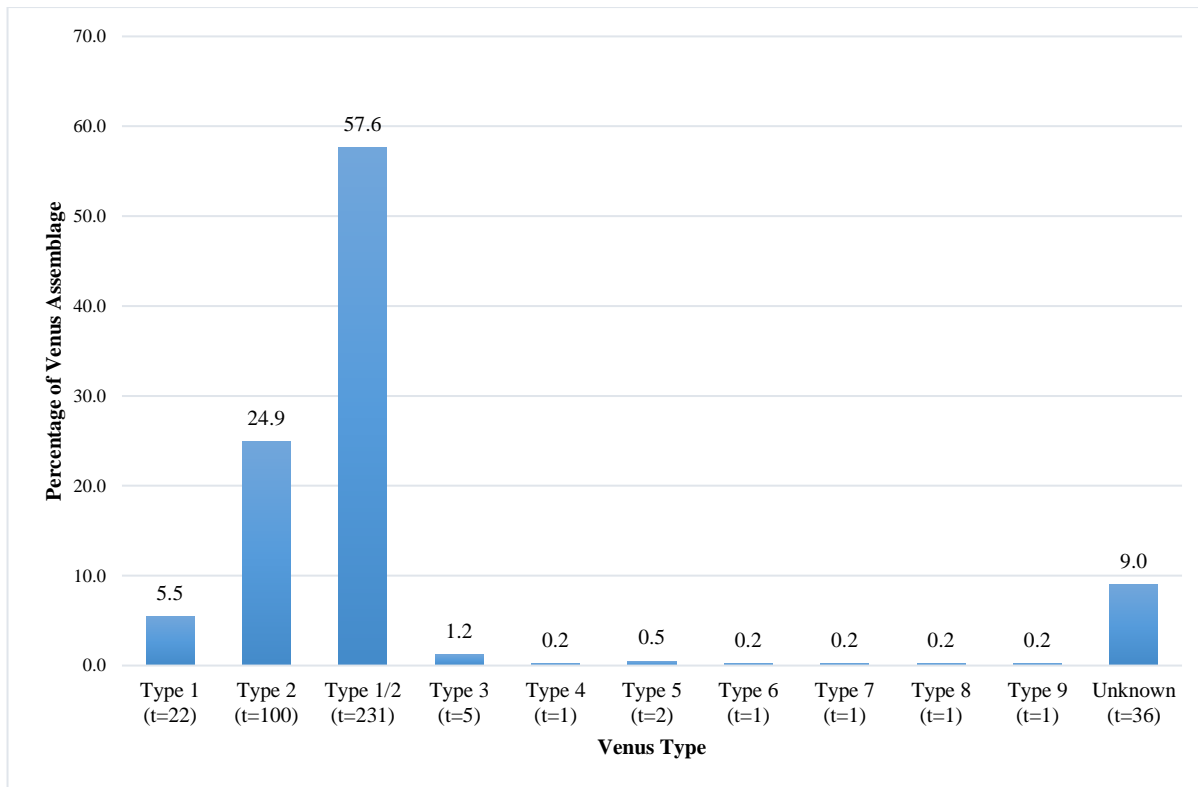


Fig. 5. 6. Number of male deities in Britain (t=13).

protection and regeneration, while on the other hand, the male gods are more concerned with subjects like agriculture, commerce, hunting and war.

Having said that, simply equating the association of what are quite a diverse group of pipeclay depictions with specific genders does not necessarily account for the diversity of people who might actually have used them. This is especially the case for the numerous female depictions that are often unsatisfactorily grouped together as 'Mother-Goddesses' linked with women given the various attributes and roles that each goddesses had in the Roman world. In this respect, fertility, of course, was not just the concern of women, but men as well, who no doubt were just as aware of the various powers that goddesses and some gods had who were appealed to by both men and women for fertility and other purposes, often through the giving of votive gifts on the Continent as well as in Britain. As such, the stereotypical association between, for example, female gods, including those in pipeclay, fertility and women is not the whole story and I would suggest that all pipeclay figurines and objects could have been used by either men or women for similar or different purposes. Schultz (2006: 6, 18) has recently pointed out that such engendered assumptions are often the result of women receiving marginal treatment in the study of Roman religion, with their cares and social importance often being reduced to those only concerning reproduction. This is clearly something that has affected pipeclay figurines studies, and should henceforth be reconsidered.

A range of mostly Venus and Dea Nutrix types were supplied to Britain, mainly from Central Gaul (see Chapter 4). However, most Romano-British people were probably not aware of the existence of rarer types and sub-types or how to get hold of them - nor necessarily even cared that they only owned a common type providing it represented the deity they wanted. For example, the 401 Venus figurines consist of nine different types (Fig. 5.7). The 100 Type 2 figurines (showing Venus holding her garment by the fingertips of her left hand) are most numerous comprising 25% of the Venus assemblage, followed by the 22 Type 1 figurines



*Fig. 5. 7. Proportion of Venus figurine types in Britain (t=401).*

(similar to Type 2 figurines but the garment hanging over Venus' left wrist). The remaining 12 rarer depictions of Venus include five Type 3 figurines (nos. 128-9, 165, 168, 645) and two of Type 5 (nos. 133, 816), as well as one Type 4 (no. 131), one Type 6 (no. 127), one Type 7 (no. 132), one Type 8 (no. 130) and one Type 9 figurine (no. 954).

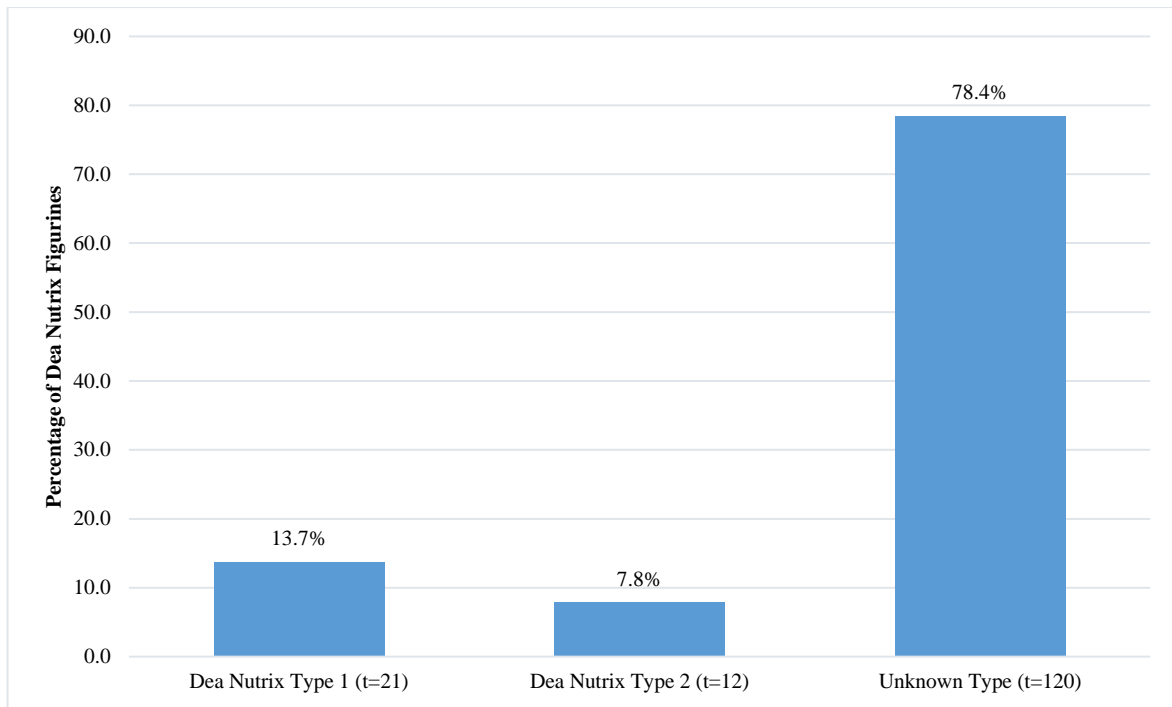
Type 1 and Type 2 figurines can be divided into further sub-types by drapery design, with specific designs associated with each Venus type. Many other designs are known on the Continent, suggesting a limited importation of sub-types to Britain from Gaul (see Appendix 1), but it is not possible to tell from which or how many workshops each sub-type came. The 14 Type 1 sub-types include eight figurines with elongated concentric folds (Garment A), one with regularly spaced diagonal folds (B), two with crescent folds (C), one with steep u-shaped folds (D), one with large studs with vertical folds and a studded hem (E), and one with large irregular folds (F). The larger group of 64 Type 2 Venus figurines with garments incorporate

27 with plain folds and hem (G), seven with plain folds and a pronounced collar (H), 23 with chevrons (I), two with concentric folds and a cross (J), three with shallow u-shaped folds (K), one with multiple irregular folds (L) and one with concentric and irregular folds (M).

Fifty-two Venus figurines can also be divided into hairstyle groups but as yet there are no strong typological relationships between hairstyles, garments and specific Venus types. A total of 13 front and four back hairstyles have been identified in the assemblage. Combed hair (F9) found on 12 figurines and plain bunches (F1) on seven figurines are the most common front hairstyles, whereas bands with buns with either curved (B1 - on 13 figurines) or straight (B2 – on 11 figurines) combed hair in the centre are the most common back hairstyles. Further details about Venus garment and hairstyle designs and their quantities and typological associations are available in Appendix 1.

The 153 depictions of Dea Nutrix are the second most common figurine type in Britain making up 24.4% of all deities and 16.1% of the entire British assemblage. Of the two types in Britain, the 21 Type 1 figurines depict the goddess nursing two infants while the 12 Type 2 figurines show her nursing one infant (Fig. 5.8). The 48 Dea Nutrix figurines that can be divided into sub-types by garment design include 33 with v-shaped folds (Garment A), four with divided v-shaped folds (B); three with Garments A or B, one with half v-shaped folds (C); three with double folds (D), possibly with a studded hem (E), and one with double folds with studs across the hem (E). A full iconographic and typological discussion of Dea Nutrix figurines including their various garment types is provided in Appendix 1.

The remaining deity figurines show that only a small range of other gods and goddesses were imported and used in Britain that probably reflect slightly different beliefs. After Dea Nutrix there are 22 figurines of Minerva (nos. 222-31, 428-32, 515-7, 593, 628, 683, 836), seven Seated Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures (nos. 59-63, 708, 867), six of Mercury (nos



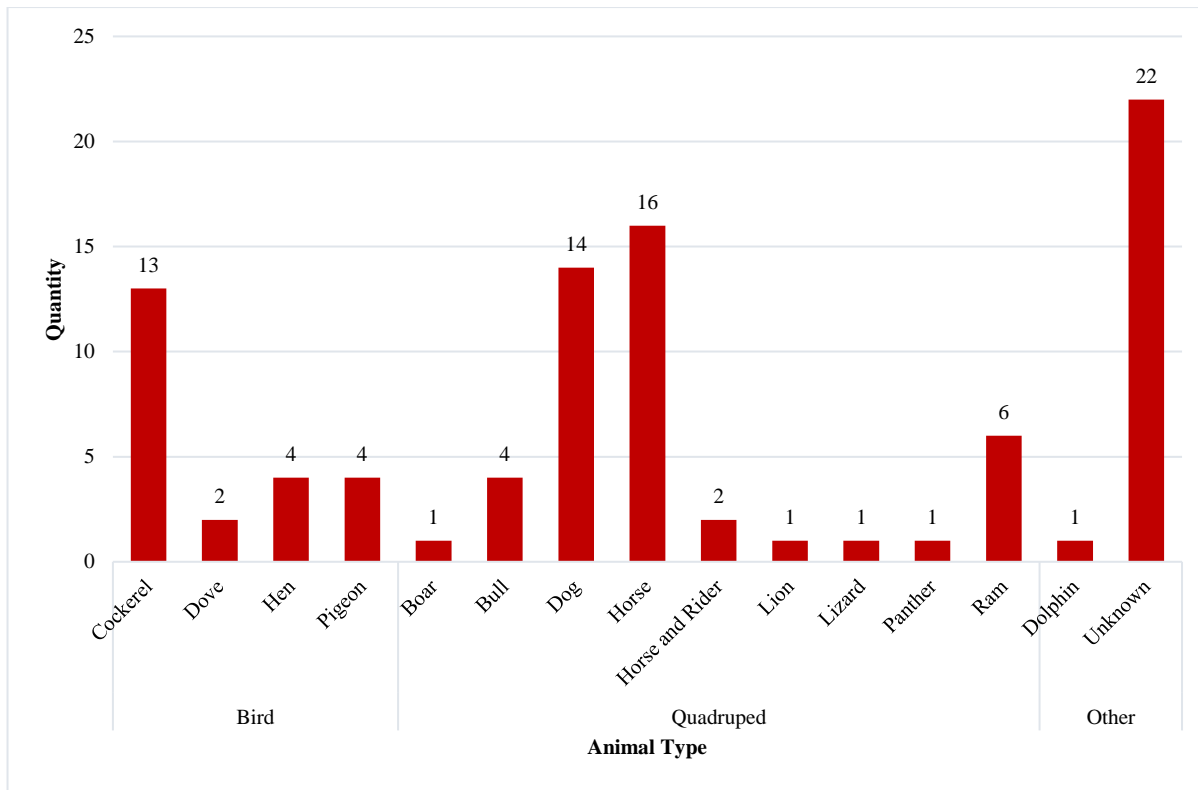
*Fig. 5. 8. Proportion of Dea Nutrix types in Britain (t=153).*

239, 634, 640, 851, 965, 971), three of Apollo (234-5, 728), two of Diana (nos. 219-20), two of Hercules (nos. 237, 639), two of Juno (nos. 518, 746) and two Standing Mother-Goddesses (nos. 64-5). The rarest deities in Britain are of Bacchus (no. 236), Cybele (no. 860), Epona (no. 233), Fortuna (no. 920), Leda and Swan (no. 232), Luna Lucifera (no. 221) and Mars (no. 240).

### ***Animals***

The 92 animal figurines recorded from the province consist of 47 quadrupeds and 23 birds (Fig. 5.9) but overall their smaller numbers suggest that they were either imported less often from Gaul or were generally much less popular with Romano-British people than deities. Most animals and birds did have religious significance and some animals are linked with specific gods: for example, cockerels are associated with Mercury, doves with Venus and horses with Epona - so this group also generally reflects beliefs about abundance and fertility in the natural





*Fig. 5. 9. Quantity of animal types in Britain (t=92)*

world (Toynbee 1973). The two eggs (nos. 619, 665) and the bale of wool (no. 335) are also probably linked to hens and sheep respectively, but are not counted in the animal group.

A range of different animals (14 in total) and therefore beliefs are represented in the form of pipeclay figurines in Britain. Horses are the most common animal with 16 finds (nos. 288-91, 530, 533-4, 660, 733? 737, 762?, 844, 881, 883, 911), followed by the 14 dogs (nos. 293-6, 350, 553-5, 682, 701-2, 755, 758, 810) and 13 cockerels (nos. 297-303, 520, 573, 641, 739, 747, 784). Less common are the six rams (nos. 622, 713-6, 744), four bulls (nos. 286, 620, 717, 736), four hens (nos. 305-7, 518), four pigeons (nos. 304, 308, 521, 817), two doves (nos. 522, 590) and two Horse and Rider figurines (nos. 274, 532). The rarest animal types are the boar (no. 847), lion (no. 531), lizard (no. 539), panther (no. 541) and dolphin (no. 540).

## Humans

The 58 human depictions made up of 30 figurines as well as 28 busts (Fig. 5.10) - the smallest group in the catalogue – were probably not as popular and as widely available as depictions of deities and animals but are a group that also reflect cultural links with both Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region. These objects generally appear to reflect attitudes and beliefs about the life-cycle and rites of passage, as well as protection and guardianship in the afterlife. The collection of 30 figurines features a mix of adult and youthful males produced in Gaul, such as the Standing Comic (no. 275), five Seated Comics (nos. 276-80), four Recumbent Figures (nos. 281-4) and four Thorn-Pullers (nos. 270-2, 711), and the rare Cloaked Figure (no. 712) probably from the Rhine-Moselle region. The rare gladiator (no. 273) may be from either Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle region. The 28 busts of women and young boys are a mix of mainly Gaulish but also Rhine-Moselle types. Gaulish products include thirteen busts of women of (nos. 242-50, 261, 588, 794, 913) excluding Type 4 women busts (nos. 251-3), five *Risus* busts

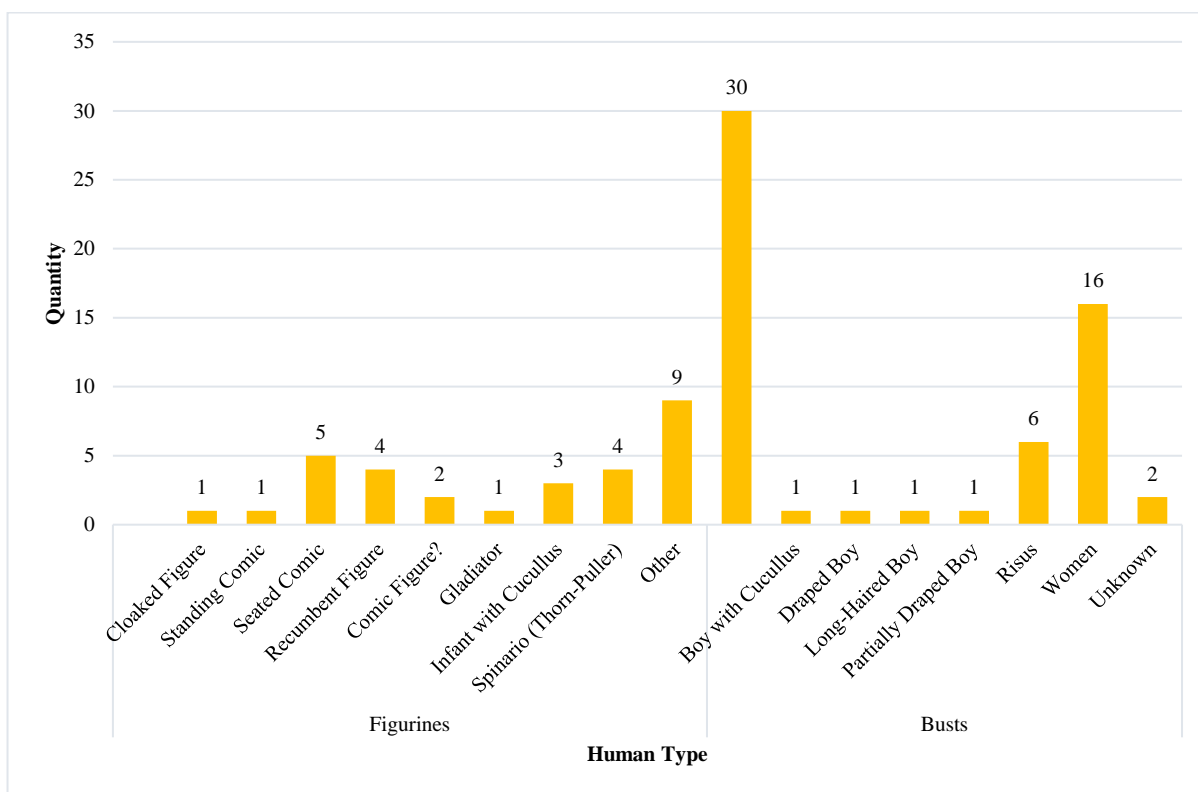


Fig. 5. 10. Quantity of human types in Britain (t=58).

(nos. 257-9, 709, 906), the Long-Haired Boy (no. 710) and the Partially Draped Boy (no. 256). Busts produced in the Rhine-Moselle region include the Boy with Cucullus (no. 260), the Draped Boy (no. 254) and the three Type 4 busts of women (nos. 251-3).

### ***Animal Vessels, Shrines and Masks***

A small number of other Roman pipeclay objects have been found in Britain that were probably used for slightly different purposes but still probably had some kind of religious significance. Perhaps the most interesting of these are the 21 animal vessels that most likely contained oils, ointments and perfumes for religious activities in temples, sanctuaries and graves (Boekel 1987: 776-7; Eckardt 1999: 66-7). The vessels, 12 of which are from a single grave at Colchester (nos. 312-323; Eckardt 1999: 67-8), depict a variety of animals with the eight crouching lions (nos. 315-6, 322, 325-6, 749, 767, 781) - the most common, followed by four crouching hares (nos. 312-4, 324), three boars (nos. 756, 321, 323), three sitting monkeys (nos. 317-8), one ibex (no. 320) and two handles from unknown types of vessel (no. 570, 976).

There are also 29 fragments from pipeclay *aediculae* that may have been used as domestic shrines, as well as seven 'theatrical', ritual or funerary mask fragments (nos. 137, 766, 769-71, 824, 952). It is still not certain what the function of these masks was but they may have been used in comedic theatre as well as for religious processions and ceremonies, and were also possibly used to protect the inhabitants of households from evil spirits (Martelli 2013a: 160).

### ***Discussion***

Quantifying the pipeclay figurine assemblage in Britain not only highlights important patterns of consumption but also provides an insight into the character of trade and supply and the mixed beliefs of the Romano-British population. A count of each type shows that deities (66%) are by

far the most common depiction, followed by animals (10%) and a small number of humans (6%). Of the individual types Venus (401) is by far the most common (41.6%), followed by 153 figurines of Dea Nutrix (15.9%), 22 of Minerva (2.3%), 16 horses (1.7%), 16 busts of women (1.7%), 14 dogs (1.5%) and 13 cockerels (1.4%), while the rarest types with single examples depict Bacchus, a boar, a Boy with Cucullus, a Cloaked Figure, Cybele, a dolphin, a Draped Boy, Epona, Fortuna, a Gladiator, Leda and Swan, a lion, a lizard, a Long-Haired Boy, Luna Lucifera, Mars, a panther, a Partially Draped Boy and a Standing Figure (Fig. 5.11). By and large these patterns probably quite accurately reflect the overall ratio of figurine types used in Britain, but production and chronological factors inevitably affect the proportions we see. For instance, the most common figurine types (e.g. Type 1 and Type 2 Venus figurines) were made in multiple workshops throughout the first to third centuries that increased the number

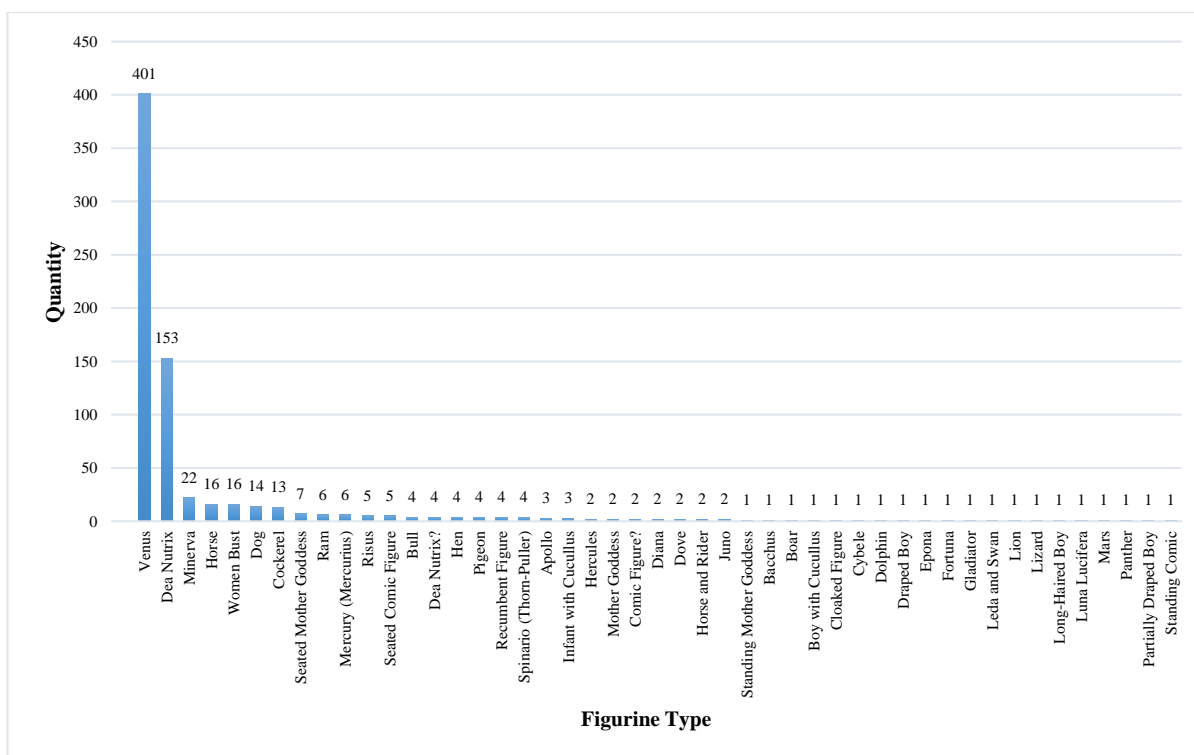


Fig. 5. 11. The quantities of pipeclay figurine types from Britain (common to rarest).

that were exported to Britain, while most rare types appear to have been produced on a much smaller scale for a shorter period making it less likely that they were exported to Britain in high numbers. Alternatively, the number of some early types (such as *Vénus à Gaine* and the Comic Figures), as well as the animal vessels, are probably low because their production predates the pipeclay market in Britain, while the infrequency of some other rare mid-second to third century types (e.g. Type 3 and 4 Venus figurines, the lion (no. 265), some shrines, as well as the masks) is probably because they were made at the time that the market was declining.

Examining the proportion of types in each group of deities, animals and humans shows even more detailed trends of figurine consumption in Britain. This is still susceptible to the dating issues outlined above but is useful for highlighting the range of different beliefs of the Romano-British population. It also emphasises the overwhelming preference that people in Britain had for Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines as no single types dominate the animal and human groups like these two goddesses dominate the deity group, as well as the entire British assemblage overall. People did use a range of other types though. For deities, Minerva is the most common type after Venus and Dea Nutrix, with Bacchus, Cybele, Epona, Fortuna, Leda and Swan, Luna Lucifera, Mars and *Vénus à Gaine* the rarest. Of the animals, horses and dogs feature most regularly with rams, hens, bulls and pigeons less so, and boars, lions, lizards, panthers and dolphins the least. Meanwhile, most human depictions are busts of women followed by *Risus*, Seated Figures, Recumbent Figures, Thorn-Pullers, Infants with Cuculli and Comics, and single finds like the Draped Boy, Gladiator, Long-Haired Infant, Partially Draped Boy and Standing Figure. Animal vessels (in their various animal types) and shrine fragments are rare but overall more common than Minerva figurines. Mask fragments are also relatively rare in Britain but appear in greater numbers than the rarest deity, animal and human types.

These consumption patterns are important for several reasons. Firstly, they provide a useful insight into the character of the use of pipeclay objects in Britain not just in terms of

availability, but also trade and supply to and within the province. Surveying all of the different figurine forms and types shows that Britain was primarily supplied by the Central Gaulish industry from the first to third centuries with other Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle region based workshops making up a small proportion of the imports during this time (Fig. 5.12 – see also Chapter 4). Many of the common types from Gaul may have been exported with shipments of samian that were maybe produced in the same areas or workshops, or arrived with individual merchants travelling from province to province. Some of the rarer figurine types from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region may also have arrived in Britain via these routes, but it is also possible that some of them arrived as the personal possessions of people who travelled to Britain from the Continent. This is likely for some of the more unique assemblages, like the Colchester Child's Grave, as well as the other child's grave at Arrington.

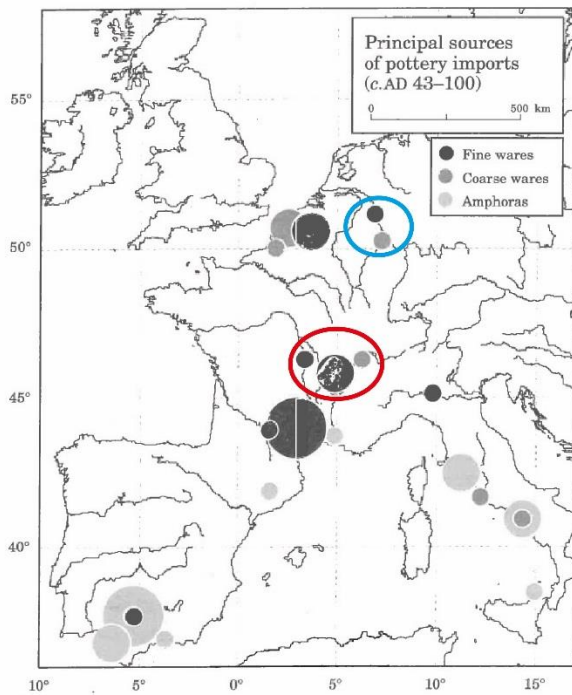
Comparing the supply pattern of pipeclay objects to the supply pattern of Central Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle region pottery imported into Britain from the first to fourth centuries (Fig. 5.13; Tyers 1996: 56-77, figs. 32, 39, 41, 42) also illustrates that although pipeclay objects were supplied in smaller quantities and from fewer sources than other wares overall, the supply patterns of both (i.e. fine wares like samian) from these production regions are very similar. The production dates of each pipeclay type are given in Appendix 1, while a chronological assessment of pipeclay consumption in Britain is provided in Chapter 6, so here I will just quickly note some evidence that shows how the supply of pipeclay objects and pottery was closely linked in the first two centuries but that the dynamics changed after that.

Like early pipeclay types that were all supplied to Britain from Gaul, the maps in Figure 5.13 show that the general supply of other pottery to Britain from the first century until the late second century was also predominantly from workshops in Central Gaul and that only a small proportion of imported pottery wares came from the Rhine-Moselle region. However, while

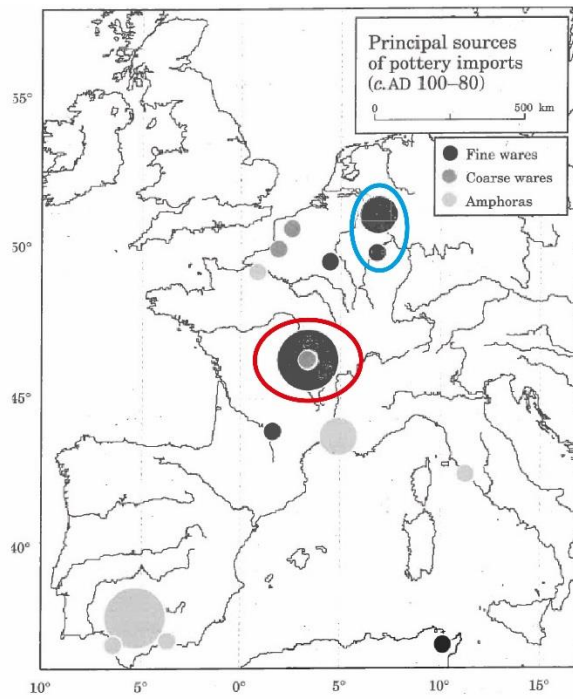


*Fig. 5. 12. The supply of pipeclay types to Britain..*

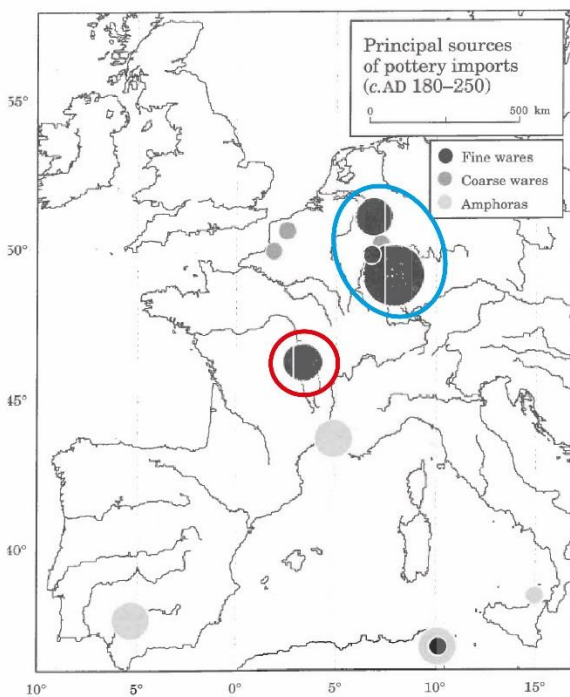
the supply of pottery from the Rhine-Moselle region surpassed that from Gaul from the late second century into the third century, a greater proportion of pipeclay objects in Britain were still supplied by Central Gaul despite the growing availability of other pipeclay types and



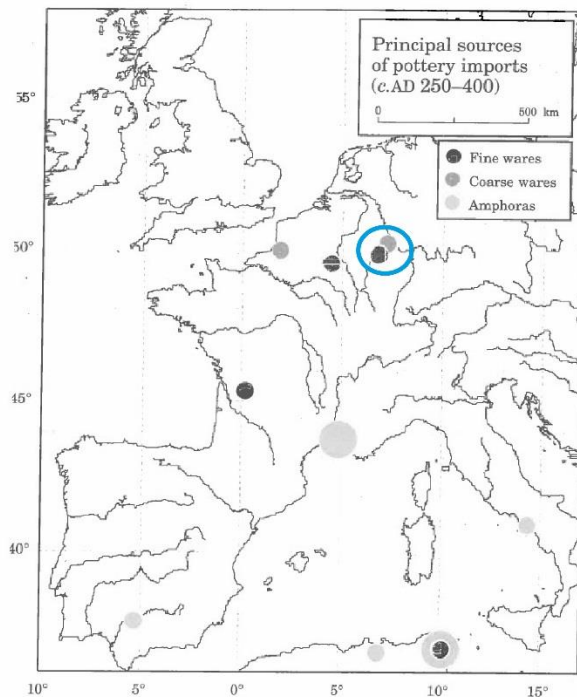
32 Sources of pottery imports to Britain, c. AD 43–100



39 Sources of pottery imports to Britain, c. AD 100–80



41 Sources of pottery imports to Britain, c. AD 180–250



42 Sources of pottery imports to Britain, c. AD 250–400

Fig. 5. 13. Sources of Roman pottery imports to Britain from the first to fourth century, after Tyers 1996: figs. 32, 39, 41, 42.

Red circles = the Central Gaulish production region where figurines were also made;  
 Blue circles = the Rhine-Moselle production region where figurines were also made.



pottery wares supplied by the Rhine-Moselle region. This evidence suggests that while the Central Gaulish pottery industry slowly declined, the producers of pipeclay objects in the same region fared slightly better and resisted the growing competition from the workshops in the Rhine-Moselle region until the third century when both industries in Gaul declined severely as those in the Rhine-Moselle area continued slightly longer. This also shows that although the religious beliefs and practices of Romano-British people diversified over time, people still regarded their close religious ties with Gaul as being generally more important than, say, their choice of tableware. However, it must be remembered that some of the pipeclay numbers that these trends are based on are small.

The variety of different pipeclay types found in Britain also asks questions about the range of religious beliefs that were held by the Romano-British population. On one hand it may be assumed that the owner of any given figurine type knew who or what it depicted and what it represented, but it is perfectly possible that some people may well have owned them and not known, and also never used them for their intended purpose, or in a completely different way altogether. Thus some people would have known about the fertility, protection and regeneration ideas associated with the large proportion of female mother-goddesses and associated animals, as well as the associations that many human busts have with ideas about the life-course and guardianship in the afterlife, but others possibly did not. The figurines from burials also suggest that a small group of people possibly even emphasised the meaning of certain figurines, busts and animal vessels by using them in this way and these are discussed more in Chapter 9.

Another interesting point here is that although the overall concept of making and using small pipeclay objects like figurines and busts (i.e. human forms and specific deities) for religious purposes is essentially a Roman one, the execution of the pipeclay objects from Britain is provincial (mainly Gaulish) – as is the emphasis on specific gods and beliefs. In Appendix 8 I discuss how this idea applies to Venus figurines in particular but it could equally apply to

other types such as Dea Nutrix and chicken figurines as well. At the same time, rare and ‘exotic’ figurine types originating from the Rhine-Moselle region may reflect the influence of different cultural and religious beliefs from this region – some of which have associations with eastern traditions. As such it is likely that some pipeclay figurines relate to certain regional beliefs in Britain - a topic discussed more in Chapter 7 - where the distributions of different types are analysed in detail. Such differences could also reflect differences between military, urban and rural populations too.

In general it is hard to tell what the number of pipeclay objects can tell us about consumer choice in Britain. Overall the total number of pipeclay objects that were on average imported into the province totals less than five per year and apart from Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines - that are themselves are not that common – most are quite rare finds. This seems to suggest that as a group, pipeclay objects were not available to everyone in the province and it is likely that people had to know where to get one if they wanted one. However, this is not to say that everyone necessarily cared or knew about how many different types or sub-types of each that were available in Britain or other provinces, especially if it was the only one available from the nearest trader or market. Some of the rarest types may also have been chosen for this reason. However, these are probably more likely to have been more deliberate choices based on the specific beliefs they symbolised and were probably much harder to get hold, raising the possibility that they were brought to Britain by people who had picked them up in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region before coming to Britain. Yet even some of the most common types, of which only a handful were on average imported to Britain per year, may not have been bought locally and may have arrived as people’s personal possessions as well.

As such, although it is hard to know if the patterns of pipeclay consumption in Britain is more to do with trade and supply or consumer choice, what is clear is that their consumption in Britain did not necessarily constitute ‘normal’ religious, cultural and economic practice but

something different, and the practices people used them for is discussed in more detail in the following chapters. However, some people evidently had the knowledge and resources needed to acquire them, and others the rare types that are again quite different from the common varieties that most people in the province had access to. This subtle pattern of rare types use is difficult to interpret but one idea – as suggested by Durham (2010: 305-37) for rare metal figurine types - is that the people who owned rarer pipeclay types were possibly of a slightly higher social status than the consumers of common types, and that these were possibly people who had more diverse cultural and religious views and beliefs in Britain. Additional contextual analysis of the common and rare pipeclay forms and types in Chapter 7 highlights this further,

Overall, quantifying the pipeclay forms and types from Britain reveals important consumption patterns that provide valuable insights into the trade and supply dynamics of consumption, and also the varied beliefs of the people who used them. It also raises important questions about consumer choice and demonstrates that rare types represent some kind of ‘otherness’ that probably reflect the activities of a slightly different social group – possibly one of a slightly higher social status – than most of the people who used more common types. Further evidence supporting such social differences is given as part of a later analysis that assesses the social distributions of common and rare figurine types in more detail (Chapter 7). For now though, I turn to the important task of situating these consumption patterns within the wider context of pipeclay supply and consumption in Continental markets and what this means.

### **Consuming the Gods in the Roman Provinces**

I will now compare the composition of the British pipeclay assemblage with that of other collections from areas covering other north-western provinces in order better understand how

the trade and supply of these objects differed between regions and explore what this might indicate about the religious beliefs, and possible practices, of the people in these different areas.

To do this the Romano-British assemblage has been compared to the quantities of pipeclay forms and types from four different Continental catalogues covering a wide geographical span of modern countries: Rouvier-Jeanlin's (1972: 91-405) catalogue of 1288 pipeclay objects in the National Archaeological Museum of France that covers the finds from France; Gonzenbach's (1986/1995) catalogue of 232 objects from Switzerland; Boekel's (1987) collection of 343 pipeclay figurines and masks from the Netherlands; and Beenhouwer's (2005) catalogue of 1146 pipeclay objects from Belgium (Fig. 5.14). The aim of this study was by no means to carry out a full review of all the Continental material; indeed, the older of these catalogues are considerably out of date and do not include recently excavated material. What they do offer though is a useful snap-shot as to the general character of pipeclay consumption in each region. The catalogues were also chosen specifically because of their proximities to Britain; for example, it may be expected that the two catalogues representing the collections from France and Belgium would perhaps share more traits and thus cultural connections with Britain than the other regions included.

Several factors make it difficult to use these collections in this way and draw reliable comparisons between them, other than being quite old. Firstly, some of these Continental catalogues are primarily based on museum collections meaning that they are usually strongly influenced by curatorial biases that include the selection and preservation of more complete specimens rather than smaller fragments. Rouvier-Jeanlin's (1972) collection is a good example of this even though many fragments are also included. The catalogues by Gonzenbach (1986/1995), Boekel (1987), Beenhouwer (2005) and, to some extent, this collection from Britain also include a considerable proportion of museum-based collections and are thus



*Fig. 5. 14. Pipeclay object quantities from Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland.*

subject to similar concerns, but are more representative as they include all of the complete objects as well as the fragments from the latest excavations up to the time of publication. Secondly, as mentioned in Chapter 1, there is a concern that some of these Continental

catalogues record the finds from modern geographic countries, that often incorporate parts of several Roman provinces and areas. For example, France covers only part of the multiple provinces that made up Gaul; the Netherlands (see Boekel 1987) only the *Limes* and part of Germania Inferior, Switzerland (see Gonzenbach 1986, 1995) Raetia and a small part of Germania Superior, and Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005) only part of Roman Gallia Belgica. Most of the finds in more recent catalogues are from provenanced find spots so that we know for certain which province they are from. Nevertheless, to make more transparent comparisons with large enough corpora I will continue to treat these regions as modern countries rather than Roman provinces and areas to show how different consumption and supply was between them.

Thirdly, the vastly different quantities of objects recorded in each of these catalogues can make it very hard to determine any meaningful differences. While the largest collections from France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972), Belgium (Beehouwer 2005) and now Britain record 1288, 1146 and 946 objects respectively, the collections from the Netherlands (Boekel 1987) and Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986/1995) are much smaller with only 343 and 232 finds each. To alleviate this problem and draw more significant comparisons, each group of deity, animal, human depictions has been quantified as a percentage of the total assemblage from a region. For ease of quantification all objects of the same general type were grouped together irrespective of any stylistic differences that can occasionally indicate different production regions: for example, Venus figurines and birds produced in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle area respectively were put in the same group.

Another problem was that identical types were sometimes recorded in different interpretative groups. For example, Beenhouwer (2005) recorded Dea Nutrix figurines as ‘Women with children’ and these were moved into the deity group, but there is still a question about whether these actually depict a goddess or a breastfeeding woman, especially when she appears to be wearing recognisable Gallo-Roman clothing rather than anything obviously

divine (see Appendix 1 and Rothe 2009, 2013 for a discussion about such dress). Moving these figurines from the deity to human group would have a significant impact on the patterns seen in Britain as well as in other provinces, but for this study I have kept them in the deity group in line with the common consensus in the Continental catalogues. This was the most significant inconsistency found, but the task does highlight the importance of accurate recording and the benefits of a complete photographic record to cross-reference between catalogues.

Overall, all of this means that like is not always being compared with like in terms of the character of each collection or the quantities and specific types found in each region. As a result there are limits to what we can learn about the trade of and religious practices linked with pipeclay objects between regions from just a general quantification of deities, animals and human forms. Indeed, a more detailed impression is attainable by analysing the proportions of individual pipeclay types from each region – a topic that is covered in more detail below. For now though several general meaningful similarities and differences can still be highlighted.

### ***Consuming Deity, Animal and Human Figurines Between Regions***

Pipeclay consumption was not uniform across the Roman provinces, with regional differences that probably relate to chronology and trade as well as religious choice and practice. Figure 5.15 illustrates that the high proportion of deities and lower proportion of animals and humans in Britain is a trend shared with France and the Netherlands, but Britain has a much higher proportion of deities and a much lower proportion of animals and humans than the other collections. Britain also has a lower proportion of humans than France and the Netherlands where this trend is reversed, if only marginally in the latter area. In contrast, animals are most common in Belgium and Switzerland, surpassing deities and humans considerably, but in Switzerland humans are more numerous than deities, which are the least well represented form

in this region. These patterns could mean many different things. On the one hand, they could reflect the trade, supply and availability of different forms in each region. If this is the case, *Britannia* had a greater supply of deities than other forms during the Roman period compared even to neighbouring provinces and regions.

In terms of supply levels (Fig. 5.16), the collections from Britain and France contain mostly Gaulish types, suggesting that these markets were mainly supplied by Gaulish workshops; a small number of objects in each assemblage indicates only a limited supply from the Rhine-Moselle region. Contrastingly, the collections in Belgium and the Netherlands have more types suggesting a greater, if not primary, supply of products from the Rhine-Moselle area, but with different proportions of deities, animals and humans probably reflecting regional preferences. The objects from Switzerland, meanwhile, are a greater mix of Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types. This is probably because the province was positioned equidistant from each production centre, but the different proportions of deity, animal and human depictions again suggests that people made slightly different choices here than elsewhere.

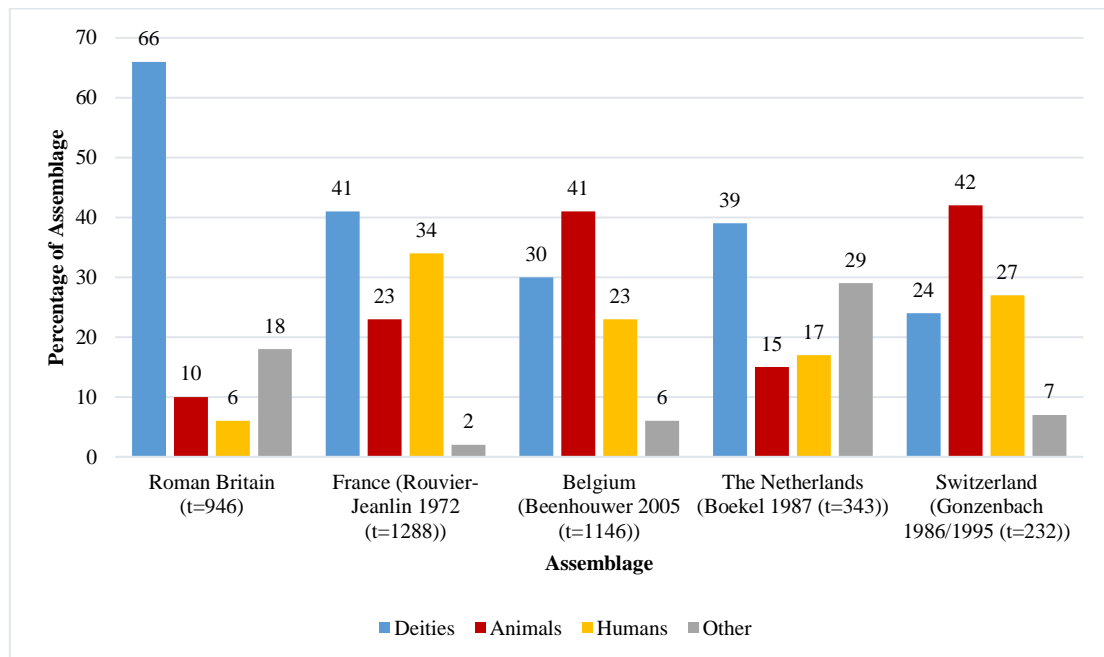
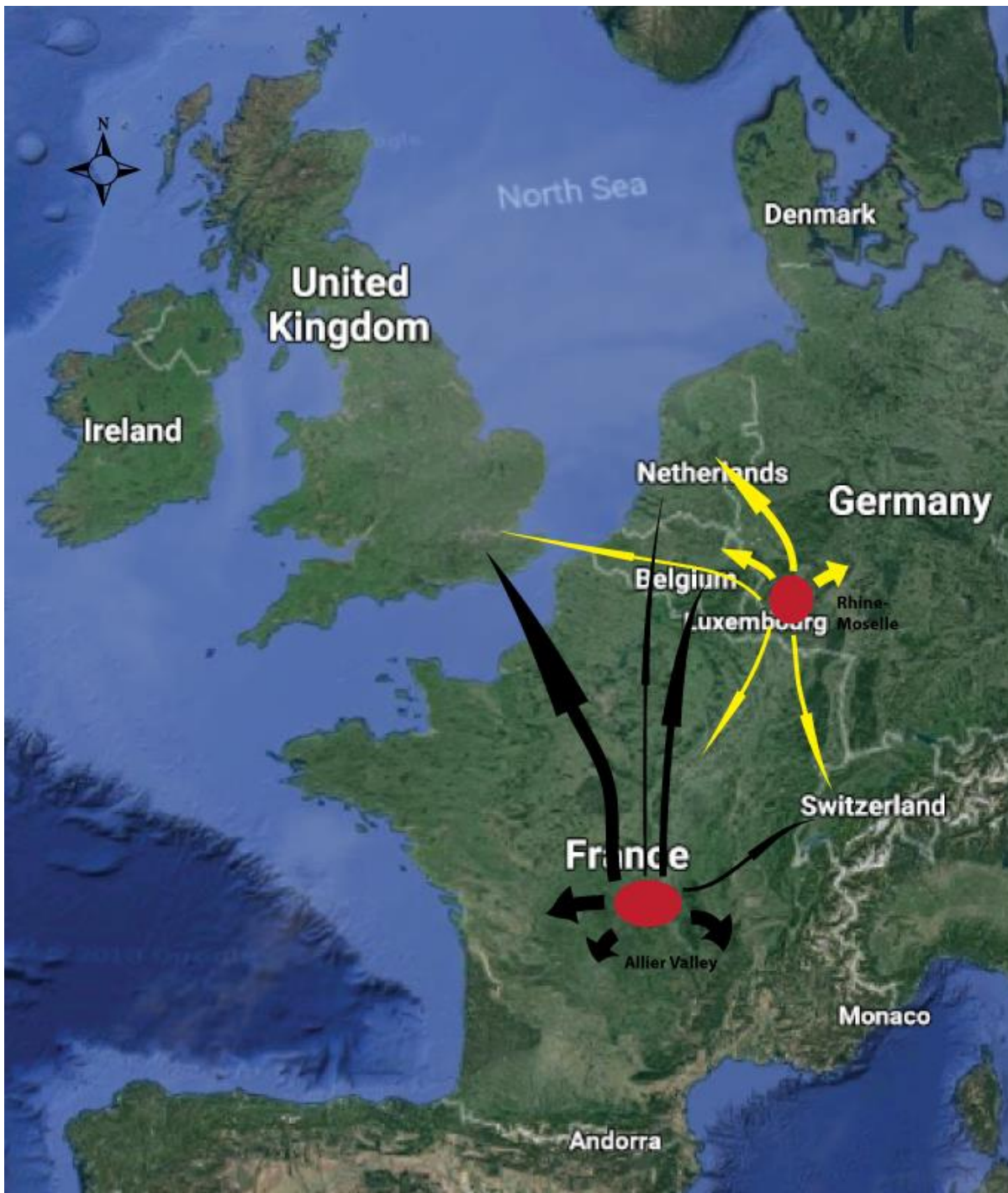


Fig. 5. 15. Proportion of deity, animal and human figurines from Britain and Continental regions.



It is possible that some of these patterns are the result of production dates. In Britain, the high number of deities is partially because these are mostly later second century imports while many of the animals and humans are earlier first century types. Switzerland also comes into contact with Rome much earlier than Britain so human figurines and busts, and some deities, of earlier date were common there. This is also partially true in the Netherlands where the higher proportion of animals and humans could reflect a more substantial supply but this region was also supplemented with a greater amount of later Rhine-Moselle products. The smaller proportion of deities here suggests that they were less popular than in Britain and France. Date alone does not account for the lower proportion of deities in Belgium and especially Switzerland as most are second century Gaulish imports and later second to third century Rhine-Moselle types suggesting that gods were just less popular in these areas. Most of the animals and humans are also second to third century types, suggesting that their proportions likely reflect more about their popularity (especially animals) than anything else.

Distances from production centres would have affected how long it took objects to reach markets and their availability in different provinces and regions. In France, the greater number of early and later Gaulish forms shows that this was a market supplied by local production workshops. In Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands the number of early Gaulish deities, animals and humans is small, but later second century products are more common. Belgium and the Netherlands were supplied by a greater proportion of second to third century animal and human types from the closer Rhine-Moselle region workshops than Britain was. This is likewise the case in Switzerland, but interestingly here there is a higher proportion of later second-third century deities, animals and humans from the Rhine-Moselle region despite the province's closer proximity to Central Gaulish workshops, suggesting a preference for products from the Rhine-Moselle region in this particular region.



*Fig. 5. 16. Exportation of Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle products to different regions.*

Britain, however, was almost entirely supplied from Gaulish workshops located further away from the first to third century, with London – the likely entry point for most objects – around 750km away from the Allier Valley as the crow flies, while the distance between

London and the Rhine-Moselle region is shorter at about 600km. Shipping routes were also longer and therefore more expensive from Gaul than from the Rhine-Moselle region (see Taylor & Cleere 1978), although traders evidently saw the extra expense of transporting Central Gaulish goods to Britain as being worthwhile. For objects produced in the Rhine-Moselle region transportation involved a short river journey (see Campbell 2012: 246-90 especially) along the Rhine before a relatively quick trip across the sea to London. Some of the Gaulish potteries may have used this route as well, accessing the Rhine by road or along rivers like the Saône, the Doubs or the Rhône (e.g. Whittaker 1994: 98-101), but most of the time Gaulish objects sent to Britain probably undertook a more lengthy sea journey after an initial trip along the Loire to the west coast of Gaul, or the Seine that is a little closer to Britain on Gaul's north coast – a trip that would have included moving them by road at some point (Jenkins 1977: 227-31). The earlier establishment of the Gaulish pottery industry and the higher volume of goods it sent to Britain during the first and second centuries probably helped these workshops successfully compete with the growing output of producers in the Rhine-Moselle region from the late second century, but this also furthermore emphasises the closer cultural contacts that Britain had with Gaul.

This section has thus shown that supply and consumer choice differed between regions. In other words, the relative proportions of pipeclay objects in a region such as Britain do not simply reflect those of Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle region, but a diverse mix. While economic and chronological factors are clearly important, there may also have been differences in practice. Alongside animals - most of which are associated with specific deities - the high proportion of deities could indicate that pipeclay objects had a more widespread religious use or acted as children's toys. The same could also be said about the higher proportion of animal and human forms from other mainland regions, where they were possibly used more widely as

toys or in domestic shrines and temples as religious symbols and ritual objects, as is usually confirmed by analysing their contexts.

Next I will explore in greater detail how the supply, meaning and use of pipeclay objects differed between Britain and other Continental regions. The first way to do this is to assess the number and proportions of each deity, animal and human group, as well as the common and rare types, found in each region. This follows below. The second way is to consider the spatial and social distribution of the figurines from Britain and compare this to the Continental material, which is touched upon in Chapter 7. Finally, I will also compare pipeclay figurines to the types and distributions of metal figurines in Britain to highlight any differences in the meaning and function of these two figurine types.

### *Consuming Deity Figurines Between Regions*

Counting the number of deity types from each region reveals interesting patterns of supply and use between them. In Britain, there is a larger range of types (22) compared with Belgium (21), the Netherlands (17), Switzerland (12) and France (13). The quantity of types in Belgium and the Netherlands are probably higher because a range of both Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types were supplied to these areas. There are also more deity types in Roman Britain than in France. This is surprising because we would expect a greater range of such types on production sites. This could be the result of my very detailed recording of types in Roman Britain and my simplistic summary of French data, but it could also be a genuine British preference for deities, as well as the impact of Rhine-Moselle products (i.e. figurine types like Bacchus, Cybele, Juno, Luna and Mars).

Taken as a whole, the iconography of the deity figurine groups might indicate something about the different social groups of men and women that might have used them in

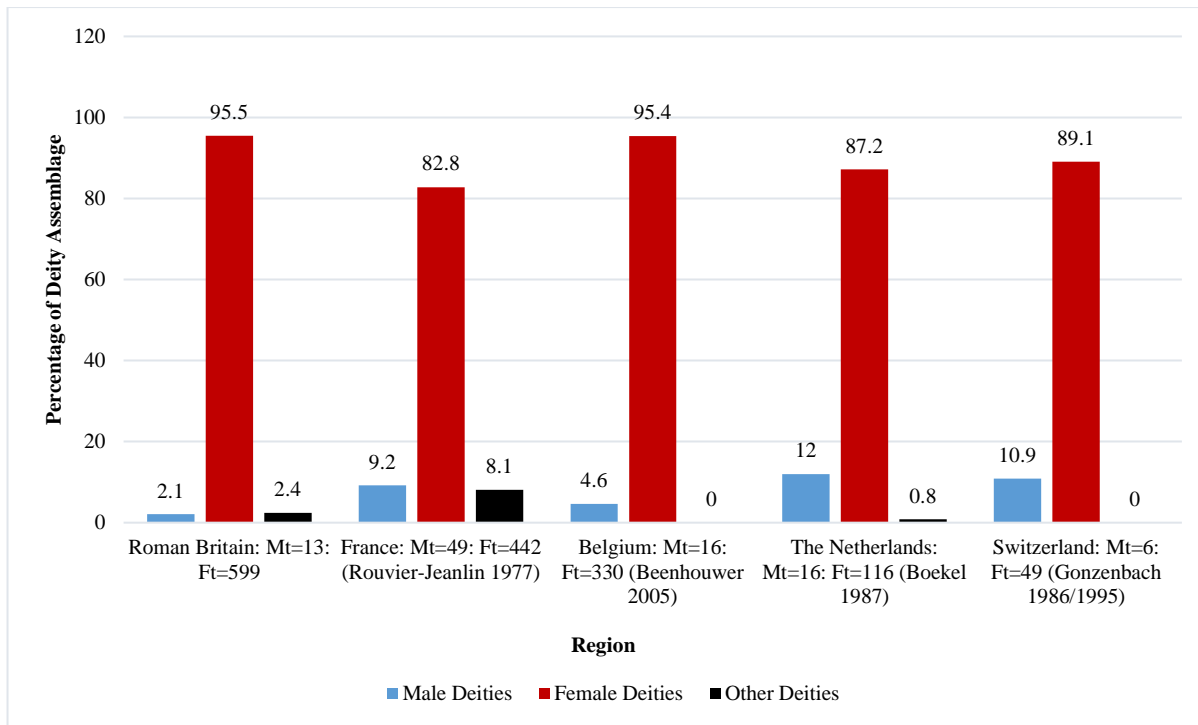


Fig. 5. 17. The proportion of gods and goddesses in Britain and Continental regions.

Britain and Continental areas. In Britain, the 627 deities overwhelmingly consisting of 599 (95.5%) goddesses and a mere 13 (2.5%) male gods indicating that they might have been primarily used by women is a pattern broadly seen within the Continental material, but in different proportions (Fig. 5.17). The difference between males and females is similar in Britain and Belgium but is smaller in France, the Netherlands and Switzerland.. This could mean that deities were being used by more men in these regions, or that women were using a greater range of male types than in Britain.

Comparing deity types from each region highlights other important differences in supply and consumer choice (Figs. 5.18-19). Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines are common in all regions, with the former usually more so than the latter. The exception is in the Netherlands where the absence of Dea Nutrix figurines suggests a small regional change in the preferences of mother-goddesses worshipped. A small range of similar mother-goddess types (including

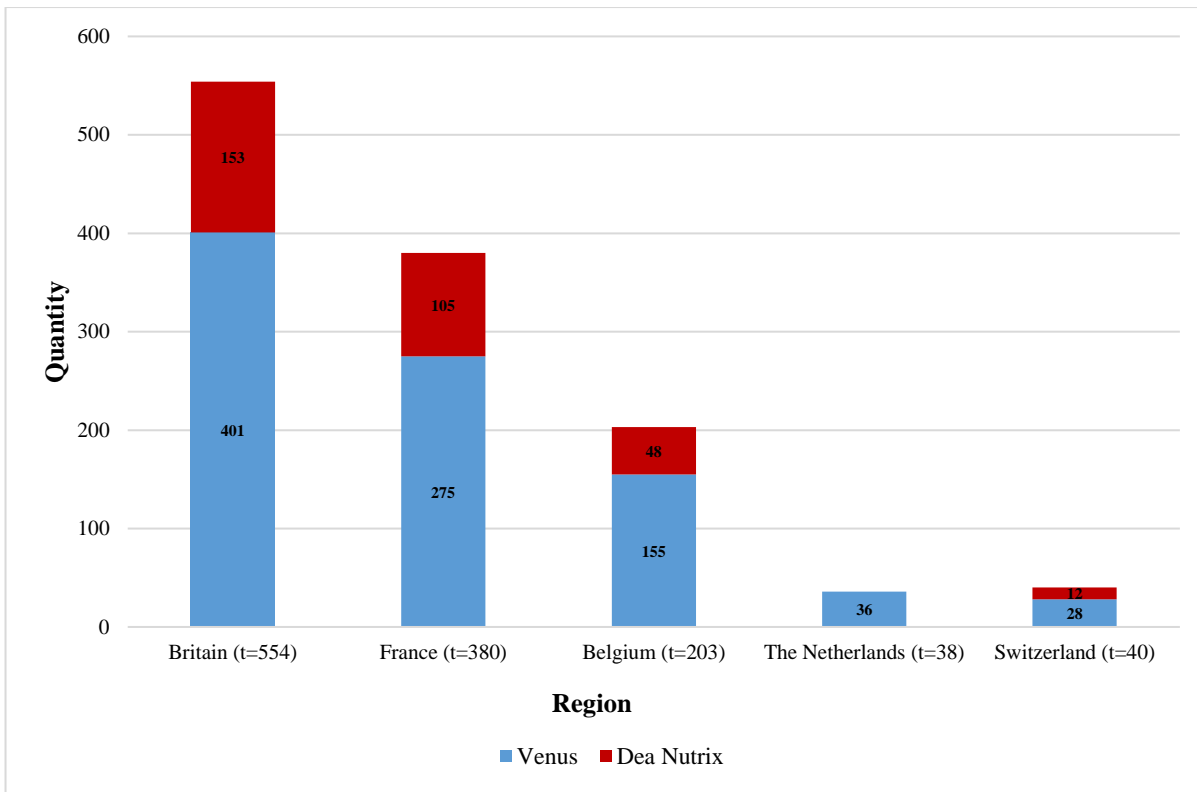


Fig. 5. 18. Quantity of Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines from Continental regions.

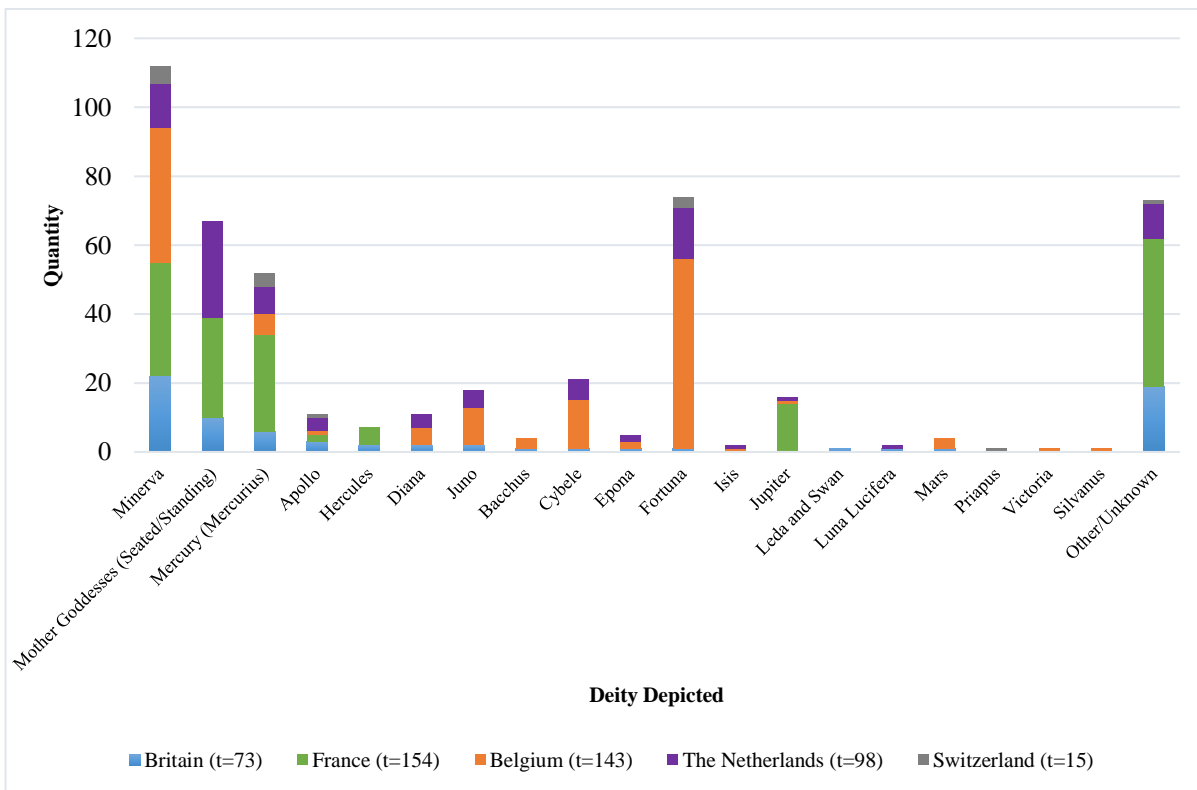


Fig. 5. 19. Quantity of other deity types from Continental regions.

Dèesse Protectorices and the Matronae and Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures seated with animals) from Britain, France and the Netherlands also suggest broadly shared preferences, as do the Minerva and Mercury figurines that feature in various quantities in each region. However, Minerva is more popular in Britain, France, the Netherlands and Belgium than in Switzerland, while figurines of Fortuna are much more common in Belgium followed by the Netherlands.

Rarer deities, meanwhile, reflect a much more complex picture of supply and consumer choice across the Continent. Few rare types are found in all of the regions. The only example of this is of Apollo who appears in Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Other rare types are not as widely distributed and suggest that religious beliefs were quite mixed between the regions. For example, close connections between Britain and France are again highlighted by figurines of Hercules that only appear in these two regions. On the other hand, deities that appear in Britain and other regions but not in France include Bacchus and Mars who only appear again in Belgium, Cybele, Diana, Epona and Juno who are all depicted in Belgium and the Netherlands, and Luna who only appears in Britain and the Netherlands.

Rare figurine types indicative of different localised trends on the Continent include Isis in Belgium and the Netherlands, Priapus in France and the Netherlands, and Silvanus and Victoria from Belgium. Likewise, the figurine of Leda and the Swan is so far unique to Britain and is the only one of its type to ever be recorded.

While most common pipeclay figurines of fertility and mother-goddesses (i.e. Venus, Dea Nutrix and to some extent Minerva) are more widely distributed than other epigraphic and non-epigraphic dedications to such cults in Britain (Jones & Mattingly 1990: 270-2, Map 8:7; 283, Map 8:19), dedications made in other ways to deities rare in pipeclay are more frequent in military and civilian contexts. For example, Mars (*ibid*: 267, Maps 8:4-5), Hercules (*ibid*: 270,

Map 8:6), and Apollo (*ibid*: 272, Map 8:7) were more commonly revered in northern and southern Britain, as are other Celtic and Germanic deities overall (*ibid*: 276-80, Maps 8:14-15 and 8:17; see also Chapter 7). The latter is also true for many of these gods on the Continent (see Derks 2008: 95-101, Fig. 3.5 for Hercules and Mars, and Figs 3.6-7 for indigenous gods associated with Mars, Mercury and Apollo). These differences probably do not reflect divergences in core religious beliefs but do mean that pipeclay was not the preferred way to worship certain deities.

If deities directly reflect religious beliefs, common mother-goddess types such as Venus and Dea Nutrix and to a lesser extent Minerva, show that ideas about fertility, protection and childrearing were widespread across these regions, but are particularly prominent in Britain and France, while types like Fortuna reflect a variation of this theme in the Netherlands and Switzerland. Common types probably reflect the views of the wider population, whereas rarer types probably symbolise the specific views of individuals or groups, which are much more varied and eclectic in each provincial region.

#### *Typological and Sub-Typological Comparisons - Venus and Dea Nutrix Figurines*

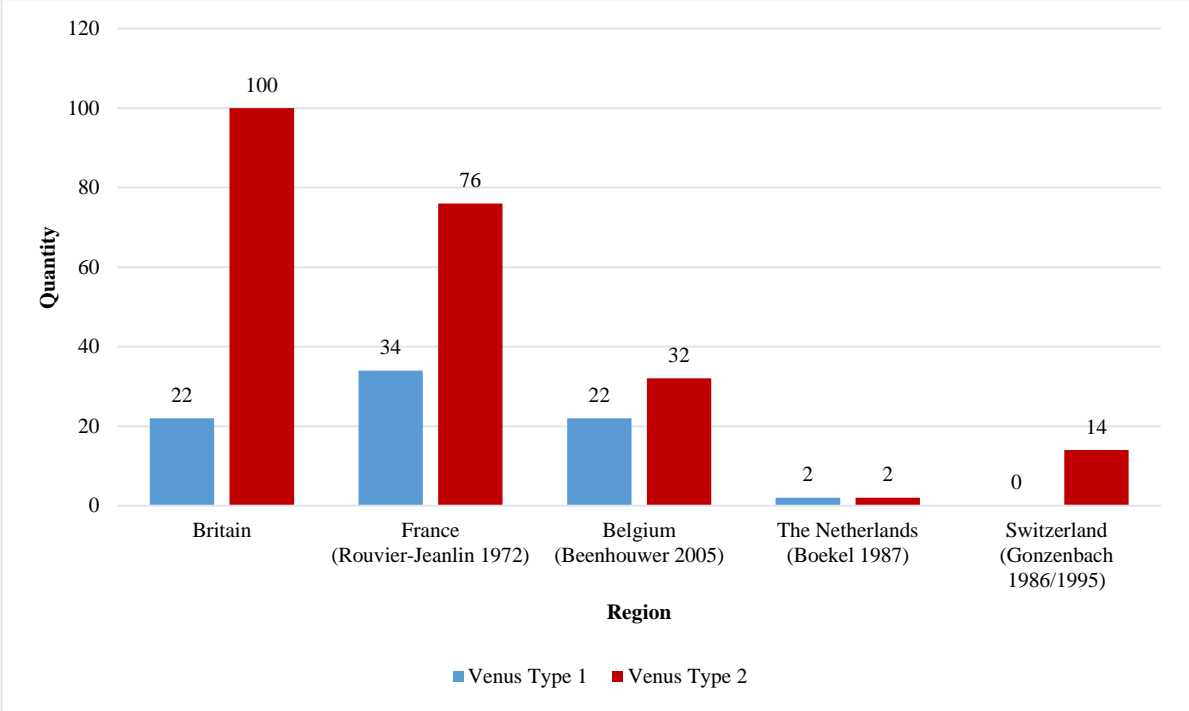
The multiple types comprising the most common depictions (Venus and Dea Nutrix) can also be compared on a regional level. All told, the individual types in each group probably generally attest to similar beliefs, but comparing the proportional distributions of common and rare types between regions provides a more detailed picture of inter-regional consumption. This task was relatively easy as most of the Continental catalogues are conveniently divided into the relevant groups (i.e. Venus Type 1 and Type 2, and Dea Nutrix Type 1 and Type 2), or can be arranged appropriately (e.g. Boekel 1987) with the help of illustrations and photographs, allowing for accurate counts and comparisons. Venus and Dea Nutrix sub-types and groups (i.e. garments



and hairstyles) are also analysed like this, but these tell us more about workshop production rather than any religious significance. Poor recording and the effects of mould copying and wear often make it difficult to identify garment and hairstyle designs, resulting in small, incomplete, datasets, but their regional patterns are still interesting and worth commenting on. The full catalogue of Venus types in Britain and their parallels is available in Appendix 1.

*Venus Types*

Figure 5.20 shows that Type 2 Venus figurines overall outnumber Type 1 Venus figurines in Britain, France and Belgium, with the greatest difference in Britain followed by France. This contrasts to the Netherlands where numbers are even but probably too low to matter, as well as Switzerland where only Type 2 Venus figurines are recorded. Both types are quite close in date, but contextual evidence suggesting that Type 1 figurines were possibly produced slightly earlier might account for their greater numbers overall.



*Fig. 5. 20. Quantities of Venus Type 1 and Type 2 from Britain and Continental regions.*

Rarer Venus types from Britain and the Continent probably reflect closer, more mixed, cultural connections between smaller populations (possibly individuals and/or groups) in these regions rather than the general populace. This includes the five Type 3 figurines with variants in most regions, the Type 4 figurines with broadly similar parallels across the Continent, the two Type 5 finds with variants in France, and the Type 6 Venus figurine with parallels in the Netherlands. Broadly similar Type 8 Venus figurines have been recorded in the Netherlands, France and Belgium, while Type 9 figurines are a little more common, with broad parallels mainly from France, but also Belgium and Switzerland. Another good example is the Type 7 figurine of *Vénus à Gaine*. This is a particularly interesting instance as only slightly different sub-types of this ‘early’ type have been found in France, making it a distinct type that did not travel south or east out of Gaul to other regions, but only northwards to northern areas of France and Britain (Fig. 5.21).

### *Venus Garments*

The quantities of Venus garment designs in Table 5.1 show a much broader range in Britain and France than elsewhere, again highlighting close production links. There are two unique garment types in Britain (Garments E and K), but this is probably due to detailed recording in Britain and they are likely to be recorded in France, their apparent production site. It is likely that only a smaller proportion of Venus types and sub-types out of the wider range made in Central Gaulish workshops were exported to the market in Britain. The exportation of sub-types to other regions like Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland was evidently even more limited. For example, although Garments A and H occur in most regions, Garments B, C, G, L and M only appear in Britain and France, Garments D, F and L in Britain, France and Belgium, Garment J in Britain, France and Switzerland, Garment I everywhere except the Netherlands,



*Fig. 5. 21. Quantities and distribution of *Vénus à Gaine* figurines in Britain and France (French finds after Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 136-41, who also records 12 other unprovenanced examples).*

and Garment K in Britain, Switzerland and Belgium. All of this suggests closer production links between Belgium and France rather than the Netherlands and Switzerland where Venus figurines were not only generally less popular, but also mainly supplied with other types from the Rhine-Moselle production centres that only occasionally made different Venus types with alternative garment designs than the ones made in Central Gaul.

## Venus Hairstyles

Quantifying the front and back hairstyles of Venus results in a similarly small but useful dataset (Tab. 5.2) reflecting a similar story. Overall Britain has the greatest variety of front hairstyles with 13; this is probably the result of my over-careful recording and some are no doubt variants of types seen in France - but in general it reflects closer production links between these regions than others despite the slightly greater variety of additional hairstyles that also come from France overall. There are slight differences. For example, in Britain styles F9 and F1 are most common and usually combined with B2, but in France the B2 style is more numerous, while styles F3, F4, F5 and F10 are more common in France than in Britain. Styles F6, F13 and B4 probably just have not been found in France yet but were likely produced there. Elsewhere, Belgium unsurprisingly shares most hairstyle types with Britain and France but in smaller proportions, while the other regions have an even smaller range from both France and the Rhine-Moselle area.

Garment Type	Britain	France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972)	Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005)	The Netherlands (Boekel 1987)	Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986/1995)
A	8	6	14	2	0
B	1	3	0	0	0
C	2	1	0	0	0
D	1	1	2	0	0
E	1	0	0	0	0
F	1	6	1	0	0
G	27	6	0	0	0
H	7	6	8	1	2
I	23	21	16	0	1
J	2	1	0	0	1
K	3	0	4	0	1
L	1	6	1	0	0
M	1	3	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

Tab. 5. 1. Venus garment design quantities in Britain and Continental regions. (Green = present. Red = absent).

Hairstyle	Britain	France (Rouvier- Jeanlin 1972)	Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005)	The Netherlands (Boekel 1987)	Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986/1995)
F1	7	9	5	0	0
F2	1	3	1	0	0
F3	2	10	1	0	6
F4	3	9	2	0	0
F5	2	4	0	0	1
F6	1	0	0	0	0
F7	2	0	4	1	0
F8	1	1	0	0	0
F9	12	12	0	0	0
F10	1	3	0	0	0
F11	1	0	0	0	1
F12	1	0	0	3	0
F13	3	0	0	0	0
Other	0	7	13	3	0
<b>F Total</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
B1	13	5	2	0	1
B2	11	12	9	4	5
B3	3	3	0	0	0
B4	2	0	0	0	0
<b>B Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>

Tab. 5. 2. Venus hairstyle (front and back) quantities in Britain and Continental regions. (Green = present. Red = absent).

### Dea Nutrix Types

The proportions of different Dea Nutrix types (1 and 2) and garment sub-types (A-D) probably also reflect some cultural and economic connections between people and regions (see the discussion in Appendix 1 for descriptions of the two Dea Nutrix types and the sub-types of garment associated with each). Dea Nutrix figurines with two infants (Type 1) are the most prevalent type overall, with significantly larger numbers in France and Britain, smaller quantities in Switzerland and Belgium, and very low numbers from sites in the Netherlands (Fig. 5.22). Out of these, Table 5.3 shows that Garment A is common on both Type 1 and 2 figurines in Britain

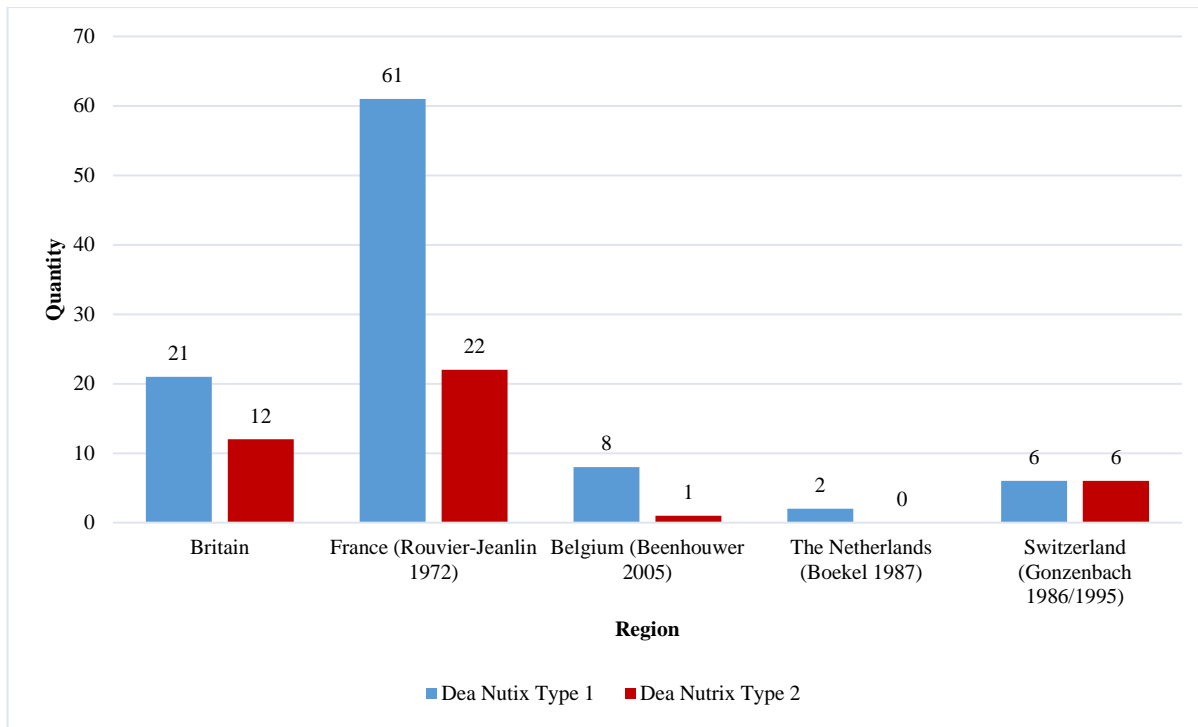


Fig. 5. 22. Quantity of Dea Nutrix figurines in Britain and Continental regions.

Garment Type	Britain	France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972)	Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005)	The Netherlands (Boekel 1987)	Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986/1995)
A	33	26	4	2	4
B	4	1	0	0	0
C	1	0	0	0	0
D/E	4	8	2	0	1
Total	42	35	6	2	5

Tab. 5. 3. Dea Nutrix garment design quantities in Britain and Continental regions. (Green = present. Red = absent).

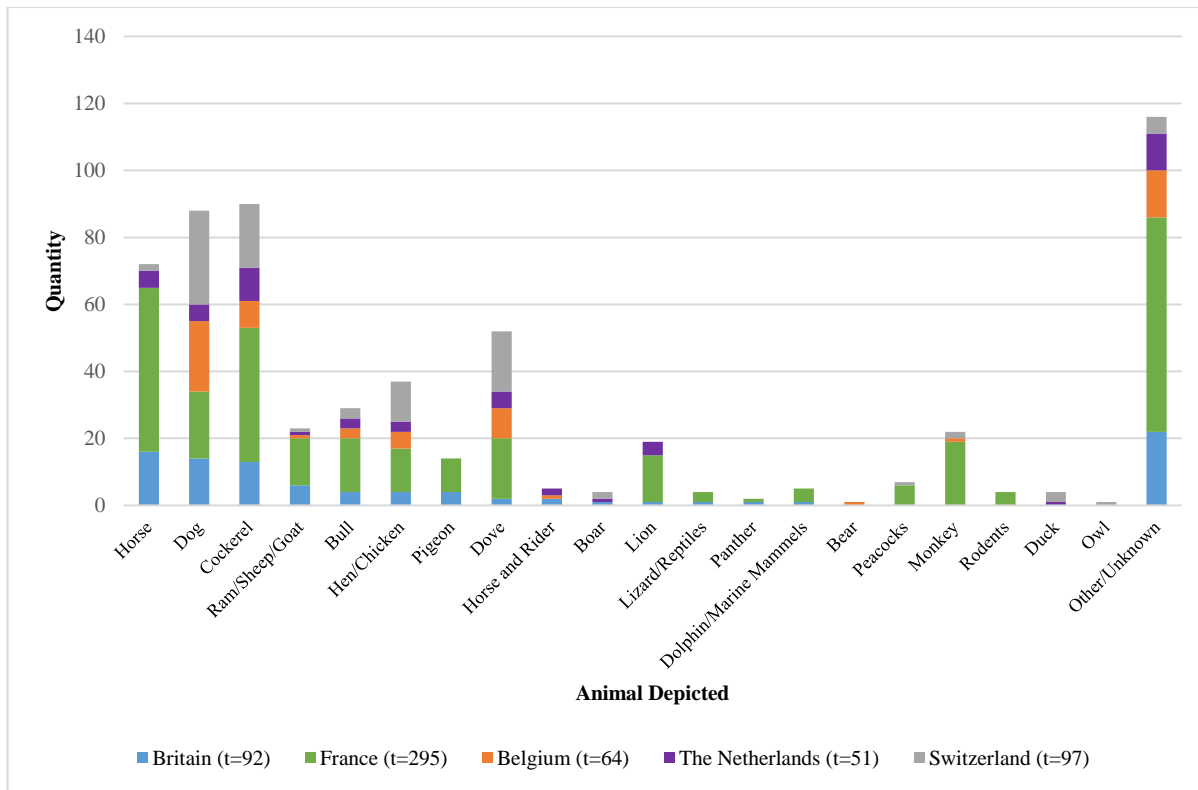
and France, followed by Garments B and D/E, and Garment C in Britain (a variant), and that Garment A is also common in Belgium and Switzerland, but less so in Switzerland. The Central Gaulish origin of Dea Nutrix figurines probably accounts for their smaller numbers beyond Britain and France, but several alternative sub-types have been found in France overall (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: nos. 318, 361; Beenhouwer 2005: 246, Cat.nr. 228 (358)), indicating a limited availability in Britain, but one that was greater than to other regions. A few more Dea

Nutrix figurines in Belgium might therefore be expected if other patterns are anything to go by, but here there are, interestingly, slightly more Mother-Goddess figurines that originate from the Rhine-Moselle region instead (Beenhouwer 2005).

### ***Consuming Animal Figurines Between Regions***

Regional diversity is just as evident from the broad range of quadruped and bird figurine types from Britain and Continental regions (Fig. 5.23). Widely shared religious ideas and beliefs are evidently reflected by some animal types that appear in all the regions. Horses, for example, that are probably associated with Epona (Toynbee 1973: 167-85; Oaks 1986: 77) are prominent in Britain, France, and especially Belgium where there are in fact 407 horse figurines that have not been included in the graph. They are also the most common animal in Britain and Belgium overall. Dogs, that are closely associated with mother-goddess cults about death and fertility (Toynbee 1973: 123), also appear in several regions - most notably Switzerland. Cockerels (and chickens/hens), probably linked to Mercury, are one of the more common birds in most regions, including Britain, but are in fact most numerous in France, followed by Switzerland, and less common in Belgium. The different distributions of these animals suggests that there were different regional preferences for them between different regions but their links with their respective gods and goddesses also shows that they reflect common ideas about protection, guardianship and fertility.

Other less common but relatively widely distributed animals include birds, like doves in Britain, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Belgium. Bulls also appear more often in France than the other study areas, as do rams. Pigeons, meanwhile, are only found in Britain and France, as are reptiles like lizards, marine mammals such as dolphins, and depictions of



*Fig. 5. 23. Quantity of animal depictions in Continental regions (note: excludes the 407 horse figurines from Belgium for display purposes).*

panthers. Lions also appear in these two regions, as well as in the Netherlands, but are much more common in France than anywhere else.

The rare animal types in Britain are slightly different to the various combinations found elsewhere and might further evidence some kind of provincial regionality in terms of consumption patterns and expressions of religious beliefs, although the small numbers again make it hard to know whether this is real a trend. In Britain, this amounts to the presence of a slightly different selection of animals linked with certain gods that are rarely found in pipeclay form elsewhere on the Continent but are occasionally depicted in other forms and media in Britain itself. This group includes the dolphin (see Hawkes & Dunning 1961: 41-62 for bronze dolphin-shaped belt buckles and fittings from Britain; Henig 1974, volume 2, 24, nos. 131-3 (pl. v), 116, App. 78 for dolphin intaglios; and Henig 1975: 208 for a mosaic of Cupid riding a



dolphin at Fishbourne), the lizard (see Bird 1996 for pottery associating lizards with the god Sabazius in London), and the panther (see Durham 2010: 74 for the eight metal panther figurines from Britain). Despite boar figurines like the one from Britain being rare with only broad parallels from the Netherlands and Switzerland, it too was a popular theme in Romano-British art, where it is often depicted in the form of statues and reliefs (Foster 1977).

Other rare animal types indicative of specific regional preferences include peacocks in France and Switzerland, a rare owl figurine from Switzerland, bears from Belgium (*cf.* Crummy's 2010 work examining the links between bear iconography and guardianship and protection in Romano-British child graves in Britain), rodents from France, and the duck figurines from the Netherlands and Switzerland.

### ***Consuming Human Figurines Between Regions***

The human assemblages from Britain and the Continental regions are relatively evenly split between figurines and busts that again suggest varied patterns of regional consumption, beliefs and practice with several typological and thematic similarities and differences between them. In general, much like depictions of Dea Nutrix, it can be difficult to be sure what constitutes a 'human' figurine or bust as some forms are quite ambiguous and could have some divine aspect or actually portray gods or goddesses. For this study and for ease of comparison I have put the figurines and busts in this 'human' group based on their similar grouping in Continental catalogues, but it is possible that some types - such as *Risus* and busts of women - may have some kind of divine quality as well. That said, quantifying the male and female figurines as they stand (Figs. 5.24-26) illustrates that in contrast to deities, depictions of human males are generally more common than human females in France, Switzerland, and especially Britain where the difference is greatest, while the trend is reversed in the Netherlands and Belgium.

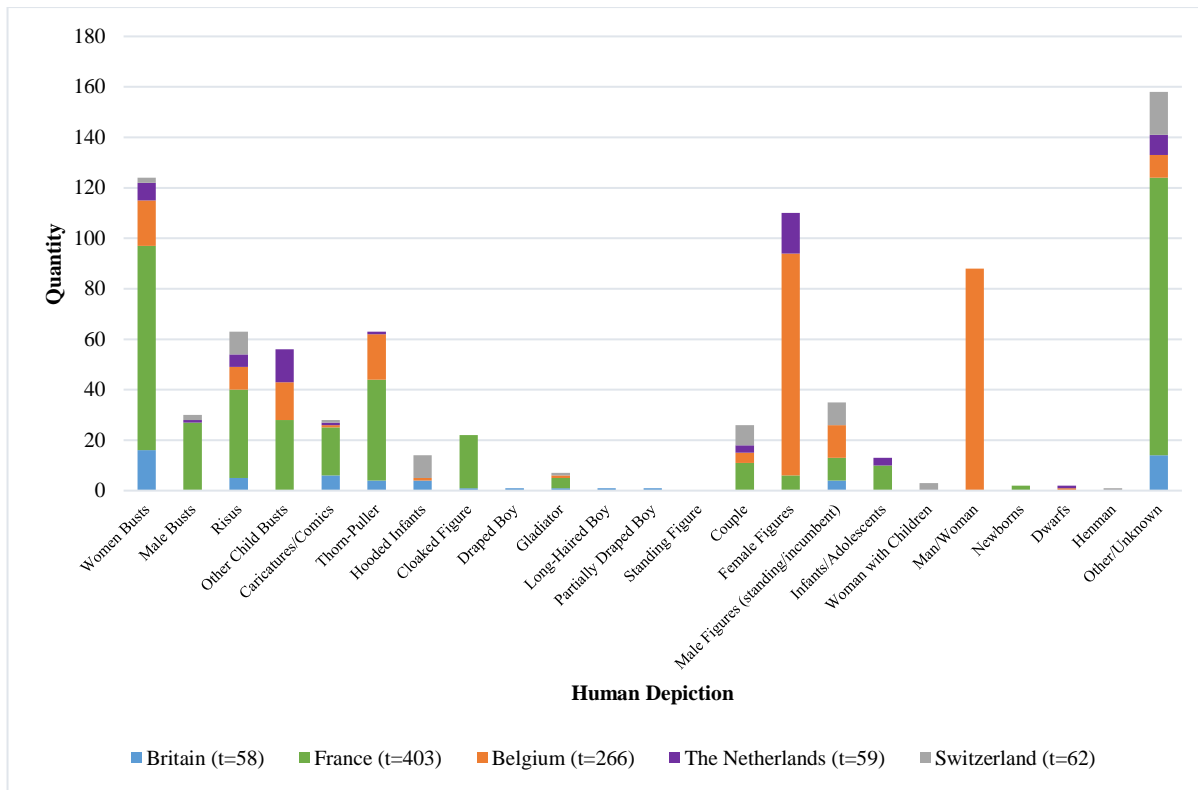


Fig. 5. 24. Quantity of human depictions in Continental regions.

There are, however, finer regional trends that might reflect cultural differences other than the fact that most of the human objects from Britain derive from France, while those in Belgium and the Netherlands are a greater mix of Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types. For example, far more busts of women, *Risus* and other children come from France than any of the other study areas, while male busts, as well as figurines like Comics, Thorn-Pullers and Cloaked Figures are more commonly found in France as well. Female figurines and other figurines of men and women, meanwhile, are much more common in Belgium than in any other region. In Britain though, busts of women are more widespread, unlike the figurines that are typical in Belgium.

Overall, the male bias in Britain, France and Switzerland and the female bias in Belgium and the Netherlands may reflect engendered beliefs and practices in these regions. However, not all types necessarily point towards this as both men and women could have used any type of human figurine or bust for their own personal reasons while there are also large

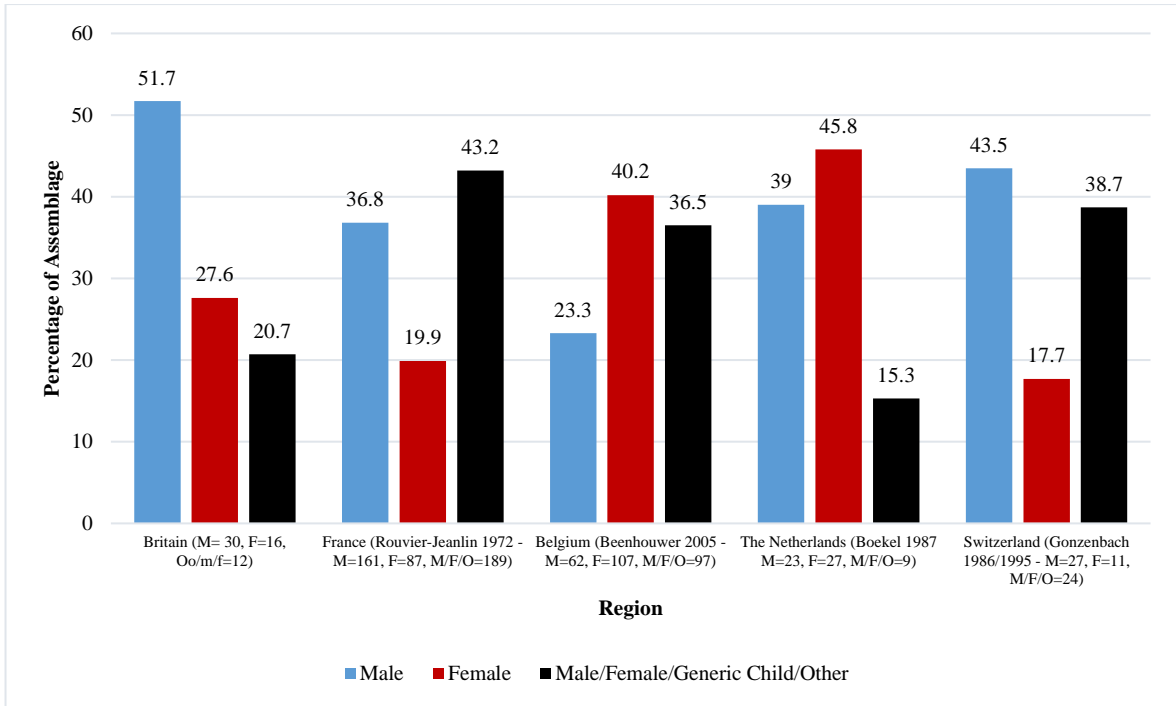


Fig. 5. 25. Proportion of male, female and other human figurines from Britain and the Continent.

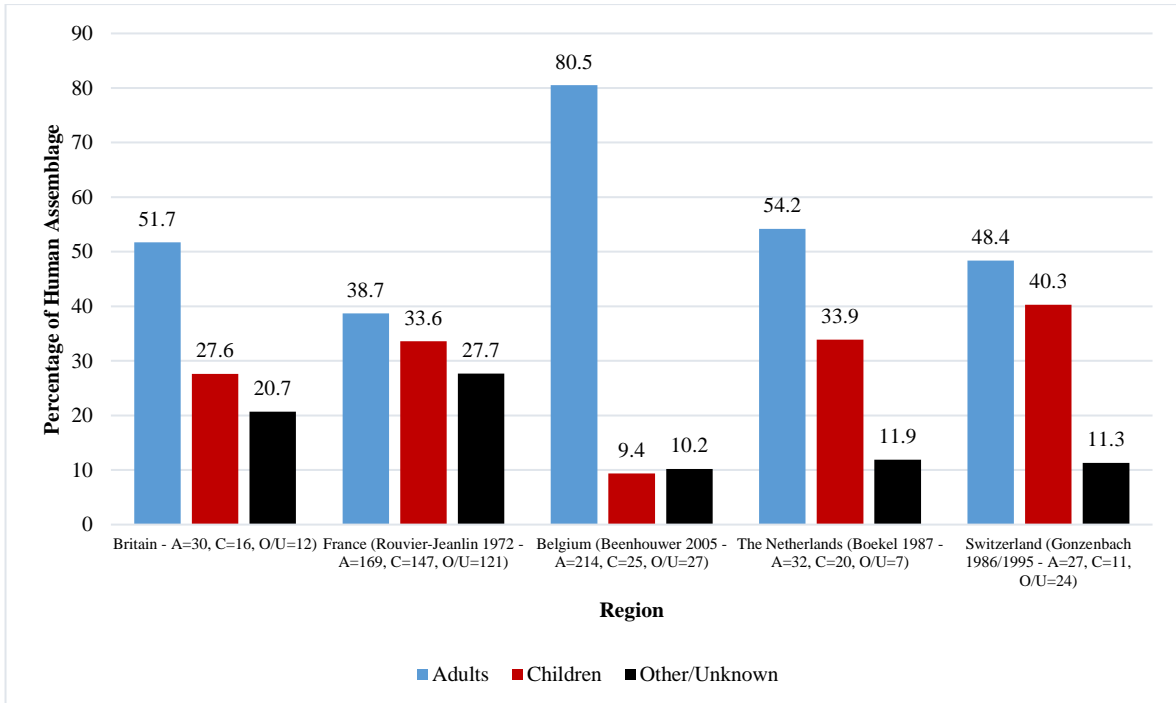


Fig. 5. 26. Proportions of adult and children figurines in Britain and the Continent.

groups of composite forms (e.g. couples) and non-gender specific types (e.g. generic children) from many of the Continental regions, although interestingly there are none of these types from Britain. Interestingly, depictions of adults outnumber children in every region (Fig. 5.26). This could suggest that human figurines and busts were mainly used by adults and only occasionally for child related purposes, like toys, in most regions, with the largest differences in Britain and the Netherlands and smaller differences in France, Switzerland and Belgium, perhaps reflecting less varied use in these areas, but this is quite difficult to prove.

One way to address whether adults or children used these pipeclay depictions of humans is to consider what a toy is and whether pipeclay humans (as well as deities and animals) were appropriate for this purpose. If they are toys, the general size and proportions of pipeclay figurines and busts suggest that they may well have been dolls – the criteria for identifying which are set out by Manson (1987; see also Dolansky 2012). In this regard, pipeclay objects are indeed small and light enough to have been moved by children and resemble human (and animal) forms realistically enough that a child could probably identify with them. As we will see in Chapter 10, they are also made from quite a durable clay too. However, as per Mason's criteria, neither pipeclay figurines nor busts feature the moveable limbs that would help facilitate play with them, although this is not necessarily an essential feature. Perhaps more useful, however, is Manson's other criteria which states that dolls must not be from exclusively religious contexts. This too is satisfied by most pipeclay figurines and busts in Britain and on the Continent, yet notably a greater proportion of the human busts come from religious contexts (see Chapters 7 and 9) than figurines, that themselves are mostly from settlement contexts. This could mean that busts are less likely to be toys than figurines, but the fact that finds from votive contexts such as temples are mainly made-up of figurines might suggest otherwise. As such, I am currently of the view that both pipeclay figurines and busts are less likely to have been used as toys by children than for other practices - the likes of which are discussed in the remaining

chapters of this thesis - and that it is possible that some were used in a playful way by children but that only by closely analysing their contexts can we get a better indication about whether this was the case, as well as which types are perhaps more likely to have been toys than others.

Particularly close production and cultural links between Britain and Gaul are suggested by the large collections of busts of women and children rather than figurines in Britain and France that may have had a significance specifically associated with childbirth, protection and the life cycle. In Britain, the group including busts of women and *Risus* and the rare Thorn-Puller figurines (a more classical form) are perhaps most similar to the slightly different combination of infants, child busts, 'newborns' and gladiators in France. This is possibly followed by the child figurines, Thorn-Pullers and woman busts seen in Belgium but, as we have seen, there are far more adult figurines from this region. Britain also shares a few women and child types with regions like the Netherlands and Switzerland but the overall profile and specific types from each region is different and probably reflects different beliefs.

The different rare human types from each region again symbolise the varied religious beliefs and practices of smaller groups or individuals, and possible cultural links. As well as the busts of what are mainly boys from Britain and France, a good example of this is the group of six Comics, four Recumbent Figures and one Standing Comic from the Colchester Child's Grave that mainly have parallels in France. A map of the distribution of these figurines (Fig. 5.27) shows that none of this particular type has been found between their likely production site in Central Gaul and Colchester, meaning that they probably came with an individual who travelled to south-east Britain. Interestingly, Britain also has several unique types of what appear to be young males that again probably arrived with individuals rather than via trade routes. The 'Hahnmann' figurine from Orselina in Switzerland, (Gonzenbach 1986: 34, no. 16 & Table 3(2), fig. 6b) is another type that may well suggest the beliefs of an individual



*Fig. 5. 27. Distribution of Comic Figures (excluding the Standing and Recumbent Figures at Colchester, two of which have caricature heads). Another unprovenanced caricature head is recorded in Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005: 86, Inv. No. B 86.1.23).*

rather than those of the region overall in that it is one of the only figurines from here that anthropomorphically combines animal traits with human features.

### **Consuming Common and Rare Figurine Types Between Regions**

Finally, comparing the most and least common figurine types in each collection highlights finer nuances about the religious beliefs and practices of general populations between regions and those that are probably more specifically associated with individuals and social groups.

Overall, the distribution of common types shows that mother-goddess cults were widely worshipped across the western regions, albeit to varying degrees. The combination of deities often varies in type and proportions between regions, but in most cases they probably reflect the, often shared, religious beliefs and practices of general populations. Figure 5.28 illustrates that although deities feature prominently in each region, Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines are the most common motifs in Britain, France and the Netherlands, but are more numerous in Britain and France. They also appear in Belgium and Switzerland but in much lower proportions behind depictions of animals: horses in Belgium, and dogs, cockerels and doves in Switzerland. Minerva was also relatively popular in Britain, France, Belgium and the Netherlands but less so in Switzerland, and only appears in small quantities in the Netherlands. Fortuna was another popular goddess in Belgium. She is also one of the more popular goddess in the Netherlands but again there are fewer of her there than in Belgium and, in contrast, is one of the rarer deities in Britain and, to a lesser degree, France. Such goddesses were evidently preferred over their male counterparts, although there is some indication that Mercury gained greater popularity in France than in any other region.

The types and proportions of common animal and human figurines also varies between regions. For instance, horses were very popular in Belgium, as were dogs in Switzerland. Even here there are some indications of a shared consensus despite their different consumption levels. For example, although the proportions of animal types in each region are considerably different, it is primarily the same animals that frequently appear. Moreover, many of these

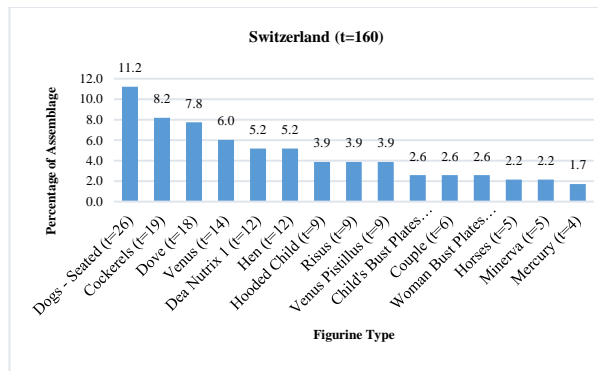
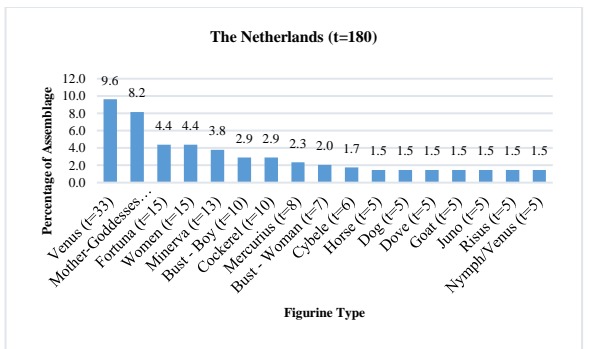
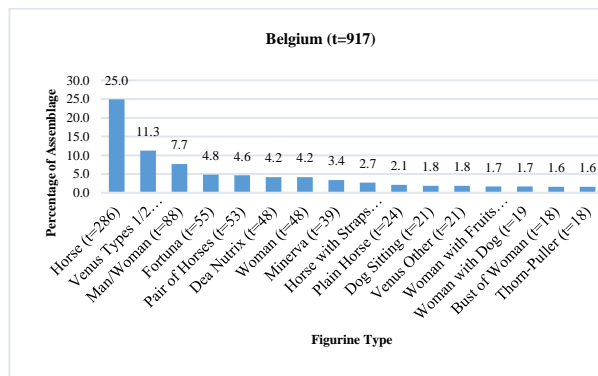
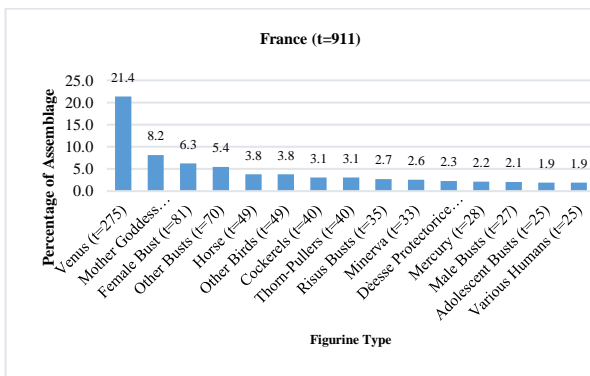
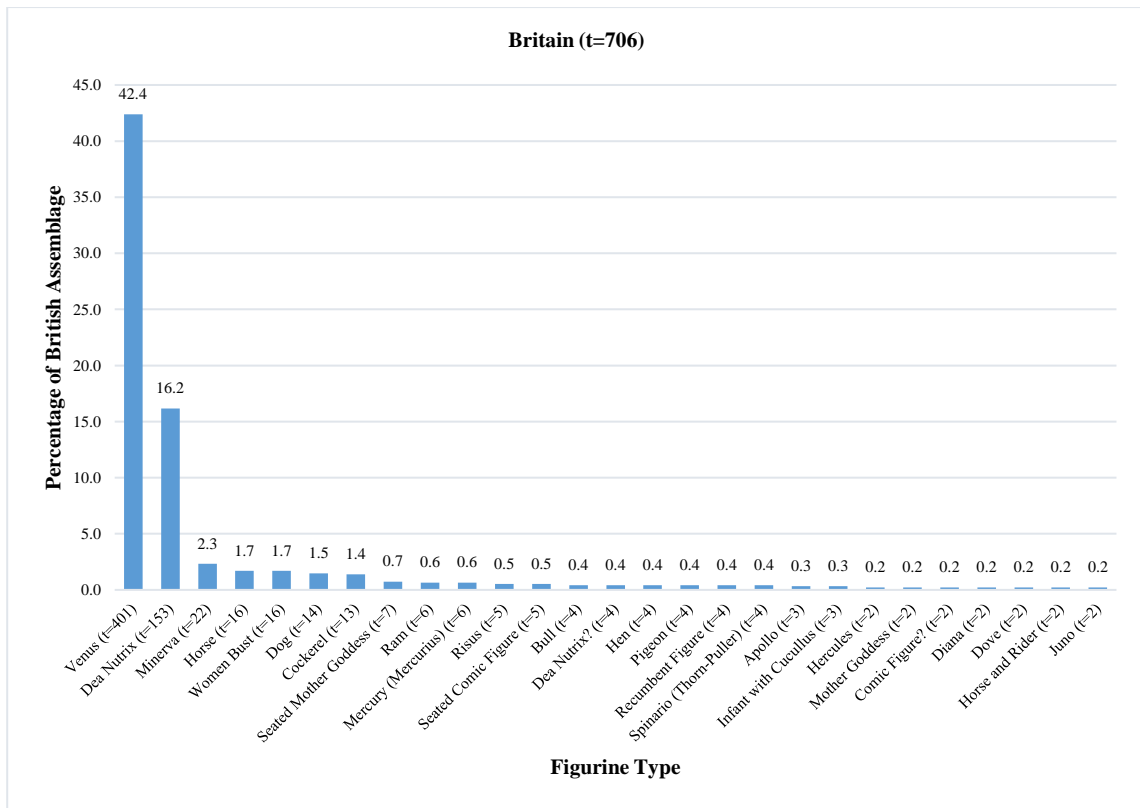


Fig. 5. 28. Proportion of common motifs from different Continental regions.



common animals and birds are often associated with popular goddesses that form part of the wider mother-goddess cult; for example, doves with Venus, dogs with Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures, horses with Epona, as well as cockerels with the most common male god, Mercury. As such, although dogs, cockerels and doves in Switzerland and horses in Belgium may mean that these animal-based religious beliefs and practices were more popular than in Britain, France and especially in the Netherlands where they occur less often than deities, they may still reflect similar sentiments that differed in overall popularity.

The same could also be said about the human types. Here there are some interesting differences between Britain and France where most of the more common types depict either women or young children. These vary typologically and proportionally in each region but generally probably reflect some vaguely shared beliefs regarding the protection of children and their vulnerability at various stages of life as they grew up. One key difference, however, is in Belgium, where human figurines of men and women (i.e. couples) are much more common than those of women and children. This is a regional variation that may reflect more local beliefs in this area about the importance of relationships, but I suspect that it probably has more to do with ideas about fertility, conception and reproduction. Human figurines depicting couples in Switzerland may represent something similar but here they are no less common than other busts and figurines depicting children, suggesting a slightly different regional belief systems and practices in these two areas.

As for rarer figurine types, it is generally hard to know if the small numbers from each region translate to anything meaningful but some ideas can be put forward. The first thing to note is that Switzerland (23) and Britain (21) have more singularly occurring types than Belgium (18), the Netherlands (17) and France (four). Some of this is probably to do with availability and distance of markets from production centres. For example, France probably has fewer rarer types because people here had better access to even the infrequently produced types

than, say, people in Britain and Switzerland who were further from production centres, while Belgium and the Netherlands perhaps had slightly better supplies of figurines from Central Gaulish workshops as well as the Rhine-Moselle industry, but nowhere near the levels in France.

Rare types may also reflect the different specific beliefs and practices of smaller groups or individuals in each region whereby each area has provided a broad mix of rare figurines that includes a broad mix of deities, animals and humans, but the specific typological composition of these rare figurine groups varies considerably (Tab. 5.4). Rare types possibly reflecting shared religious and cultural ideas between Britain and France include the albeit slightly

<b>Britain</b>	<b>France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972)</b>	<b>Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005)</b>	<b>The Netherlands (Boekel 1987)</b>	<b>Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986/1995)</b>
<b>Bacchus, 1</b>	Gladiators, 4	Apollo, 1	Amor/Personification? 1	Apollo, 1
<b>Boar, 1</b>	Masks, 4	Bear, 1	Boar, 1	Caricatures, 1
<b>Boy with Cucullus, 1</b>	Marine Mammals, 4	Boy with Cape (cucullatus), 1	Bust Mould - Man, 1	Child in Bed, 1
<b>Cloaked Figure, 1</b>	Rodents, 4	Bust of Girl, 1	Caricature? Mime? Philosopher? 1	Couple in Bed, 1
<b>Cybele, 1</b>	Seated Characters, 4	Caricature, 1	Child? 1	Couple on Chair, 1
<b>Dolphin, 1</b>	Seated Infants, 4	Dwarf with Cape, 1	Duck, 1	Egg, 1
<b>Draped Boy, 1</b>	Reptiles, 3	Genius, 1	Dwarf? 1	Gladiator, 1
<b>Epona, 1</b>	Child Busts, 3	Gladiator, 1	Dward with Scroll, 1	Goddess of Sorrow, 1
<b>Fortuna, 1</b>	Other Human Characters, 3	Goat, 1	Isis, 1	Group of Men, 1
<b>Gladiator, 1</b>	Apollo, 2	Isis, 1	Jupiter Bust, 1	Henman, 1
<b>Leda and Swan, 1</b>	Newborns, 2	Jupiter-Taranis, 1	Lion/Bear, 1	Man in Robes, 1
<b>Lion, 1</b>	Panther, 1	Man with Rabbits, 1	Luna, 1	Man Strapped with Basket, 1
<b>Lizard, 1</b>	Priapus, 1	Monkey, 1	Man. Philosopher? 1	Man in Toga with Scroll, 1
<b>Long-Haired Boy, 1</b>	Serapis? 1	Rider with Cape, 1	Ram, 1	Owl, 1
<b>Luna Lucifera, 1</b>	Vulcain? 1	Silvanus, 1	Sheep? 1	Older Recumbent Man, 1
<b>Mars, 1</b>		Venus in Aedicula, 1	Thorn-Puller, 1	Other bird, 1
<b>Panther, 1</b>		Venus: Lower Body Covered, 1	Venus?Cybele? 1	Peacock, 1
<b>Partially Draped Boy, 1</b>		Victoria, 1		Priapus, 1
<b>Standing Comic, 1</b>				Rider with Shield, 1
				Sheep, 1
				Venus mit Begleitung, 1
				Venus with Mirror, 1
				Younger Recumbent Man, 1

*Tab. 5. 4. Rarest figurine types and quantities from Britain and Continental regions.*

different mix of male gods: Apollo and Mars in Britain (that are slightly more common in France), and Priapus, Serapis and Vulcan in France, as well as, to some extent, the gladiators, boars, lions, monkeys and Comic Figures, in addition to the panthers and reptilian and marine mammals such as lizards and dolphins that only appear in these two regions. Such close cultural affinity is not reflected so much in other Continental collections, where the mix of rare deity, animal and human types, and the beliefs and practices they likely reflect, are much more varied and eclectic between each of the provincial regions.

### ***Consuming Shrines, Animal Vessels and Masks Between Regions***

Production and cultural links are reflected by shrines, animal vessels and masks too. Shrines like the ones from Britain are most commonly found in France where they were produced in the late first century until the end of the second century and only occur occasionally in other areas (Gonzenbach 1995: 271-9). Animal vessels are also most common in France where they were made in the late first century (e.g. Boekel 1987: 776-7; Gonzenbach 1995: 314-8). Outside of France they occur most frequently in Britain and, like shrines, appear to have been brought to the region only occasionally. Masks, on the other hand, have a much more limited distribution in Britain and are more likely to have been brought to the region by people who obtained them in the Rhine-Moselle area where they are also rare but have been found in the Netherlands and Switzerland (Boekel 1987: 806-7, Map 3, 813).

### ***Summary***

Overall, comparing pipeclay forms and types in different regions highlights different consumption patterns in Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland. These patterns probably reflect regional differences in religious choice but, as we have seen, they are

also influenced by factors like chronology, trade, and the proximity of production centres to provincial markets. If they do reflect religious choice, the analysis has shown that the consumption of common and rare types in Britain highlights close cultural connections with France more so than any other region. However, varying distributions of similar types and associated forms (e.g. mother-goddess figurines like Venus and Dea Nutrix as well as some animals) suggests widespread fertility and protection beliefs throughout many regions, while rarer types more likely represent the religious beliefs and practices of different individuals and groups. Finally, the British collection is not only unique for its high proportion of mother-goddesses that may reflect people's strong fertility and protection beliefs here, but also the large collection of universally rare figurine types reflecting various 'eastern' and 'exotic' influences that may well have belonged to people of a higher social status.

### **Material Matters - Comparing Pipeclay and Metal Figurines in Britain**

Comparing the proportions of ceramic and metal figurines from Britain is a useful way to analyse differences in the forms and types represented in these materials and what this could mean in terms of their similar and different religious beliefs and practices. The analysis carried out in Chapter 8 further suggests that different materials affected religious practice but here I shall concentrate on the quantities and proportions of the depictions found in each material. A total of 996 metal figurines have been recorded from the province by Durham (2010: 37-78) from similar sources (i.e. museum collections, published sources and the Portable Antiquities Scheme), and just like pipeclay figurines, these have been divided into types and quantified to identify patterns of consumption in Roman Britain. All the deities, animals and humans are usefully grouped with their quantities given and all the common and rare types are identified and quantified.

Directly comparing ceramic and metal figurines is not straight forward as many factors affect how representative the numbers of each may be. Other than the possibility that more metal figurines may have been found since Durham carried out her survey, one of the main factors is that metal figurines are less likely to survive as they are more prone to soil corrosion than those of ceramic. Furthermore, many metal figurines were probably melted down for reuse. The value placed on metal objects by antiquarians and modern excavators alike also means that metal figurines are more likely to have been published than pipeclay figurines. However, comparing these two assemblages still reveals some interesting similarities and differences that potentially reflect meaningful nuances in the religious beliefs and practices they represent.

The first interesting thing to note is that there are actually slightly fewer objects of pipeclay (946 overall, including 777 figurines and 34 busts) than metal (996) in Britain overall. Issues affecting the respective preservation of clay and metal may be partially responsible for this, but overall it is surprising that there are not more pipeclay objects considering they are usually regarded as the more common finds. Indeed, pipeclay objects far outnumber metal ones across the Continent, while the greater value of metal objects in general is also well attested. A possible reason is that fewer pipeclay objects have been published overall in Britain but mine has been a comprehensive study that included material from museums and archaeological units. Dating evidence suggests that pipeclay objects were just not as popular in Roman Britain after they were introduced in the first century, with their use declining significantly afterwards, while metal figurines stayed in circulation for longer (see Chapter 6). Such was also true of lamps – another (often imported) ceramic product that never really caught on in Roman Britain - that might be a more specific reflection of cultural consumption and wider regional identity than, say, ceramics like samian that circulated more widely in the province (Eckardt 2002: 58-60). Consequently, the lower number of ceramic pipeclay objects in Roman Britain is interesting because they are likely to be cheaper objects than metal figurines, but it could also indicate that

ceramic figurines, like lamps (Eckardt 2002), were only ever adopted by a relatively small proportion of the population.

The proportion of deity, animal and human figurines in pipeclay (excluding the shrines, animal vessels and masks in the 'Other' category) and metal (Fig. 5.29) highlight some uniformity in the forms depicted. In both cases the deity group is clearly best represented, with pipeclay deities (66%) slightly more numerous than those in metal (60%) proportionally. At the other end of the scale humans make up the smallest group: pipeclay at 6% again being only slightly more than the metal at 4%. In contrast, although animal figurines are the second most common group in both materials, there is a much larger proportion in metal (30%) than in pipeclay (10%). Some of these differences might be accounted for in the 18% of 'Other' pipeclay objects or a potential production and publication bias of metal rather than pipeclay animals. Thus, while the proportions of ceramic and metal deities and humans points towards similar popularity levels and possibly practices, this is not true for animal figurines.

On the other hand, the most common figurine types depicted in metal and pipeclay do differ considerably (Fig. 5.30). Whereas Venus (41.6%), Dea Nutrix (15.9%), Minerva (2.3%), Horses (1.7%) and women busts (1.7%) are most common in pipeclay, Mercury (19.3%), Hercules (9.8%), Mars (7.7%), cockerels (7.3%) and eagles (6.3%) appear the most frequently in metal; dogs, horses and Minerva are all relatively common in both ceramic and metal. Totalling 29 figurines (4.8% of the metal assemblage) Venus is only the ninth most common metal type; this being significantly less than the number in pipeclay (401 or 41.6% of the assemblage), while depictions of mother-goddess figurines (such as Dea Nutrix) are far less common in metal. Common metal types that are rarely seen or absent in pipeclay include eagles, Cupid, Bacchus, Jupiter, horse and riders, boars and goats. There are, therefore, distinctive differences between the ceramic figurines that mainly depict mother-goddess types

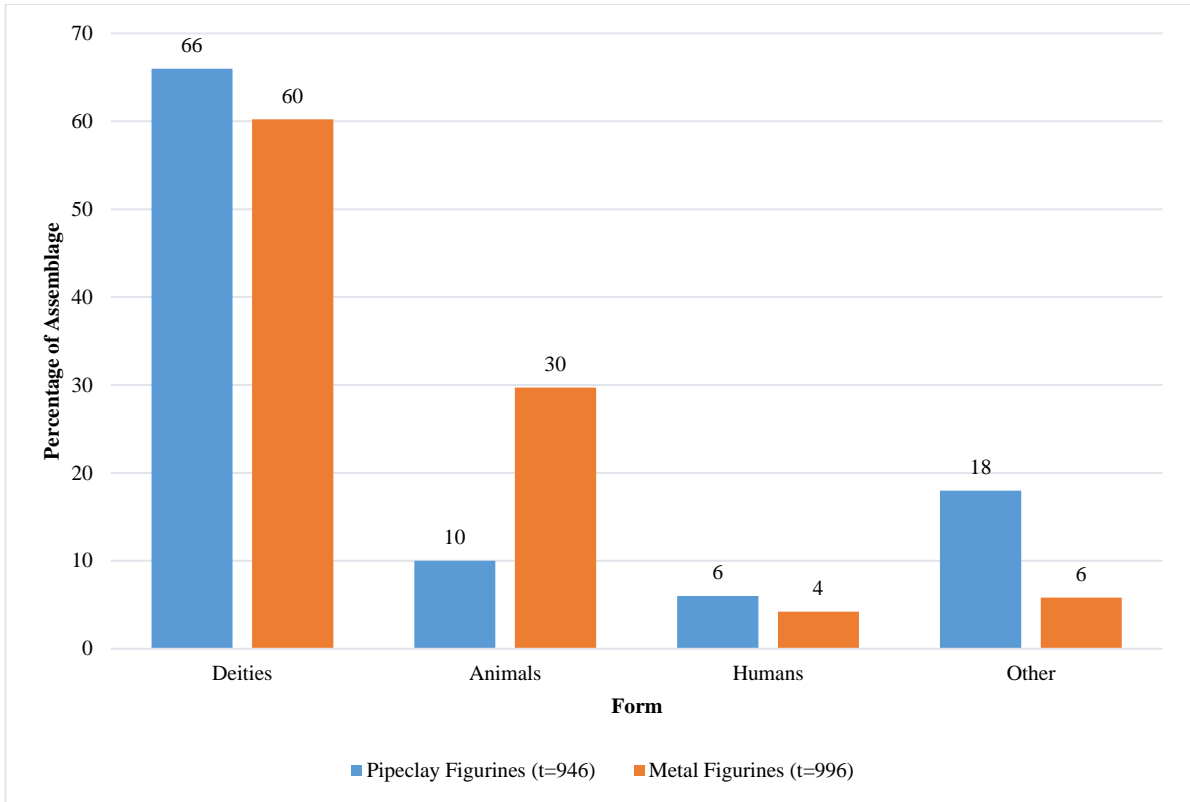


Fig. 5. 29. Proportion of deity, animal and human figurines in pipeclay and metal.

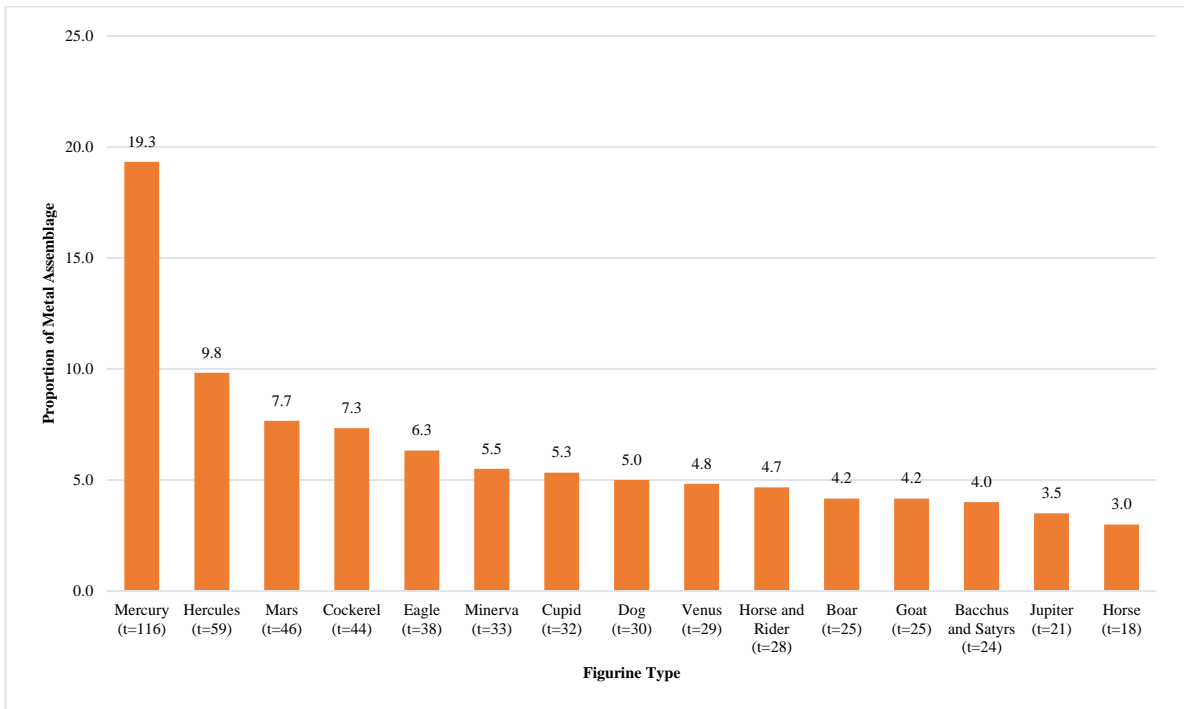


Fig. 5. 30. Most common metal figurine types in Britain.

and the metal figurines that primarily portray male gods, which are illustrated by Figure 5.32.

Gender differences are less apparent between the rarest types (that are occasionally similar) but do suggest different individual beliefs. It could be argued that the metal types are slightly more 'exotic' in nature than the depictions in pipeclay and that this could reflect differences in social class. For example, the rarest ceramic types depict Bacchus, Cybele, Epona, Fortuna, Leda and the Swan, Luna, Mars, a boar, a dolphin, a lion, a lizard, a panther, the Boy with Cucullus, the Cloaked Figure, the Draped Boy, the Gladiator, the Long-Haired Boy, the Partially Draped Boy and a Comic Figure, while the rarest types in metal include Aesculapius, Atlas, Ceres, Epona, Flora, a Muse, a River Gods and Sucellus. Class differences are also suggested by the fact that most of the rare ceramic types are represented in metal whereas few of the rare metal types are depicted in pipeclay. Indeed, the only two pipeclay types that do not appear as metal representations are Cybele and Leda and the Swan.

There are also possibly differences in religious belief and practice, social classes and gender between the pipeclay and metal figurine types in each deity, animal and human group (Figs. 5.31, 5.33-4) but it is much harder to be certain about this. The first thing we can do here is compare the number of pipeclay and metal types in each group. This shows that there are more deities and animals in metal than pipeclay, but a more equal number of human types in each material. How I have grouped these types for quantification obviously affects these figures somewhat, but overall it shows that a smaller range of pipeclay than metal types circulated in Britain. This could mean many things, but it probably most accurately means that workshops only reproduced certain metal types in ceramic (albeit often with some differentiation in form), and that these pipeclay figurines were probably used by a slightly larger group of people who were in all likelihood lower in terms of their social status than the consumers of metal figurines. This is generally supported by the number of ceramic and metal figurines in each group (i.e.



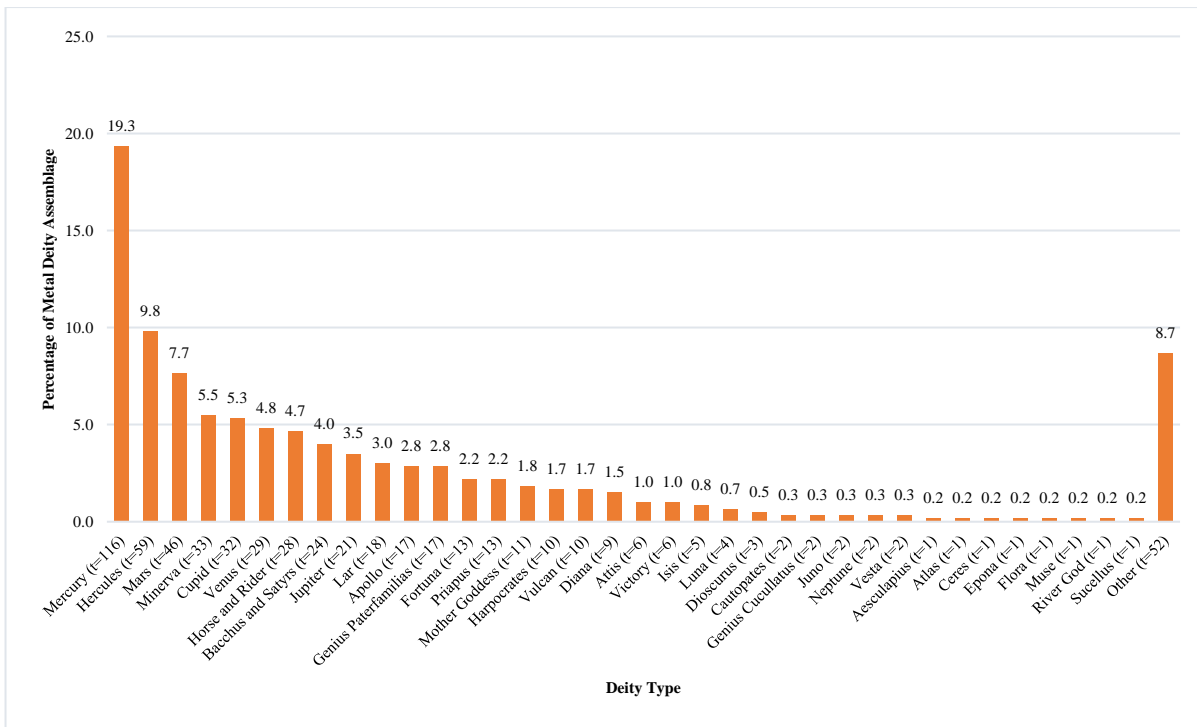


Fig. 5. 31. Proportion of metal deities in Britain (t=600).

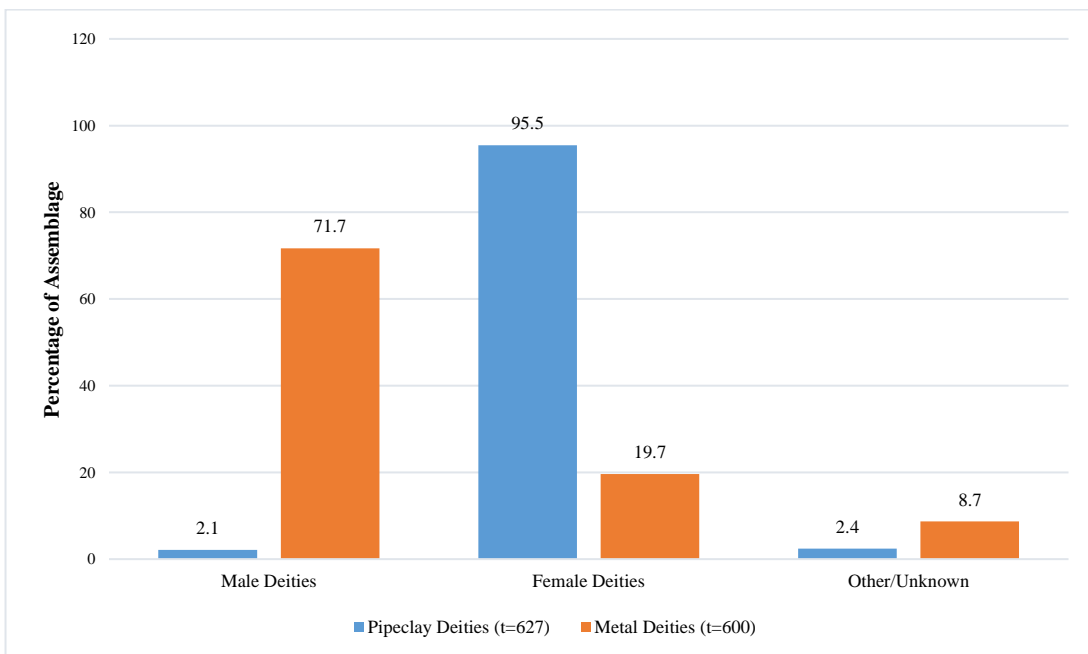


Fig. 5. 32. The proportion of pipeclay and metal male and female deities in Britain.

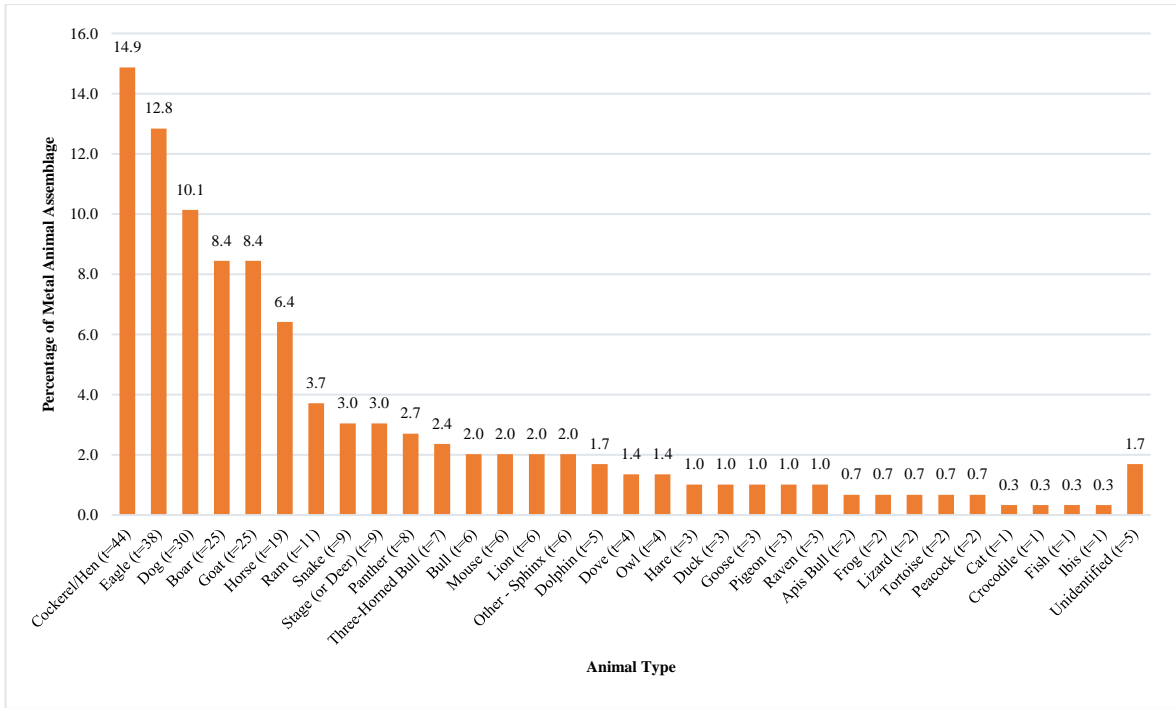


Fig. 5. 33. Proportion of metal animals in Britain ( $t=296$ ).

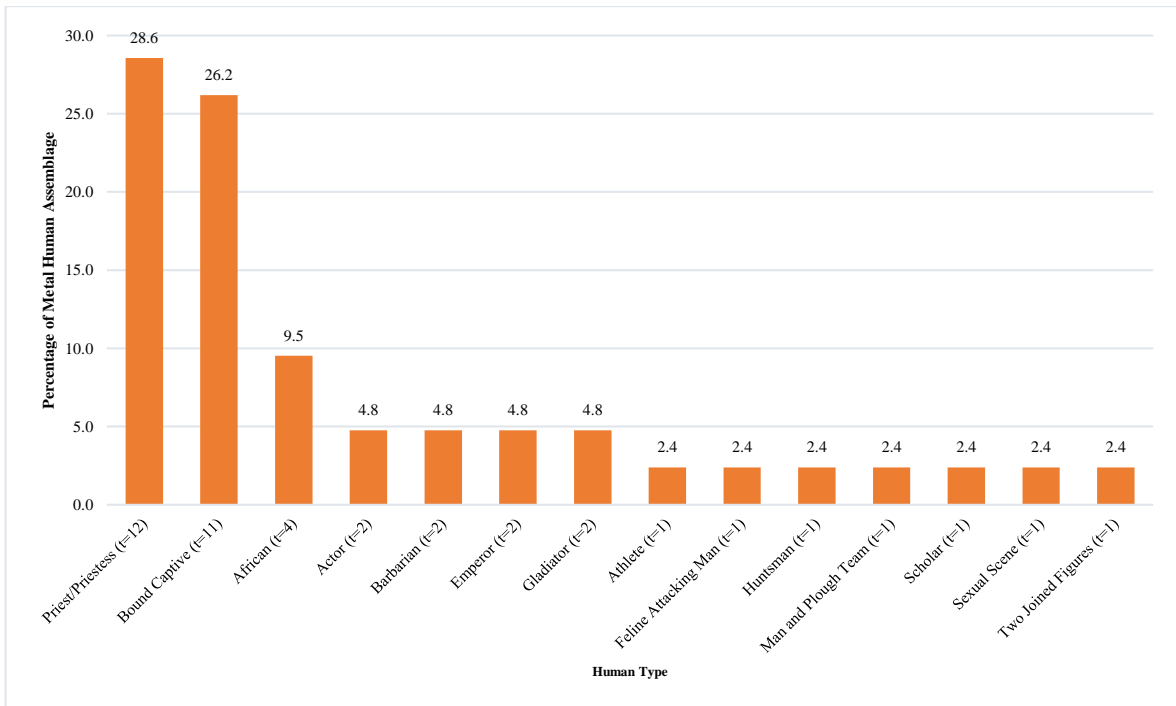


Fig. 5. 34. Proportion of metal humans in Britain ( $t=42$ ).

600 metal and 627 pipeclay deities, and 42 metal and 58 pipeclay humans), the exception, of course, being the lower number of ceramic animal figurines that were, therefore, not as popular or as significant as metal types in the religious lives and practices of Romano-British people.

Looking at each group in more detail, Figures 5.31-32 show that although the total of metal deities (600) is lower than pipeclay deities (627), metal figurines mainly consist of gods (71.7%) rather than goddesses (19.7%) in a stark reversal of the pipeclay trend (2.7% male gods and 94.9% female goddesses). This evidently reflects something about their respective popularities, but could deities in clay be more common because clay was a cheaper option for women who had less disposable income? Looking at specific types, I have already noted that gender divisions may be inherent in the preference for gods like Hercules, Mars and Mercury in metal, and goddesses like Venus and mother-goddesses that are more common in ceramic. Elsewhere though there is a much more even distribution of gods and goddesses amongst the remaining rarer deities where social status might be more of a factor. For instance, Bacchus, Apollo, Fortuna, Diana and Luna are more frequent in metal, while Epona and Juno only appear occasionally in metal and pipeclay. There is, however, a wider array of rarer metal deities, such as Priapus, Harpocrates, Vulcan, Attis, Victory, Isis, Discurus, Neptune, Vesta and Flora.

Of the animals (Fig. 5.33), quadrupeds and birds are common in metal and pipeclay. Some animals associated with mother-goddesses (i.e. horses and dogs) and gods like Mercury (i.e. cockerels) are well represented in both materials, while rams, bulls and pigeons also occur often in each group. Other animals probably reflect slightly different beliefs and practices, and arguably emphasise social differences. Quadrupeds like boars, goats, lions and panthers, for example, are more common in metal, as are exotic reptiles like snakes, frogs, tortoise, lizards and crocodiles, and birds like eagles (themselves imperial symbols) ravens, owls, geese, ducks and peacocks. Unsurprisingly, all pipeclay animals are depicted in metal but species like eagles, snakes, mice, owls, frogs, tortoise, crocodiles and fish only occur in metal.

Finally, that most metal figurines are of adults (Fig. 5.34) suggests that they were used very differently to the pipeclay depictions of mainly females and young children. Nor are there many metal human busts compared to those in ceramic depicting women and children, while nearly all the rarest metal human types are in the form of adult males compared to the rarest pipeclay types that mainly depict children, adolescents or young males. The use of portrait heads and busts in the household as a way to commemorate ancestors is a well known Roman practice that likely extended into Britain (Ferris 2012: 118-9) but the differences in the forms depicted in ceramic and metal might reflect how the figurines used and the implementation of this practice differed for each gender. It is therefore possible that metal busts and figurines were used to represent and commemorate men who were usually head of a household, whereas ceramic figurines and busts might have been used for the remembrance of women and children.

Gladiators are one of the few types to appear in both materials but are slightly more numerous in metal. Once again there is the suggestion that metal human types are far more 'exotic' than pipeclay types, with some perhaps reflecting particularly strong personal (the Athlete, Huntsmen and Scholar), religious (the Priests/Priestesses) and cultural (the Africans) identities. Particularly interesting metal figurines include the two 'Emperors', two classically styled 'Barbarians', 11 'Bound Captives' that may be linked with slavery: probably owners and traders rather than slaves themselves (Jackson 2005; see also Webster 2010 for the slave trade in general), and the four Africans that may reflect direct or indirect links to African culture if not religion *per se* (e.g. Eckardt 2014: 63-91).

### ***Look-a-Likes? The Significance of Materials***

While comparing the proportions of metal and pipeclay figurines highlights some clear differences in terms of their consumption patterns and the different beliefs they represent, it is

possible that the different properties of these two materials also had some bearing on how and why they were used. Over the past twenty years a small stream of research has been conducted looking at how different materials and their use in the past reflected and shaped social views and beliefs. Most of this has been carried out in the field of pre-history where on Salisbury Plain, Wiltshire, for example, Pearson (1993) and Pearson and Ramilsonina (1998) have observed that the use of wood was reserved for the ‘realm of the living’ at the large seasonal settlement of Durrington Walls and nearby Woodhenge, while stone was exclusively reserved to build structures immortalising the dead in the ancestral landscape of Stonehenge on the nearby Plain. How the properties of ceramics and metal relate to the use and significance of Roman objects, including figurines, remains an interesting topic but one that is still very much underexplored.

Garrow and Gosden’s (2012) book, *Technologies of Enchantment* on ‘Celtic’ art that focusses on metalwork is one of the few studies that analyses how the materiality of objects influenced social and societal change from the late Iron Age to the early Roman period. In it the authors not only recognise a relationship between the emergence of ‘Celtic’ artwork and the resurgence of metalwork (that included metal figurines) across Europe during this period, but also show that this kind of art was an integral part of daily practices and wider communal transformations that constituted part of people’s complex cultural identities (Garrow & Gosden 2012: 307-11). A key part of their work is understanding that metal’s physical properties (i.e. its strength, versatility and durability) was influential on why metal objects were used, as well as by whom: ‘changes in the [use] and nature of metalwork were not primarily to do with technology...but concern broader sets of values connected ultimately to the reproduction of society’ (*ibid*: 14). Their concluding remarks about the contextual distribution of such material in hoards, burials and settlements emphasises how metal objects reflect social diversity and inter-connectedness, but in doing so they also suggest that metal figurines were particularly

important in negotiating identities of social elites as they are usually found in ‘rich’ burials with objects like horse gear and ornamental objects rather than in those with fewer grave goods overall (Garrow & Gosden 2012: 319). The problem is that no comparisons are understandably made between ceramic and metal objects as part of their work.

For the Roman period Eckardt (2002a: 135-51) has shown that detailed contextual analyses of certain types of lighting equipment made from clay as well as different metals can shed light on the complex social identities of people and communities in Roman Britain. In her two case studies, she shows that although open lamps of any material (a type traditionally interpreted as being “native” in character) are mainly found in ‘small towns’ and in the countryside across Britain, this type of lamp was generally being used more regularly by military and urban populations in the southeast than anywhere else. Furthermore, while people in ‘small towns’, villas and rural areas usually used iron open lamps, the military more often used open lamps made of lead – particularly in Wales. Alternatively, another type of lighting equipment - ceramic candlesticks - are closely associated with ‘small towns’ and rural sites across Britain but iron candlesticks are more densely distributed towards the south-west. Other metal candlesticks come from a range of site types but each has their own regional biases: copper-alloy ones in the north, and lead candlesticks primarily in the southeast.

Differences in the contextual use of lighting equipment between materials can also be observed. Thus, while few ceramic open lamps and candlesticks are strongly related to ritual activity, iron lighting equipment is more closely associated with ritual practice in some areas, and more so across certain areas and site types in Britain than others. This, as Eckardt (2002a: 151) states, suggests that different forms of lighting equipment made of different materials had different practical and ritual functions, and that they are meaningful reflections of how people’s status, wealth, regional traditions, and lifestyles (military, urban, rural) differed across Britain.

The question then is whether some of these ideas about materiality can be applied to ceramic objects like pipeclay figurines, to what extent this is feasible, and what it might say about the people that used them. A more detailed analysis focussing on the different contextual distributions of ceramic and metal figurines and what this could mean regarding the status of the people that used them appears later in this thesis (see Chapter 8). For now I will briefly consider if certain properties of ceramic figurines might have influenced their use and meaning, and the extent that this might relate to metal figurines.

Even though pipeclay figurines are made from clay which is usually regarded as a less valuable material than metal, it is possible that the finishing and decoration on some objects was intended to mimic the look and qualities of metal. Burnishing figurines whereby the clay is polished or smoothed to create a shiny surface that perhaps vaguely resembled metal might have been one way to do this. This effect can be seen on many common and rare figurines. Clay colour may well have added to this effect, with whites emphasising the shine, and darker buff yellows and occasionally reds potentially contributing towards the replication of more realistic-looking metal finishes. Some of this ‘burnishing’, however, may be use or depositional wear rather than the results of a conscious aesthetic decision or applied process and it is not necessarily possible to differentiate between these different processes. There is also no definitive proof that the intention was actually to replicate the more expensive metal finish in clay rather than just a shiny, smooth clay one.

Decoration is another possible factor. Most of the pigment surviving on ceramic figurines is red rather than the range of colours that some (Higgins 1976: 109; Jenkins 1977: 7-12) suggest they were painted with. This could be because red pigments survive better in soil conditions. Most surviving paints also usually occur only in small quantities, often on more uneven surfaces like garments rather than the body of figurines, making it hard to know if they were applied to the entire object or if different colours were used on different parts. The use of

red, as well as other techniques, like the glazes seen on animal vessels, may well have helped create a shiny finish mimicking more valuable metals like bronze, but it is hard to be certain.

Overall burnishing is more common on figurines than painted decoration. Preservation issues are probably to blame for this, although not all figurines were necessarily decorated. It is unlikely that these techniques had any functional role in terms of the practices the figurines they appear on are associated with beyond their more appealing visual aesthetic: people might just have wanted a 'better-looking' figurine to, say, put in their household shrine or dedicate in a temple. But they were perhaps ways in which people tried to improve the perception of their social status and attempt to make more meaningful dedications to the gods they worshipped.

There is not enough space in this thesis to evaluate all of the potential relationships between different figurine types and the materials they are made of but two brief examples can illustrate the point. Firstly, it is possible that the more fragile pipeclay material may itself be a symbol that reflects the delicate nature of life, or stages of it, and it is therefore perhaps unsurprising that they are most commonly associated with depictions of fertility goddesses like Venus and Dea Nutrix where protection in pregnancy and childbirth are important factors. The depictions of animals like doves and dogs that are affiliated with these goddesses may also be associated with this kind of idea - as may those of women and young boys that likely reflect the more vulnerable early stages of life before progressing to maturity. Such an idea becomes even more poignant given the number of pipeclay figurines that have been found in graves on the Continent and in Britain, especially in the latter where the burial focus is on young infants and children (see Chapter 9). Alternatively, it is possible that the metal figurines primarily depicting male gods are associated with another kind of worship that encompasses metal's properties of strength and durability. In this sense, Mercury's role as protector of Roman commerce, Hercules' godly power and Mars' role as the god of war and imperial protection all seem innately appropriate. Using the qualities of metal to emphasise or enhance the function and



purpose of objects and the practices they were used for can also be seen in the form of small metal figurines of babies, like those in terracotta and stone, that were sometimes used as votives or *votums* (see Derks 2014, also Carroll 2018: 76). These, Derks argues, were deposited by parents as thanks to the gods after their initial prayers to them were answered by the infant surviving the first few weeks after birth. Using a metal figurine as a *votum* rather than a stone or terracotta one may therefore have been a way that some people added credence to the sentiment of their divine thanks in the hope that future prayers would also be answered.

### *Summary*

This analysis points out that although the numbers of ceramic and metal figurines in Britain are similar, they are affected differently by factors such as metal reuse in the past and publication bias. Ceramic figurines were probably cheaper, less valuable objects than their metal counterparts but they appear to have been relatively rare in Roman Britain. A closer look at the proportion of forms and types in each material also reveals finer nuances between them that not only reflect differences in religious beliefs, but also the social and cultural identities of the people that used them. For instance, although the similar proportions of pipeclay and metal deities and humans suggests they might reflect similar beliefs and practices, different animal proportions indicate that metal animals were probably used for a different purpose. Moreover, analysing common and rare types in ceramic and metal not only reflects differences in core religious beliefs (and possibly practices), but also that common pipeclay types mainly depict mother-goddesses and metal figurines mainly male gods, which might reflect gendered use by the wider population. Rare types probably reflecting the beliefs and practices of individuals and smaller social groups also differ and showcase cultural differences between the materials, with those of ceramic demonstrating particularly close cultural (and production) links with the area of Gaul covered by modern France, and metal types reflecting more individualism and

exoticism. Finally, some ceramic figurines may have been burnished or decorated to mimic more valuable metal figurines, while the qualities of each material may be related to the specific iconography and function of types.

These different consumption patterns demonstrate that the relationship between metal and pipeclay figurines is much more complicated than previously thought and that comparing ceramic and metal forms can tell us a lot about the social status and identities of the people that used them. In particular, it highlights that although ceramic figurines were cheaper and less valuable objects that might be thought to have belonged to lower social classes of society, they still had their own purpose and appeal alongside the more valuable and culturally very different metal figurines. Overall, within the remote province of Britain, they were both relatively rare and 'high status'. How exactly the purpose of ceramic and metal figurines differed will be a topic of a later chapter comparing their contextual evidence in detail (see Chapter 8), but for now it is clear that the different materials figurines are made of is a very important factor.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has been concerned with the typological quantification of the pipeclay objects from Britain and comparing this to Continental collections as well as the assemblage of metal figurines from Britain to highlight differences in their consumption, and what this can tell us about the different beliefs, practices and identities (i.e. status and gender) of the people that used them. The first part of the chapter summarised the quantities of pipeclay forms and types in Britain and identified common and rare types to highlight the character of their consumption in the province. Although affected by factors of chronology, production and trade, this showed that the consumption of and consumer choices made about pipeclay objects in Britain were mainly based on the veneration of mother-goddesses figurines like Venus and Dea Nutrix that

are associated with fertility and protection beliefs which closely link the province, by production and culture, to the area of Gaul covered by modern France. It also showed that rarer forms and types probably reflect the more unusual and exotic beliefs and practices of individuals and smaller social groups of, quite possibly, a higher social spectrum of society. Comparing the British picture to ‘snap-shots’ of pipeclay consumption in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland then highlighted the choices people in different provinces made about their beliefs, and the distinctive composition of the British assemblage, within the wider context of Continental production, trade, supply and availability.

The second part of the chapter directly compared the proportions of ceramic and metal figurine types that have been found in Britain. This showed that although pipeclay figurines were indeed probably less valuable than metal figurines, the proportions, and more importantly the types, of deity, animal and human depictions in ceramic and metal differ greatly in the province, and consequently that different social groups were using pipeclay and metal figurines as part of different belief systems and possibly practices. It was also suggested that the materials that ceramic and metal figurines are made of might be an important part of their use and social importance, and that some finishing on pipeclay figurines perhaps mimicked qualities of metal.

The next step is to take a closer look at the chronology and distribution, both spatial and social, of pipeclay objects in Britain, and compare this to metal figurines (see Chapter 8), to get a better idea about the different ways in which they were used by Romano-British people.

## Chapter 6. Chronology

A chronology of pipeclay object use in Britain can be established by analysing the finds from dated contexts. Unfortunately, most of the finds (580) are from unknown, undated or residual contexts, but 366 objects come from dated contexts (Appendix 3). A significant concern with contextual dating is that it only accounts for the date an object was last used rather than when it was produced and the duration of its use, and it is evident that some pipeclay objects, such as figurines, stayed in circulation for quite some time, possibly as religious heirlooms, before they were deposited. The other concern is that stylistic dating and dating based on Continental parallels is more difficult for rare types because there are fewer parallels. An indication of when an undated British find was produced and used can occasionally be provided by parallels from the Continent, but this method can be just as difficult because of a lack of, or poorly recorded, contextual information and associated dating evidence from Continental sites.

Over time (Fig. 6.1), the 366 dated finds show that the use of pipeclay figurines was relatively low in the first century, before peaking in the second century and generally declining in the third century. There is another slight peak in the fourth century which is mainly caused by residual finds rather than representing a real increase in use, and finally a small number of residual objects from post-Roman deposits. Figure 6.1 also shows that animal vessels were only used on a limited scale in the first century, and that a small number of masks appear in the second century. This pattern is undoubtedly influenced by when these two object types were produced (animal vessels in the first century and masks in the second), but to some extent also reflect their respective popularities in each period that was, overall, generally much lower than that of pipeclay figurines. A closer look at the figurine, bust, shrine, animal vessel and mask

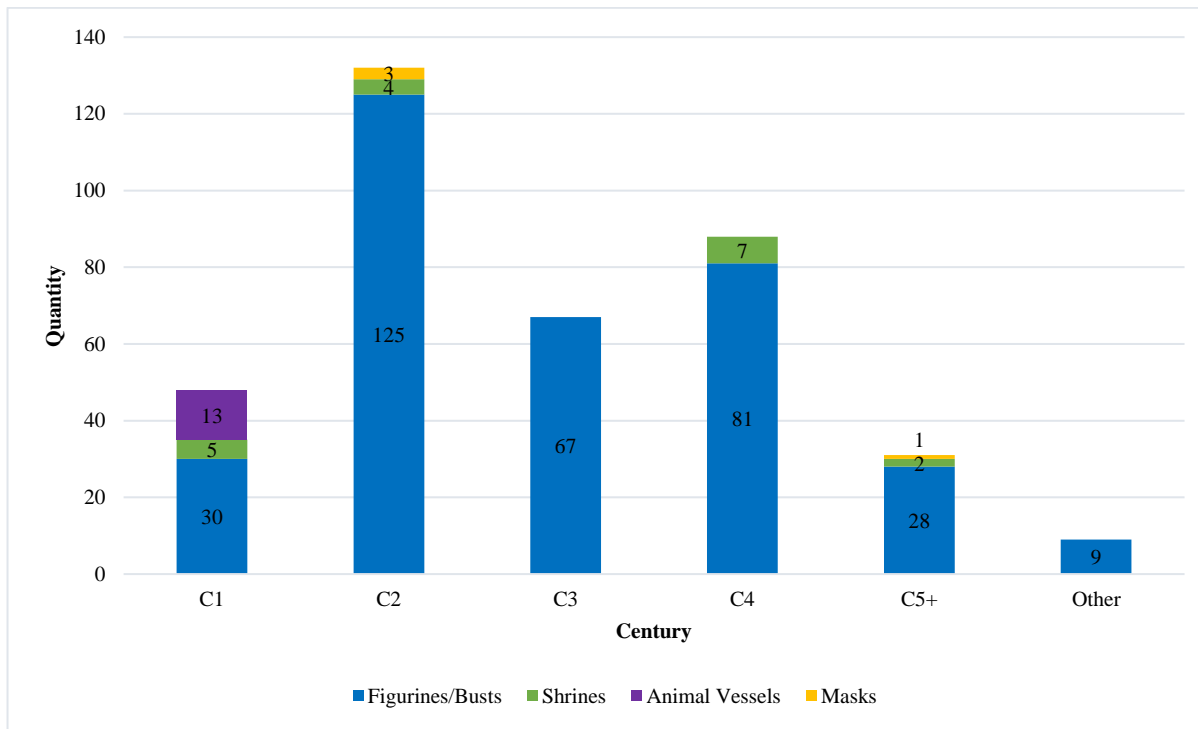


Fig. 6. 1. Quantities of pipeclay figurine/busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks per century in Britain.

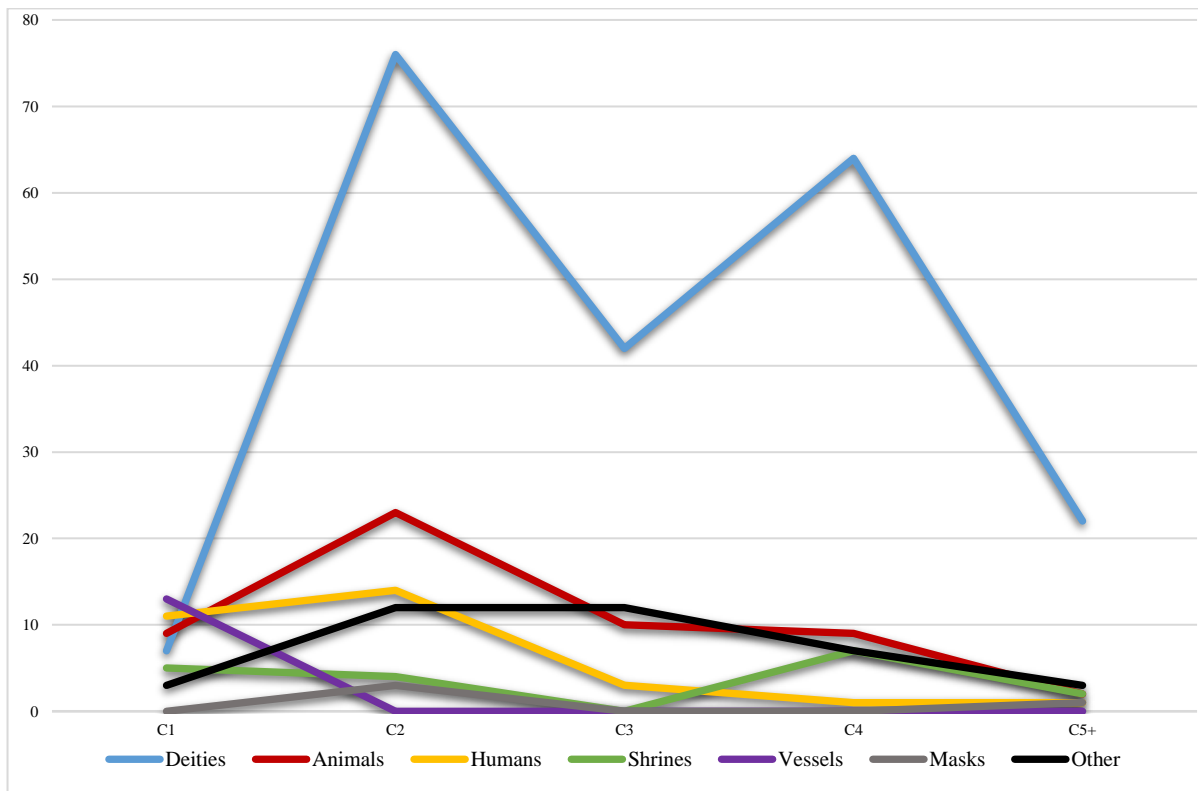
types associated with each period reveals a more detailed picture of how the use of these objects, and the beliefs and practices associated with them, changed over time.

Overall, the earliest of the 48 dated pipeclay objects are a mix of mainly animal and human forms, followed by shrines, the earliest of which are the egg (no. 619) from a pit at Lion Walk, Colchester dated *c.* AD 44-49/55, the lion-shaped animal vessel (no. 749) from a rubbish pit at the *Civitas Capital* of Silchester dated *c.* AD 40-50/60. a piece of *aedicula* shrine (no. 469) from a make-up/levelling deposit dated AD 62-5/70 at the Bloomberg site in London, the Horse and Rider figurine (no. 532) from a similar deposit of identical date also from the Bloomberg site, and a cockerel (no. 641) from a pre-Flavian pit at Usk. Slightly later finds include figurines of a cockerel, a bull, Comic Figures, dogs, a panther and a Partially Draped Boy. All of these are types suggesting close cultural connections with Gaul and are mainly from the large urban centre and likely importation point of London suggesting early trade and

religious activity by civilians. However, the egg (no. 619) and fragment (no. 839) from Colchester, Essex, and cockerel (no. 641) from Usk, Monmouthshire, from fortress contexts may suggest limited military use. Interestingly, the majority (23) of first century finds are from the Child's Grave in Colchester dated to the late Claudian to early Neronian period (Eckardt 1999) and the animal vessels are finished with a glaze. The collection evidently represents the beliefs and practices of an individual or family unit using pipeclay figurines and animal vessels in a funerary way rather than the religious practices of the general population.

Interestingly, deity figurines, also from Gaul, first appear slightly later than animal and human types, suggesting that ideas symbolised by these objects were more mixed than later mother-goddess based fertility and protection ideologies that were more popular in Britain in the second and third centuries. Indeed, this early deity group not only includes Hercules (no. 237), also from the Claudian-early Neronian Colchester Child's Grave, but also the first Venus figurines at urban settlements like London (nos. 436 from a context dated AD 90-100 making it the first securely identified and dated Type 1 figurine, and no. 474 from an earlier context dated AD 65/70-80) and Chichester (no. 671 – AD 60-75), as well as two finds from the small settlement of Orsett, Essex (no. 613) and the villa at Stanwick, Northamptonshire (no. 726). These finds, as well as the Dea Nutrix figurine from the site of a villa at Ashted, Surrey (no. 37), suggest the early influence of some deities, namely common goddesses like Venus, in the religious lives of some rural populations as well.

Rather than a figurine, possibly the earliest pipeclay object in Britain is actually Along with the animal vessel of a lion from Silchester (no. 749), there are 12 other animal vessels from first century contexts. Ten of these are from the Child's Grave at Colchester. The other two are another lion (no. 767), this time from a pre-Flavian to Flavian ditch in the Roman small town of Baldock, and secondly, a boar-shaped vessel from a midden at the Leadenhall Court site in London dated between *c.* AD 95-100. Although their exact function is unclear (see



*Fig. 6. 2. Quantity of figurine depictions and other forms per century in Britain (t=375).*

Appendix 1), along with the early animal figurines, these vessels further emphasise the importance of animal imagery in the province during the first century, as well as the early production and cultural links that Britain had established with Gaul by this time.

The circulation of pipeclay objects increased and peaked in the second century (132 finds) with a greater typological diversity of deity, animal and human figurine types. The 78 deities are the best represented group in the second century (Fig. 6.2), with Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines the common types. There is also a selection of birds and animals (23). As well as this there is a higher number of human figurines and busts (14), and forms such as shrines (four) and masks (three), in the second century compared to the first, which are generally characterised by busts of women and boys. A continued high level of Gaulish influence is expressed by the types in the second century, but several rare types from this period were

produced in Gaul as well as the Rhine-Moselle region – the latter including Apollo (no. 234, 728), the Matrona figurine (no. 708) and the Cloaked Figure (no. 712).

The pipeclay objects from second century contexts have a wider distribution across Britain than those from the first century but there are very few finds from the Antonine Wall even though this area has been extensively excavated. This could suggest that Central Gaulish figurines were no longer being imported to Britain by the mid-second century and that the figurines from the Rhine-Moselle production centre were not imported until after c. AD 150 – much like the main supply of samian from Rheinzabern (e.g Fulford 2013; Goodman 2013; Weber 2012). This could also mean that all of the Central Gaulish pipeclay figurines that were deposited after the second century were heirlooms (M. Fulford pers. comm.).

Figurines from second century contexts are more widely distributed across the social strata than objects from first century deposits. Most are still from urban habitation contexts but there are now a greater number - of what are mostly common types – in habitation contexts that include military sites (more in civilian *vici* than deposits associated with fortresses or forts themselves), rural sites and villas. The second century also sees the use of figurines for funerary practices in both urban and rural settings. This group (of 29 finds) includes urban cremations at Colchester, Essex, St. Albans, Hertfordshire, and Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire, and rural cremations at Arkesden, Essex, Brighton, Sussex, Puckeridge, Hertfordshire, and Snodland, Kent. The inhumation at Arrington, Hertfordshire, that features a selection of distinctly rare deity, animal and human figurines and busts (nos. 708-17) made in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region probably represents the beliefs and practices of an individual or a group with a more mixed selection of cultural beliefs.

Pipeclay objects may have been used for ritual purposes in the second century. One example of this is at Springhead where a rare Type 3 Venus figurine (no. 128) derives from the



*cella* floor of Temple 1. Possible temple finds include Ashwell with its depiction of Apollo (no. 728) and a possible Comic Figure (no. 729), and Harlow from which there is a mask (no. 824). That all of these are rarer pipeclay objects no doubt added to their significance as ritual objects.

In the third century pipeclay figurine consumption declined significantly (67 figurines). This probably has something to do with the contemporaneous decline of the Gaulish industry (Boekel 1987: 204) but their consumption in Britain also changed, with circulation focussed on urban sites (23) rather than in small towns and the countryside. Several figurines are from sites that were at some stage related to the military, but again most finds are from contexts that are more closely associated with contemporary or subsequent civilian activity. The one find possibly linked with military activity is a Type 1 Dea Nutrix from Dover (no. 24) recorded as being from a rectangular pit inside a barrack block dated between AD 163 and 208 when the fort was still in use, but it could have belonged to a civilian in the area. The other finds from military sites are from more ambiguous deposits such as pits, ditches and associated buildings that may or may not have been linked with military personnel but again could very well have belonged to the civilians who lived in nearby settlements as well.

The mainly common deity types suggest that core beliefs around the mother-goddesses of Venus and Dea Nutrix persisted into this period as rarer types and ideologies declined in popularity, with rarer types circulating in mainly large urban settings where trade networks and availability were probably better than in rural locations. The exceptions are two rams, one from Colchester (no. 622), the other from the small town of Wixoe, Suffolk (no. 744), and the Infant with Cucullus (no. 241) from the fort at Reculver, Kent. These might represent the vestiges of people with beliefs that were slightly different to the 'norm' but their context dates all overlap with the second century, meaning that by the later third century pipeclay consumption was now almost entirely restricted to the most common figurine types across the social spectrum.

A pattern of declining circulation continued into the fourth century where the increased quantity of 88 dated objects (81 figurines and seven shrines) is probably linked to people increasingly discarding them as their importance reduced. There is also a greater chance that some finds may have been disturbed and redeposited so that they actually reflect earlier activity. This category also includes finds with very wide context dates (e.g. AD 160-400). A total of 49 of the 88 dated objects fall into this category; a group that includes rare types like Type 3 (no. 645), Type 5 (no. 816) and Type 9 (no. 954) Venus figurines, and the Seated Mother-Goddess/Female Figure with Dog (no. 62). Meanwhile, the 40 finds securely dated to the fourth century are mainly, unsurprisingly, common types like Venus, Dea Nutrix, cockerels and horses, but there is also a pigeon (no. 521) from London.

Most of these finds are again primarily from habitation contexts with a distribution reflecting a wide social mix of people spread over urban, military (mainly *vici*) and rural sites, but there are also quite a few from religious contexts. The figurines associated with funerary activity are three depictions of Venus (nos. 441-3) from the same inhumation burial (B392) in Roman London's eastern cemetery at Tower Hamlets, a residual Venus figurine (no. 480) from a disturbed inhumation burial (B156) in the same cemetery, another residual Venus from a different inhumation burial (B4) in the cemetery at St. Clare Street, London (no. 662), a Dea Nutrix (no. 718) from an inhumation burial in the Icknield Way East cemetery in Baldock, Hertfordshire, and a pipeclay fragment from Butt Road cemetery at Colchester (no. 621). Ritual use is also evidenced by the three Dea Nutrix figurines (nos. 25, 50, 51) from the remains of a wooden building overlying Temple VII and possibly a fragment of horse (no. 291) at Springhead, Kent, the cockerel figurine (no. 573) from a levelling deposit at The Shrine of Apollo in Nettleton, Wiltshire, and the Type 5 Venus figurine from Brougham, Cumbria. The Venus figurine from Brougham is the only find that possibly evidences graveside rituals in that it comes from a pit that possibly contained redeposited pyre debris (Cool 2004: 122).

Many of these fourth century finds were by now quite old having been produced and imported in the first or second centuries and were kept for quite some time before they were deposited. Most of these are figurine types are stylistically associated with production in the second century (e.g. Venus Types 1 and 2, Dea Nutrix Types 1 and 2, the Mother-Goddess/Female Figure with Dog (no. 62) and the cockerel), or second to third centuries (the Type 9 Venus figurine, bull and shrine). Most of these finds are from deposits like pits and ditches on urban and rural sites that may have been discarded as rubbish or were probably deposited earlier and disturbed and redeposited at a later point, but a small number of others were probably kept for a period of time before deposition. Some of the figurines from deposits like pits and ditches are from religious sites. For example, Venus (no. 162) and horse (no. 291) figurines from Springhead, Venus (no. 492) and a shrine (no. 462) from London, and a cockerel from Nettleton (no. 573), all from pits and ditches inside or within the vicinity of shrine and temple complexes, may have some religious significance but the character of these deposits makes it hard to know exactly how they were used. This group of figurines from ambiguous deposits on religious sites also includes the three Dea Nutrix figurines from Springhead (nos. 25, 50-1) that were found in layers associated with wooden buildings overlying the remains of Temple VII that may or may not have been some kind of later shrine or temple structure, and the Type 5 Venus from Brougham, Cumbria from a pit fill that may be redeposited pyre debris (Cool 2004: 122-4).

The six second to third century style figurines more clearly associated with religious activity during the fourth century are from burials, or contexts associated with them. Two finds, the Venus figurine from burial B156 in Roman London's eastern cemetery at Tower Hamlets (no. 480), and the Venus figurine from the backfill of burial B4 at Clare Street, London (no. 662), are from disturbed deposits that may be associated with earlier activity but are perhaps more likely heirlooms that were deliberately buried as grave goods. However, four figurines –

the three of Venus from the same child inhumation burial (B392) at Tower Hamlets, London (nos. 441-3), and the Dea Nutrix from an inhumation at the Icknield Way cemetery in Baldock, Hertfordshire (no. 718), indicate that some of the most common figurine types were still being used as part of burial rites as late as the middle of the fourth century. Aside from one of the London Venuses (no. 443), the figurines from the inhumations at London and Baldock are in relatively good condition with few signs of wear suggesting that they may have been carefully curated - possibly as heirlooms - for this purpose, more about which is discussed in Chapter 9.

The 31 objects from deposits dating to the fifth century and later include those from post-Roman, Medieval and Saxon contexts. These are mainly of common deities like Venus and Dea Nutrix but this group also includes depictions of Mercury, Minerva, an egg, *Risus* and a Type 1 shrine. The sites they are from include a mix of military, urban and rural locations, but most of them are residual and were probably deposited earlier before being disturbed and redeposited later. Five are more interesting because they are from contexts that partially date back to the Roman period and evidence military and urban use, as well as, in one case, funerary activity. This group includes the Dea Nutrix figurine from an unspecified deposit dating between *c.* AD. 370 to 500 at the south gateway of the last stone fort at Vindolanda (no. 886), the residual Venus figurine from an occupation layer in Canterbury, Kent (no. 580) dated AD 315 to 450, the *aedicula* shrine from Colchester, Essex from an occupation deposit broadly dated between *c.*AD 300-400+ (no. 623), the Venus figurine from a dumping deposit at the Guy's Hospital site in London dated from the mid/late fourth century to the early fifth century (no. 668), and the Venus figurine from a grave fill located in the Roman cemetery in Colchester, Essex (no. 618) that is dated between *c.* AD 329- *c.*450.

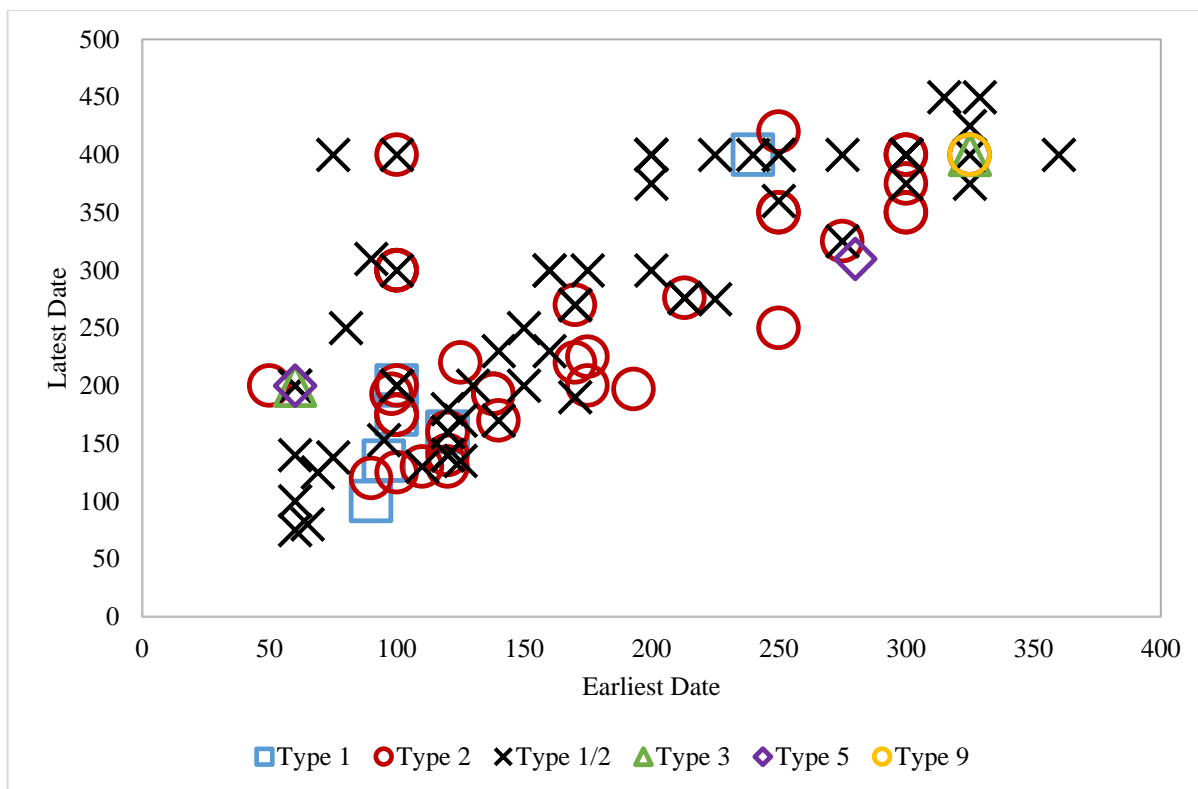
One interesting feature about the chronology of pipeclay figurines is the reduction of dated finds from religious contexts in the third and fourth centuries (14, compared to 48 in the first and second centuries) when the use of similar objects, like metal figurines, in such third to

fourth century ritual contexts at temples increases (Durham 2012: Section 5, Chronology). This difference is hard to account for but one suggestion is that ceramic figurines were no longer popular choices for the ritual and funerary practices for later generations in third and fourth century Britain, and that these people worshiped their gods in alternative ways or changed their ritual and funerary practices altogether. This does not mean that people simply switched to using, say, metal figurines for these purposes; these were, of course, still more valuable, have quite a limited 'religious' distribution throughout the third and fourth centuries and were probably used by different people. There were, however, still a small group of people that continued to use pipeclay figurines for ritual and, mainly, funerary practices who were probably culturally distinctive from the rest of the Romano-British population, especially in London (see Chapter 7). It would ultimately be useful to see if this was also true on the Continent but unfortunately the current surveys are not detailed enough to do this on a province by province basis.

While all objects in Britain fall within the parameters of Continental dates, early contexts are more likely to provide finds that were made closer to their production dates. This is supported by Continental material whereby parallels of the animal vessels (Boekel 1987: 776-7), Type 1 shrines (Beenhouwer 2005: 803), and figurines, including the Comic Figures (Boekel 1987: 597-601) and egg from Colchester (no. 619) - the only one from a dated context in Europe (Crummy 1983: 143) - are earlier types that were produced in Central Gaulish workshops. The dog from Southwark Street, London (no. 755) also appears to be an earlier figurine type judging from the mid to late first century pit it comes from, while the other Continental finds typically date from the mid-first to early second century (Boekel 1987: 725).

It is occasionally possible to refine the chronologies of certain figurine types and sub-types in Britain, especially if they were produced over longer periods, but the limited data mean that this is only possible for certain types (e.g. Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines). For Venus

figurines (Fig. 6.3), the context dates from Britain suggest that Type 1 figurines arrived before any of the other types, with the Type 1 figurine from London from a deposit dated AD 90-100 (no. 436; see Reyner *et al.* 2011: 407) being the earliest identifiable type of Venus from the province. Type 2 Venus figurines then appear, and occur much more often, the following century. A find from the first to second century *cella* floor in Temple 1 at Springhead, Kent may suggest that Type 3 figurines arrived at about the same time as Type 1 and 2 figurines but this deposit is only broadly dated from the first to second century, while the type's usual association with mid-second century Continental deposits means that it probably arrived in



*Fig. 6. 3. Scatter graph of Venus figurine context dates from Britain. For each point the earliest and latest possible contexts dates have been used, so, for example, a deposit dated AD 120–215 is recorded as such, but one broadly dated to the second century is recorded as AD 100-200. The earliest dates of figurine deposits broadly dated to the first century have also been refined per typological production dates. For example, Venus figurines from ‘first century’ contexts are not earlier than the mid to late first century and are recorded as such. To make a useable plot, contexts broadly dated as the early, mid, or late part of any given century (e.g. the mid-second century) have been given generic numerical values. For example, the ‘early’ part of a century refers to the first 25 years (e.g. AD 100-125), ‘mid’ the middle fifty years (e.g. AD 125-175), and ‘late’ the last 25 years (e.g. AD 175-200).*

Britain on the later side (e.g. Beenhouwer 2005: 490-500). The Type 5 Venus figurines can also be fitted into this sequence; the first, from Thomas Street, London (no. 133), from a Trajanic pit suggests that this rare type was also probably imported after Type 1 figurines and at roughly the same time as Type 2 figurines, but there are some from Continental contexts as early as the late first century (Bird *et al.* 1978: 395). The second Type 5 Venus is the likely redeposited find from a pit dated AD 280/85 to 300/310 at Brougham, Cumbria (no. 816) that also probably arrived in Britain at an earlier date than its context suggests. The Type 9 figurine from a mid-fourth century or later levelling deposit at Caerwent, Monmouthshire (no. 954) was probably also imported earlier than its fourth century deposit suggests given the parallels that are typically from late second and early third century deposits across the Continent (e.g. Beenhouwer 2005: 487-90).

A chronology of Type 1 and Type 2 Venus garments in Britain is much more difficult to establish due to the lack of well-dated material but the context dates that are available do suggest that Garment A was the first garment style to arrive in Britain, followed by Garments C, E, F, H, I, and J in the second century. Garments G, K, and L are from later British contexts but appear on figurines that are stylistically associated with the second century and were thus probably made and imported at around the same time as the other garment designs. The dated contexts of Continental Venus figurines likewise show that Garment A was the earliest design with the motif seen on figurines from contexts dated to the mid to late first century (e.g. Beenhouwer 2005: 438-9, Serie 23; 440-2, Serie 26), with the range of other designs following later from contexts more broadly dated to the second century (e.g. Beenhouwer 2005: 447-82).

Meanwhile, the observation that the first identifiable types of Dea Nutrix figurine are Type 1 figurines from second century contexts could mean that these arrived in Britain before Type 2 Dea Nutrix figurines, or that they arrived slightly later and there are thus more of them. The problem with this is that there are still many unidentified figurines of Dea Nutrix that may

be attributed to either type that could alter this sequence, one of which is the Type 1 or 2 find from a first century context at Ashted, Surrey (no. 37). Unfortunately the current contextual dates of Continental material do not offer any clarification, with most Type 1 and 2 figurines coming from contexts broadly dated to between the late first and second centuries (Beenhouwer 2005: 426-83). This either means that the two Dea Nutrix types are contemporary designs, or that one type may have been made only slightly before the other, though both were clearly sent to Britain.

The British assemblage also includes several interesting figurine types that are either new or previously undated. The contextual dating of these obviously reflects the date that they were last used in Britain rather than when they were made or the use of any Continental parallels, but the new dates are valuable contributions that improve our knowledge about the types of pipeclay figurines produced and when and where they circulated. The rarity of these types also emphasises the regional character of figurine consumption in Britain in particular.

The first of these figurines is the Gaulish-style Hercules from the late Claudian-early Neronian Child's Grave at Colchester (no. 237; Jenkins 1977: 158). It is so far the only known type of Hercules figurine in this particular pose (standing upright with his club in his right hand resting on the ground and a lion skin held in his left hand), and is unparalleled on the Continent. A slightly different type of Hercules figurine depicting the god standing with just his club in his right hand is known from a small number of French sites (e.g. Langres, St. Pourçain-sur-Besbre and Toulon-sur-Allier; see Gonzenbach 1995: 135-6), but none of these is dated.

The Type 5 Woman's Bust (no. 588) is another previously undated Gaulish type with only one parallel from Clermont-Ferrand, France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 291, no. 798), but the find from Wanborough, Wiltshire from a pit possibly associated with buildings dated *c.* AD 90 to 120 means that the type can now be broadly attributed to the late first to early second century.



Meanwhile, although the Horse and Rider figurine (no. 532) from the Bloomberg site, London is unique in the way in which the rider's hand is positioned on the back of the horse, the animal does share features with many Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle horse figurines that were made in the second century (e.g. Gonzenbach 1995: 209-13; Beenhouwer 2005: 608-9, Serie 551). The difference is that the Bloomberg figurine is much earlier than these other Continental examples in that it comes from an occupation deposit that has been dated between AD 65/70-80.

The panther figurine (no. 541) that was also probably made in Gaul given the similar roundel markings on a broadly comparable find at Toulon-sur-Allier, France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 358, no. 1104), is the only other undated Gaulish type with a Romano-British context date. Coming from an occupation layer/rubbish dump at Borough High Street in London dated between AD 60 and 100, it is now probably safe to say that this was an early animal type.

The Double Horse figurine from Newstead, Lincolnshire (no. 292) and Cloaked Figure from Arrington, Cambridgeshire (no. 712) were probably both made in the Rhine-Moselle region but each has only one broad parallel, both of which are from undated contexts: the Double Horse figurine at Salzburg, Austria (Gonzenbach 1995: 240, Abb. 93, no. 4, taf. 152, no. 2), and the Cloaked Figure at Nida-Hedderheim (Rüger 1980: 113, no. 297). The British material can be used to date these two figurine types for the first time. The Double Horse figurine at Newstead can only be broadly dated to the later first to late second century having come from a context tentatively dated between AD 80 and 180. The Cloaked Figure, on the other hand, comes from a closed grave and can be broadly associated with the second century.

The chronology of pipeclay figurines and associated objects in Britain presents a picture of growth and decline incorporating complex changes in terms of the beliefs and practices they encapsulate. While use in the first century was limited and included a small selection of early forms and types from Gaul that probably reflect the beliefs and practices of individuals rather

than larger social groups, the larger scale distribution of common deities like Venus and Dea Nutrix across different site types in the second century reflects a peak of importation, beliefs and practices associated with popular mother-goddesses by mainly civilian populations in urban and rural areas, and their occasional use for religious (ritual and funerary) practices. The third and fourth centuries saw these beliefs and practices persist throughout Britain but decline overall. Some of the surviving objects may now have been heirlooms that had been curated for up to 200 years before being placed into graves or deposited. Overall though, the small range of rarer, exotic, types made in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region in mainly urban centres and occasionally burials is indicative of individuals or small groups with slightly different religious beliefs and practices. Most types in Britain align with Continental dating but a small number of previously undated figurines add to the known sequential chronology of products that were manufactured as part of the pipeclay industry overall.

## Chapter 7. Spatial and Social Distribution

In the following chapters I will argue that pipeclay objects like figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks were important religious objects that shaped the beliefs and practices of different individuals and social groups in Britain and also constituted an important part of their cultural identities. However, it is first important to get a better idea about exactly how these objects were used in the province and whether this can tell us any additional information about the different social groups that used them, including where, when and how they did so. Mapping the spatial distribution of pipeclay objects and analysing their contexts in detail can help address these issues and clarify their social significance in the province.

The first part of this chapter therefore examines the overall spatial distribution of all pipeclay objects in Britain to highlight any geographical patterns in their use and compares this to the distribution of metal figurines to identify any differences. The second part of the chapter examines the social contexts of all the pipeclay objects in Britain throughout the Roman period (see Appendix 4). As outlined in Chapter 3, this analysis is carried out on several levels. The first level involves comparing the proportional distributions of all the pipeclay objects across different types of site; these are categorised as military sites (forts and fortresses), urban sites (*Coloniae* and the possible *Municipium* of Verulamium, *Civitas Capitals*, London and small towns) and rural sites (both settlements and villas). The second level involves analysing the contexts from which the finds on each site type were from, with differentiations made between habitation deposits (e.g. pits, ditches and occupation layers), and religious or ritual deposits that includes the objects from temples, as well as those found in burials.

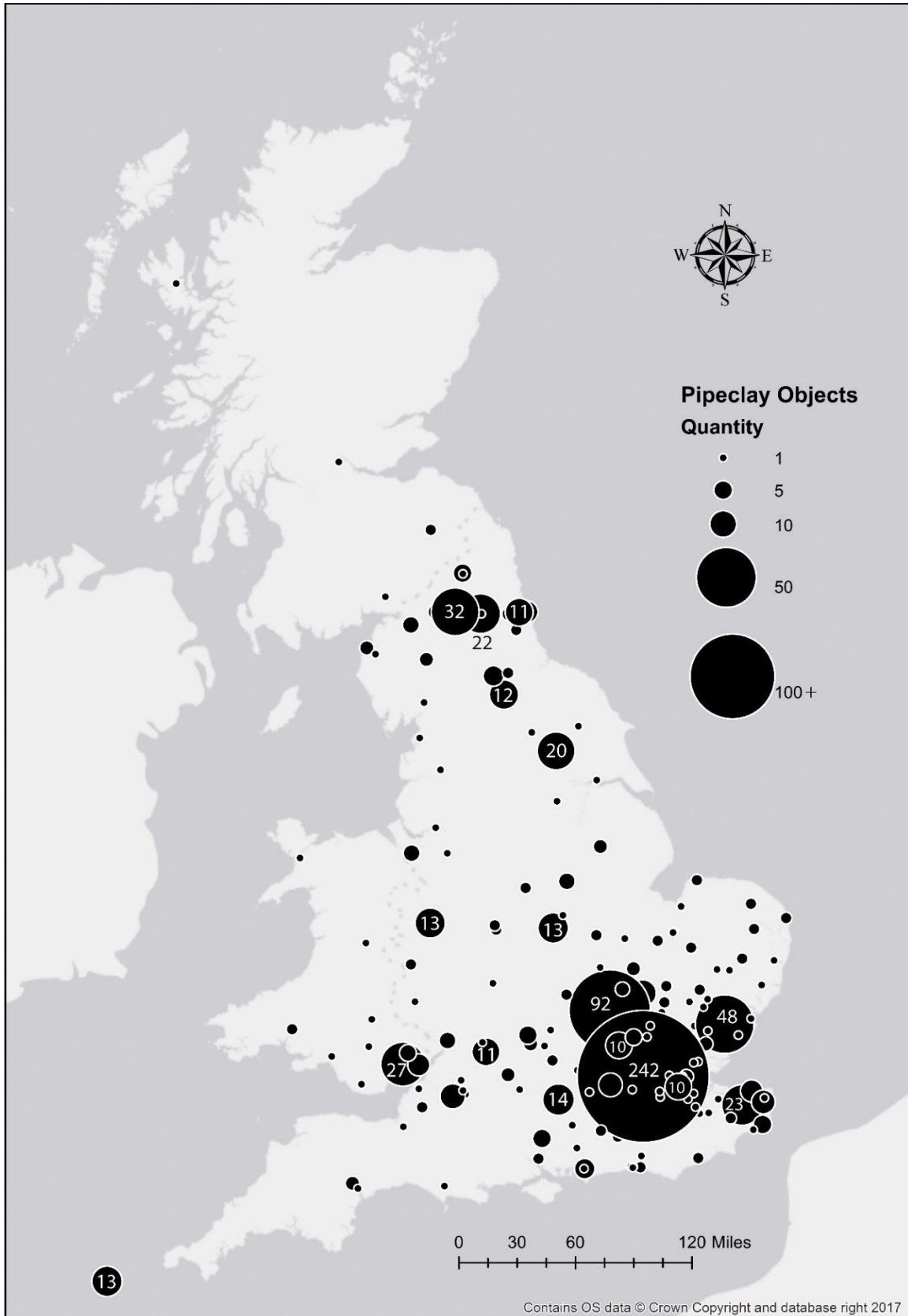
In theory, it is possible to take a more detailed look at these contexts by analysing other objects found in them. I have tried to do this for habitation contexts and differentiate between,

for example, domestic and industrial, as well as high- and low-status deposits, but overall the data is too variable and difficult to compare. We also do not really know how the deposits got there and thus how meaningful they are. Certain deposits located near interesting features might have been deposited deliberately, but most probably reflect less meaningful processes, such as refuse accumulation, unwanted goods, or accidental loss. Analysing this kind of contextual data from habitation sites is very hard but it has been queried in the database and is presented in a table in Appendix 5. Contextual data from burials, such as grave structures and goods, can also be difficult to analyse and compare but as burials are deliberate deposits their composition and contents can be a more direct, reliable and useful source of information (see Chapter 9).

The third part of this chapter directly compares the spatial, social and contextual distributions of different pipeclay forms (i.e. figurines/busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks) and select figurine types to highlight any further specific patterns of religious practice associated with them. This section compares the distributions of common and rare figurine types and their associated forms (e.g. Venus with doves, Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines with dogs, and Mercury with chickens) to highlight the extent of any regional patterns of belief and practice within the province. It also compares the distributions of male and female types to examine the extent to which the gendered depictions reflect engendered religious practices. All of this provides a more nuanced picture about how pipeclay objects were used for various religious practices by different populations and social groups in Roman Britain.

### **Overall Spatial Distribution**

Figure 7.1 illustrates that the 946 pipeclay objects are widely distributed across Roman Britain but are mainly concentrated in south-eastern England. The largest concentrations are in London (242 finds), Flitwick (92) and Colchester (48), but Canterbury (23), Silchester (14), Leicester



*Fig. 7. 1. The spatial distribution of pipeclay objects in Britain (t=946).*

(13), Wroxeter (13) and Caerleon in Wales (27) also stand out. The dense distribution in the south-east, and especially in London, is probably because most of these objects were shipped to London along the Thames (Jenkins 1977: 201) where they were consequently sold and redistributed to other sites. London being an importation hub would certainly account for the very high levels of pipeclay objects there, but high concentrations of finds elsewhere may be related to other factors. The 92 objects from Flitwick, Bedfordshire (including the 89 fragments from Ruxox Farm and the three finds from the Roman settlement nearby), for example, might be because this is a possible temple site, while the number of finds from Colchester are inflated by the fact that 12 of the 48 objects are from the same deposit – a child's grave at Beverley Road (Eckardt 1999).

The other southern sites with ten or more finds are all major settlements located along major roadways that would have facilitated the easy transportation of such goods from London. Most of Wales and the south-west are generally devoid of finds. There are also 13 finds from Nor'nour in the Isles of Scilly, where there may have been a settlement or temple (Dudley 1967; Butcher 2000-1).

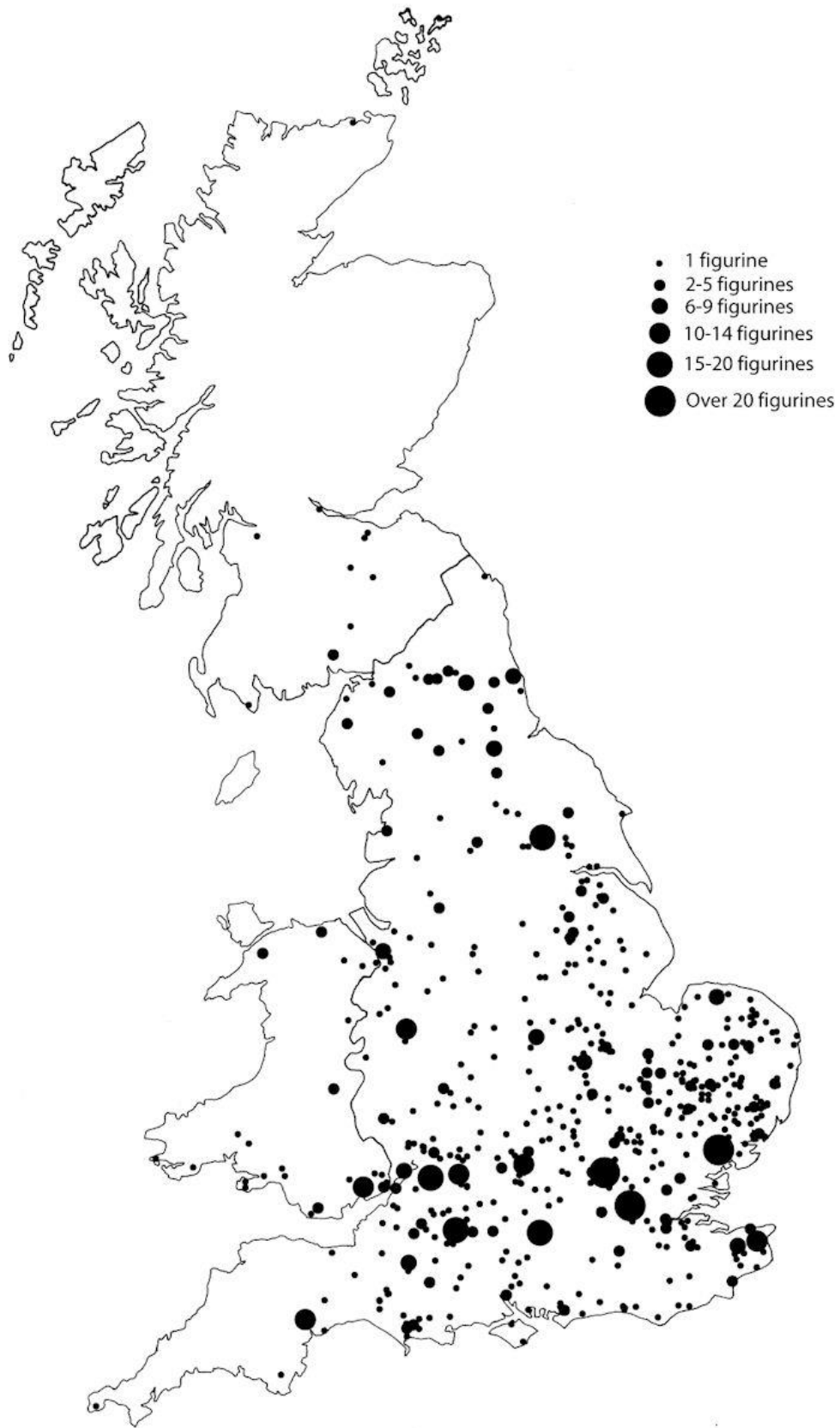
Further north there are significant collections at the large settlements of York (20 finds) and Catterick (12). The other concentration of finds is along Hadrian's Wall, where stand-out sites include Vindolanda (32 finds), Corbridge (22) and Wallsend (11). A small number of these finds are associated with military buildings but most are from deposits in *vici* and probably belonged to the civilian populations there. Some of these may have been transported in shipments of military supplies, but others may have travelled north with soldiers and their families.

Beyond the wall there are only a small handful of finds. Two of these, both Venus figurines, are from known military forts at High Rochester (no. 114) and Stirling (no. 120)..

One of the other finds is the boar figurine from Burnswark (no. 847) which may be associated with the military, especially as the animal was the emblem of the twentieth Roman legion *XX Valeria Victrix* that was stationed in the region (Manning 2000: 75). Meanwhile, the Bale of Wool from the Isle of Skye (no. 335) is probably a misidentified antiquarian discovery and is probably not Roman based on the absence of parallel objects in Britain and on the Continent.

With all distribution maps there is always the possibility that the patterns observed might be more a reflection of excavation and publication levels rather than ancient activity but Figure 7.1 does show that pipeclay objects (mainly figurines) could reach anywhere in the province and cross frontiers, from the Isles of Scilly to Stirling. However, the gaps in this distribution are more difficult to explain, especially given the relatively small number of finds overall. For instance, the fact that common types are not found on more sites but even rare types are found at sites across the province suggest that supply may in fact have been the main factor inhibiting distribution. It could also be argued that the demand for pipeclay products was so strong in London that most of these imports were consumed there and left little opportunity for other people across the country to obtain one (M. Fulford pers.comm).

Comparing the distributions of pipeclay objects and metal figurines (Fig. 7.2) is useful to see if there are any differences in where they were used in Roman Britain. Although we have already seen that the number of pipeclay objects (946 – 777 of which are figurines and 34 busts) and metal (996) figurines in Britain are similar (Chapter 5), Figure 7.5 shows that metal figurines are slightly more widely distributed across Britain, with denser clusters than pipeclay objects in the south, especially in counties like Suffolk (83 metal to eight pipeclay), Norfolk (65 to 15) and Cambridgeshire (44 to eight) that might reflect regional preferences for metal figurines. It also shows that the distribution of metal objects in Roman Britain generally has an East Anglian bias but this is not surprising given the long tradition of metal detecting in this region (see the Portable Antiquities Scheme data analysed by Brindle 2014).



*Fig. 7. 2. The distribution of metal figurines in Britain (after Durham 2012, fig. 7).*



Further north, slightly more metal figurines are found beyond Hadrian's Wall, though neither metal nor pipeclay figurines established themselves along the Antonine Wall where military connections are more likely. There are greater quantities of pipeclay than metal figurines at sites like Canterbury, Silchester and Vindolanda, but the greater number of metal figurines in most counties may well indicate that pipeclay figurines were less popular than metal figurines in the province overall.

London is one place where pipeclay objects (242, including 192 figurines and five busts) do outnumber metal figurines (87) but this probably has more to do with the fact that London was the main point of importation for pipeclay objects from the Continent, whereas more metal figurines appear to have been made in Britain in addition to those that were imported from Gaul (Durham 2012: 2.1). Local production is a factor that also probably accounts for their more widespread distribution in Britain overall.

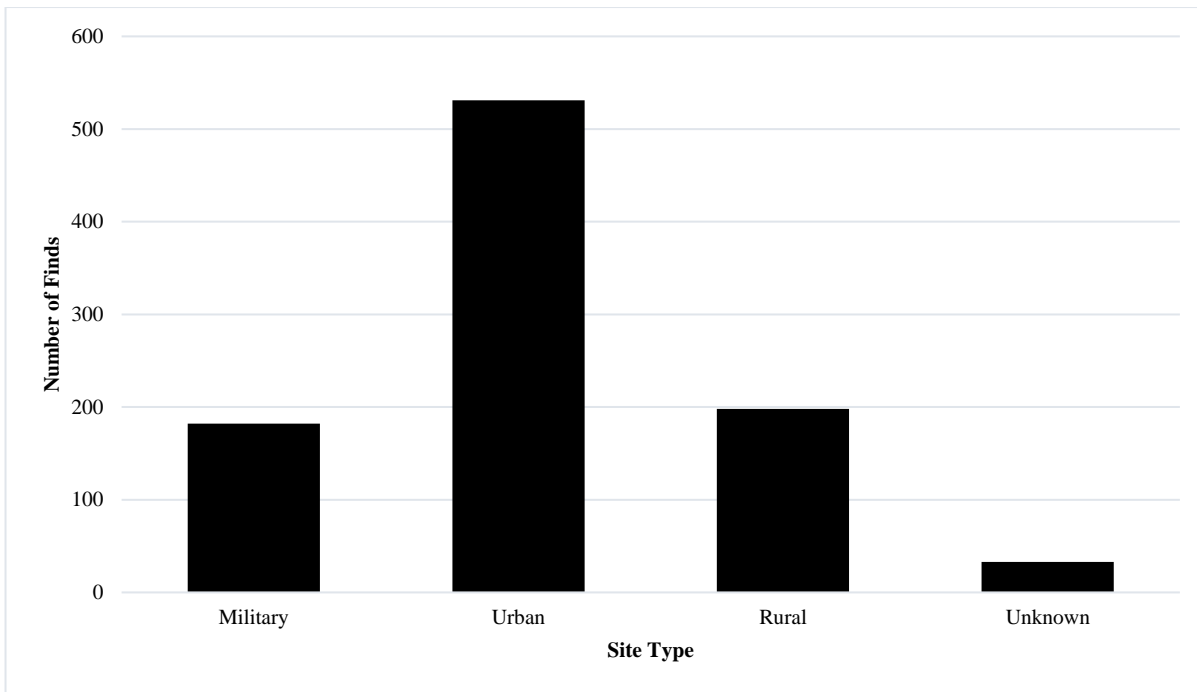
Comparing the distribution of pipeclay figurines to metal figurines therefore shows that the distribution of pipeclay objects in Britain is not simply the result of excavation bias in the province but is reflective of their specific use by Romano-British people. Broadly comparing this to other forms of imported first second century material culture would show the same thing but there is not space to carry out this kind of analysis here. Overall, the subtle differences in the distributions of pipeclay objects and metal figurines in Britain clearly highlight different patterns of use in different regions of the province. As one might expect, the distributions of pipeclay and metal figurines are quite similar, although there are significant differences that are not just related to aspects of production, but perhaps also function, use and practice.

## Overall Social Distribution

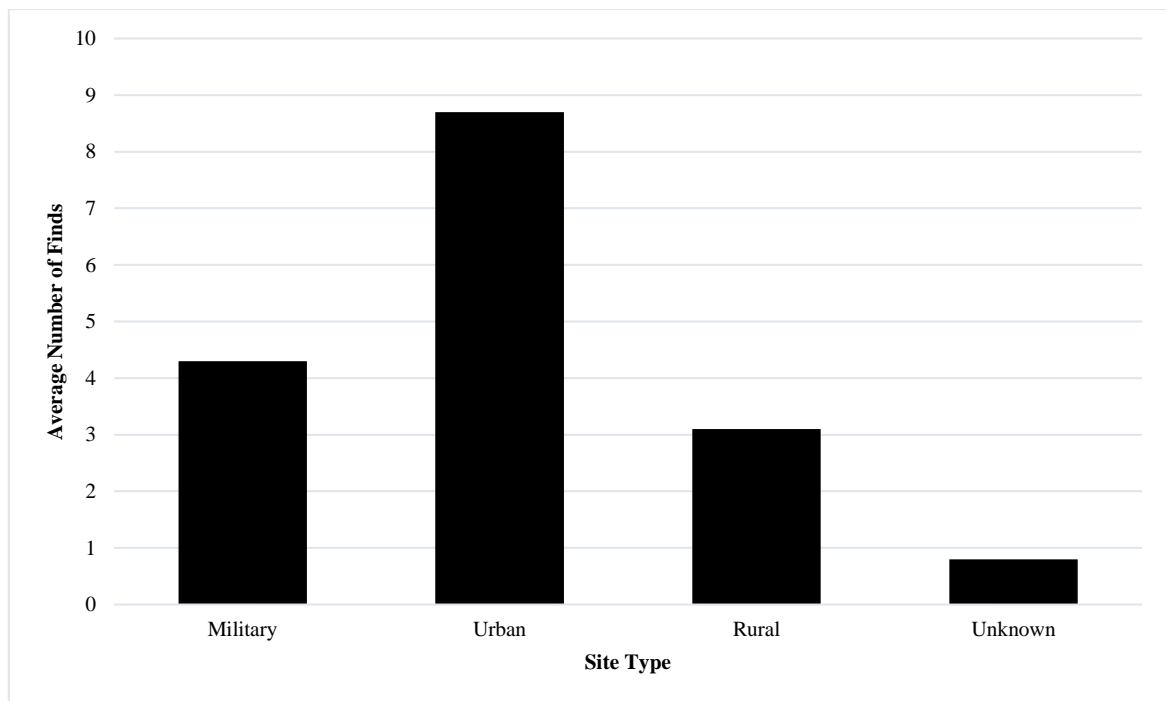
Out of the 946 pipeclay objects from Britain, 182 are from military sites, 531 are from urban sites, and 198 are from rural sites. The remaining objects are from sites of mixed or unknown social character. Counted together, the total quantity of finds from each type of site are illustrated in Figure 7.3-4. This initially shows that the overall distribution of pipeclay objects in Britain is most strongly associated with urban rather than military and rural populations.

Mapping these sites (Fig. 7.5) shows that military sites are located mainly in the south and south-west along the coast of the province at sites like Caerleon, Brancaster, Caister-on-Sea, Caernarfon, Dover, Reculver, Richborough and Usk. Usk is the only fortress site associated with the Roman conquest but this was short-lived. There is also a particularly dense distribution along the northern frontier of Hadrian's Wall. Urban sites, meanwhile, are more widely distributed across Britain. Most of these urban finds are in the south-east of the country and are made up of small numbers of finds from quite widely distributed small towns while the objects from higher status large towns are more concentrated on just a few higher status sites (see the section on urban finds below for more details). This distinction in the distribution of urban finds continues in the smaller collection of urban finds from the north of Britain where the largest concentration of finds are from the *Colonia* rather than other large settlement types, and the military phase in York (interestingly there are few finds from urban Chester but there was a more lasting military presence here), while the remaining northern finds are mainly from smaller urban towns and settlements. This appears to contrast with the overall distribution of finds from rural sites, nearly all of which are found in the south-east of the province.

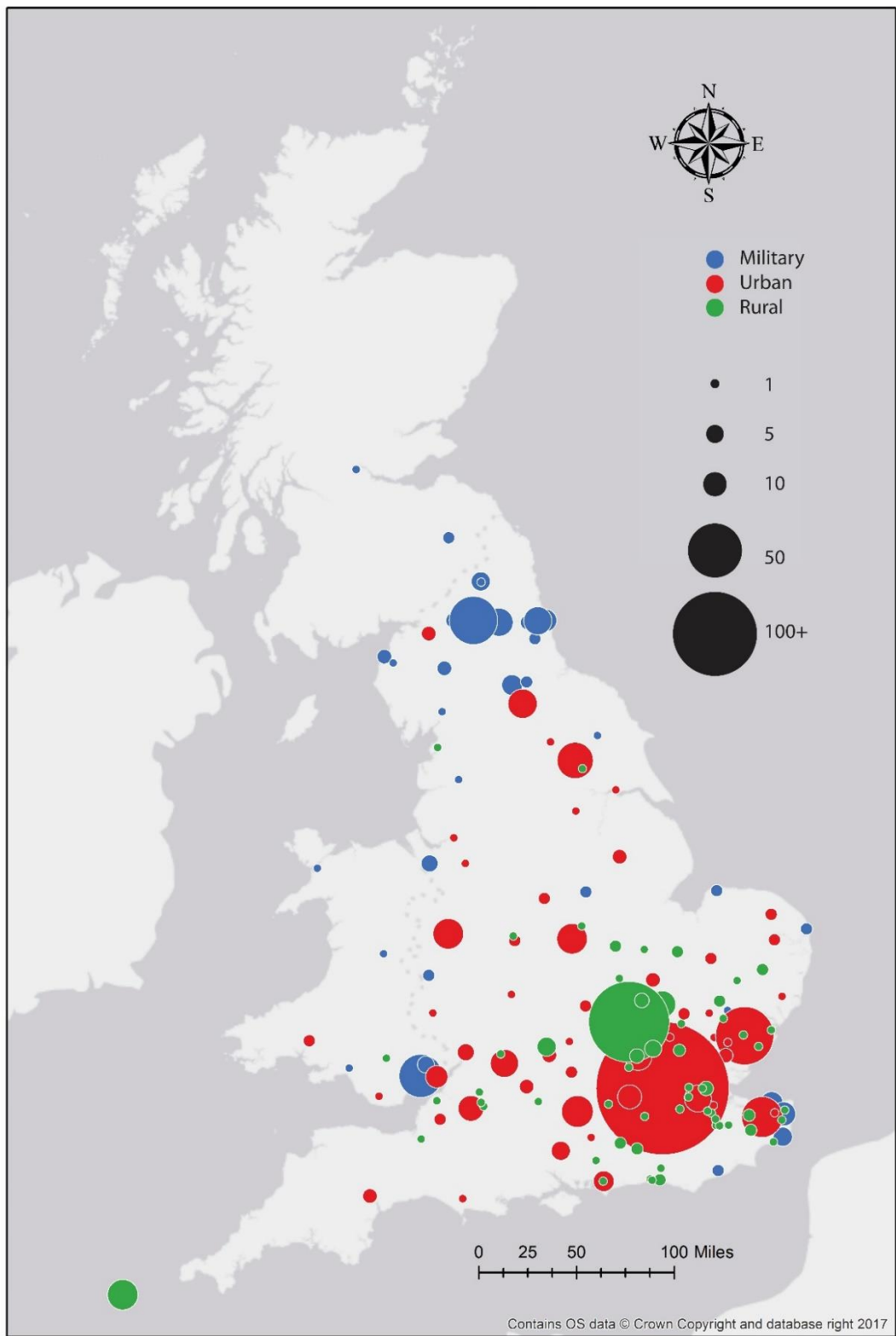
The map therefore suggests that while only small pockets of military and rural populations made use of pipeclay objects in Britain, far more people were utilising them in urban settings right across the province. It is, however, an oversimplified picture and as such we shall now move on to consider how pipeclay objects were used by more specific social



*Fig. 7. 3. The social distribution of pipeclay objects (t=946).*



*Fig. 7. 4. Average Number of Finds per Site Type.*



*Fig. 7. 5. The distribution of military, urban and rural sites with pipeclay objects in Britain (t=911).*

groups of people by analysing the different types of military site (i.e. fortresses, forts and associated civilian *vici/canabae*), urban sites (i.e. *Coloniae* and the possible *Municipium of Verulamium*), London, *Civitas Capitals* and small towns) and rural sites (i.e. rural settlements and villas) they come from, and their contexts. Religious sites in rural locations are counted separately but elsewhere are discussed as part of the contextual assessment of each site type group below. More information about the finds from religious sites is given in Chapter 9 as part of a detailed discussion about the ritual use of pipeclay objects in Britain.

### ***Military Sites***

The 182 objects from military sites make up the second largest group, behind London. These are split into four categories (Fig. 7.6): finds from legionary fortresses (5%), forts (30%), and civilian areas like *vici* and *canabae* (42%). That fortresses like Caerleon, Colchester and Usk make up only a small proportion of the military assemblage indicates that pipeclay objects were only occasionally used by military personnel, or that these sites pre-date the pursuit of pipeclay use. The swift change from military to civilian occupation may account for some of the low number of finds from some of these sites (especially Colchester (Crummy 1984: 309)). Only one object actually comes from the inside of a building of a legionary fortress that could suggest direct use by military personnel – a fragment (no. 839) from a possible occupation layer dated c. AD 44-60/1 within a barrack block (Building 131) in Colchester. Some of the other finds may have been the possessions of soldiers too, but most of them are from deposits like pits and drains that reflect their disposal rather than their use on these sites.

Pipeclay objects from forts are more numerous, with 51 finds from 19 sites, although this only amounts to less than three finds per fort on average. The number of fort finds is generally quite low in Britain, but the higher proportion that derive from northern sites along

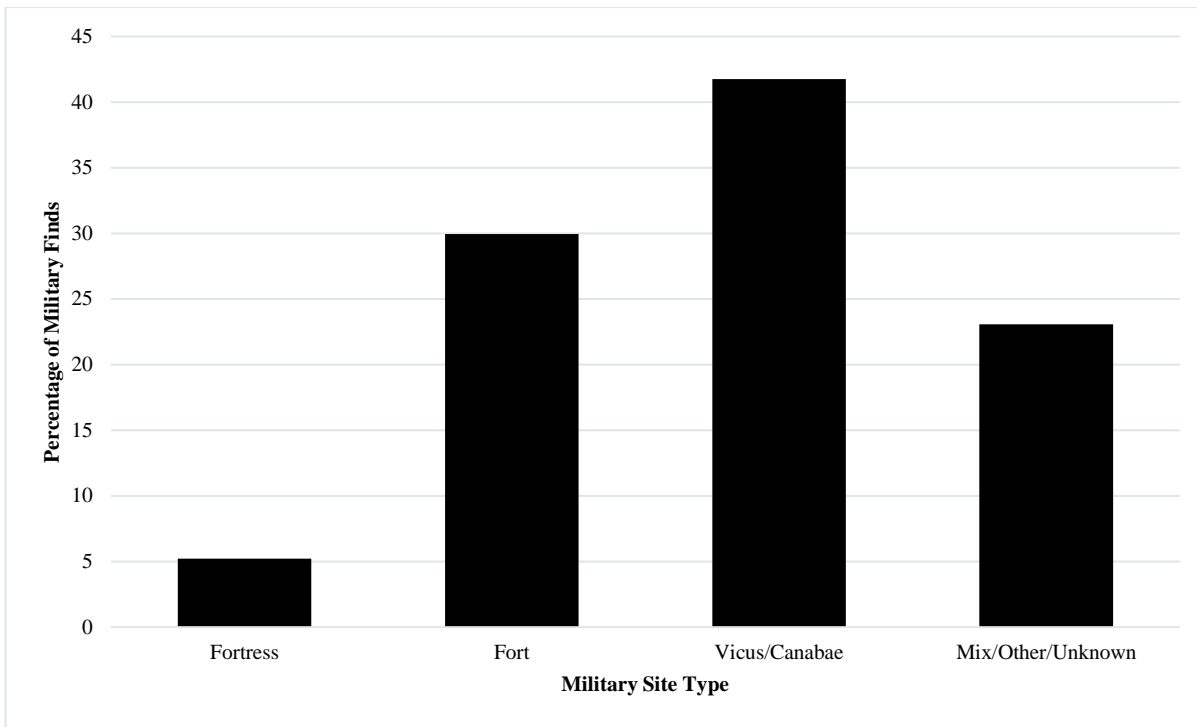


Fig. 7. 6. Distribution of finds from different military site types ( $t=182$ ).

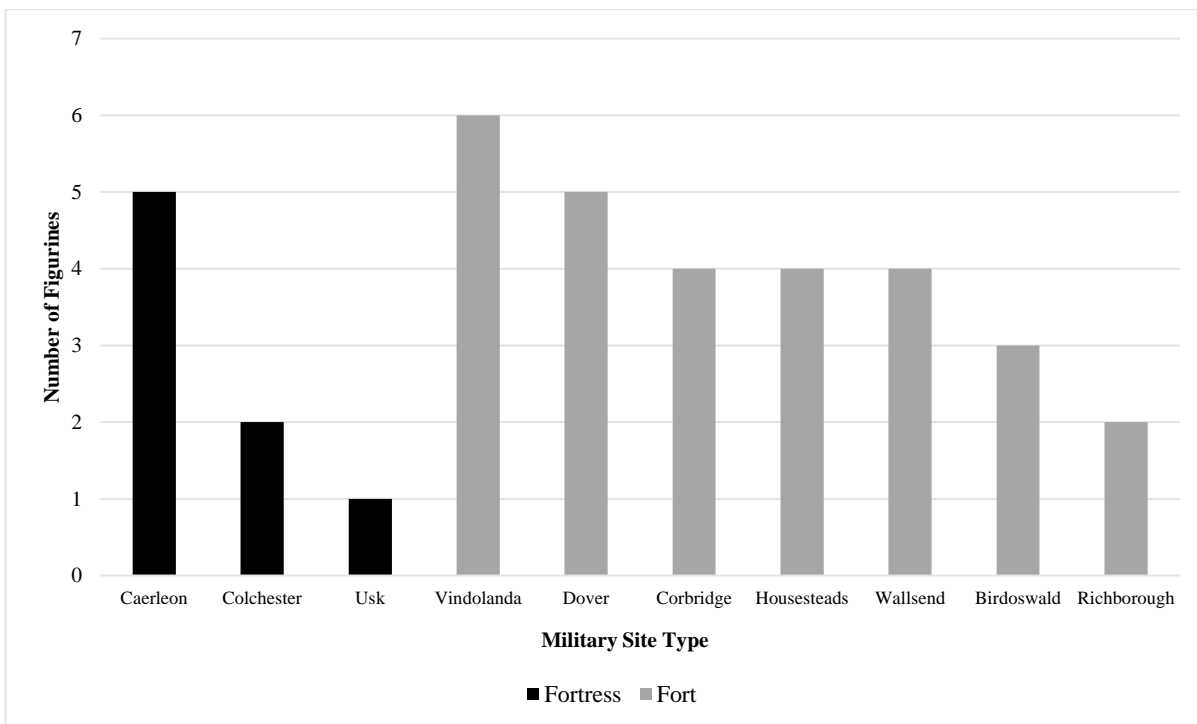


Fig. 7. 7. Quantity of finds from each military site.

Hadrian's Wall, including Vindolanda, may well be because many more forts in this area have been excavated than forts in the south of the province. Most of the forts in Britain only provide one or two objects, as at Caernarfon, Caister-on-Sea, Chester-le-Street, High Rochester, Newstead and Richborough, although other forts like Dover (five), and many of those situated further north at Vindolanda (six), Corbridge (four), Housesteads (four), Wallsend (four) and Birdoswald (three), have yielded more (Fig. 7.7). The few finds from Colchester and Usk probably reflects the short amount of time that they had a strong military presence (Colchester was only a legionary fortress for five to six years and Usk about 20 years, while Caerleon, which has slightly more finds, was a fortress from the late first century until the end of the Roman period). Three finds from Chester may also belong to this group as well but are poorly recorded antiquarian finds that are not for sure linked with its military phase, while most finds from York are associated with the settlement's urban phases.

Out of the 21 fort finds with more detailed contextual information, most objects are again from deposits such as pits, ditches and drains that, although located within the vicinity of military buildings and structures, only tell us about how the objects were disposed of. Just two finds are from occupation layers in buildings that would have been occupied by military personnel. The first is a Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 24) from Dover that was found inside a room of the fort's barrack-block. Another figurine, this time of Venus (no. 135), is also from a barrack-block at Birdoswald but it is not associated with a particular room.

Far more finds (71) are from *vici* (48) and *canabae* (from a total of 15 sites) than on any other military site type. This distribution is perhaps not surprising given that *Canabae* are extramural settlements that developed around fortresses whereas *vici* are settlements that grew up around auxiliary forts (Mason 1987: 143; Franzen 2006) – yet both settlements were a cultural milieu of soldiers and civilians who probably had better access to imported goods because of their military connections. Some finds are from sites where other finds have also

been found in forts (e.g. Birdoswald, Caerleon, Vindolanda and Wallsend) that highlights the cross-over between civilian and military consumption. There are also several sites where the only finds come from *vici*, such as at Benwell, Corbridge, Greta Bridge, Malton, South Shields and Stirling.

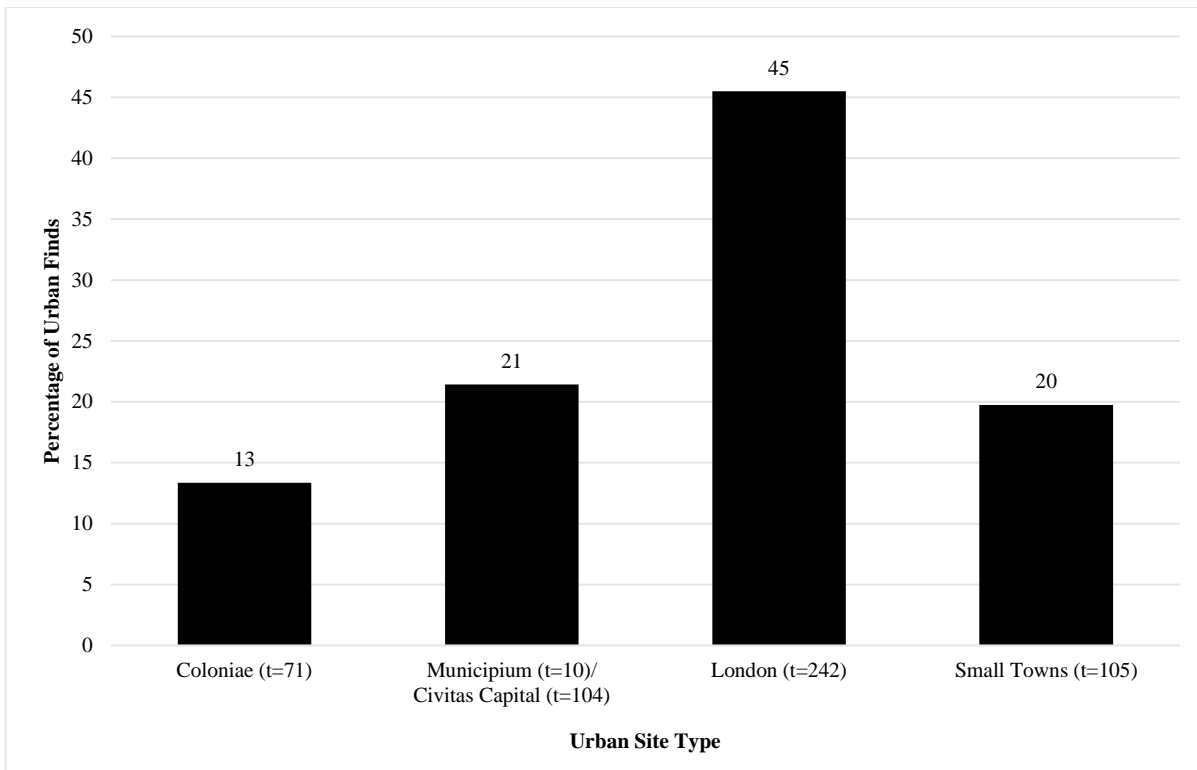
The contexts and deposits the *vici* and *canabae* finds are from are similar to the military ones described above (e.g. pits, ditches, gullies, sometimes associated with buildings), but with the addition of a few finds from slightly different deposits (e.g. alleys, floors, metalling, small channels, drains, refuse dumps, soil accumulations, destruction debris), and one Venus figurine (no. 123) from a hypocaust system inside a building at the site of Vindolanda.

Finally, there are three finds from possible burials that might be associated with some kind of military activity. One is the Type 5 Venus figurine (no. 816) from Brougham that comes from an oval pit that could be a cremation burial in a disturbed area of the Roman cemetery associated with the Roman fort in this area (Cool 2004: 122). The other two finds, a Venus figurine from an unrecorded context (no. 124) and a bust of *Risus* from a possibly disturbed cremation burial (no. 257) are both from Fishergate cemetery in York. Both York finds are from undated deposits but the cemetery pre-dates the Roman *Colonia* and is therefore probably associated with the settlement's military phase when it consisted of a fortress and a substantial civilian *vicus* (RCHM York Vol. I, 69b; Alcock 1980: 50; Hutchinson 1986a: 358, no. C-12).

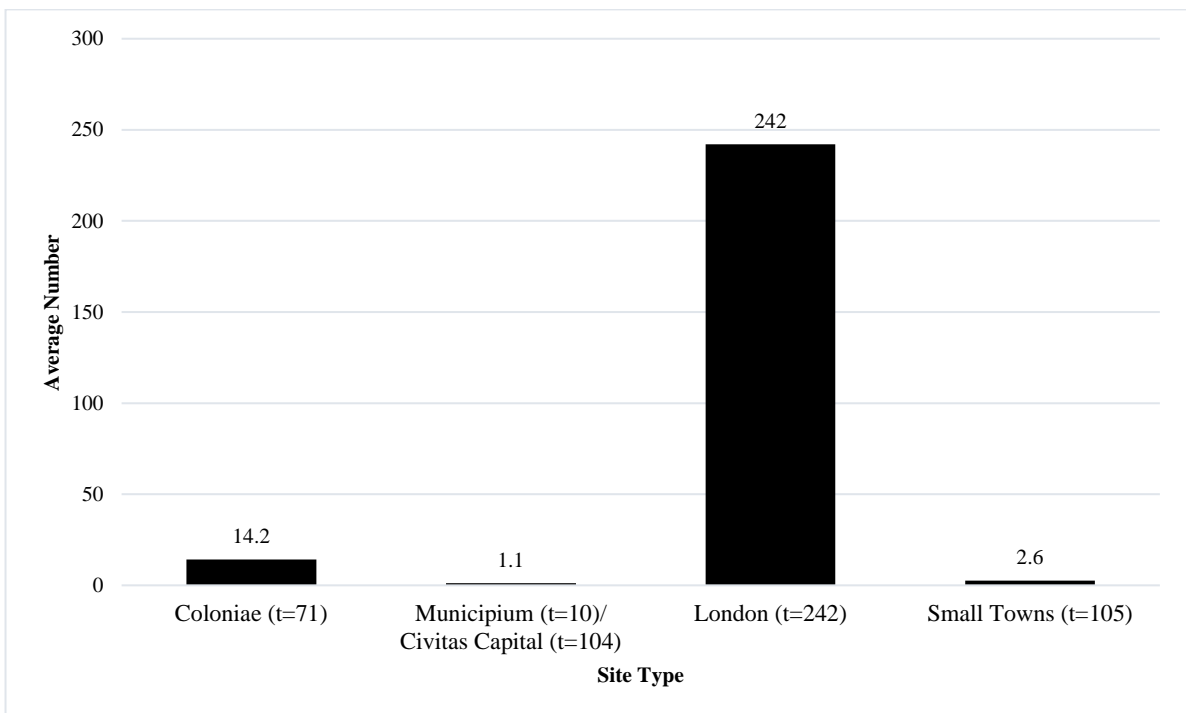
### ***Urban Sites***

Out of the 531 finds from urban sites (Figs. 7.8-9), London has provided the most, with 242 (245 including three previously misidentified) finds. This group is discussed in more detail below. The next largest groups are made up of the finds from the two categories: *Civitas Capitals* (104 finds) and small towns (105 finds), the latter at a lower end of the Roman city hierarchy. The smallest groups, meanwhile, are urban sites at the higher end of the urban scale,





*Fig. 7. 8. The social distribution of pipeclay objects on urban sites (t=531).*



*Fig. 7. 9. Average number of pipeclay finds per site type.*

with 71 finds from *Coloniae* (the high average here is caused by a mere four sites), and ten finds from the possible *Municipium of Verulamium* – the smallest group, here combined with *Civitas Capitals*. What is more interesting is that the distribution of objects in urban areas appears to be more closely associated with regional centres (i.e. *Civitas Capitals*) than administrative centres like *Colonia* but the average number of finds from *Civitas Capitals*, as well as all other sites in general, shows that they are still quite rare finds in Britain overall. It is also notable that the proportion of discoveries from *Civitas Capitals* and other small urban towns are relatively even but that small towns have a higher average. Factors like the extent of excavation on each site type and the total number of such sites in Britain obviously affect these numbers (fewer sites provided the finds from small towns, for example), but in general this closer relationship with ‘lower status’ sites could be an indication that pipeclay objects were mainly consumed by populations at the lower end of the social scale.

The 71 objects from *Colonia* are provided by just four sites (Fig. 7.10). Most of these (46) come from Colchester, where the majority (23, including 10 animal vessels) were found together in the cremation burial of a child at Beverley Road dating to the late Claudian to early Neronian period (Eckardt 1999: 60-8). The other grave good that is associated with Colchester is a pigeon (no. 308) from a cremation dated between AD 80 and 120 in one of the settlement’s cemeteries (May 1930, pl. 82, no. 53; Jenkins 1977: 406, no. 1). The remaining 22 finds from Colchester were found in different areas of the *Colonia*. Some of these were found in better excavated parts of the city at sites like Culver Street (three finds), Lion Walk (three finds), Balkerne Lane (two finds) and Butt Road (two finds; see Crummy 1983: 141, 144-5, 1992a: 191-3) – all areas that were part of the fortress - but no two finds are from the same deposit or context.

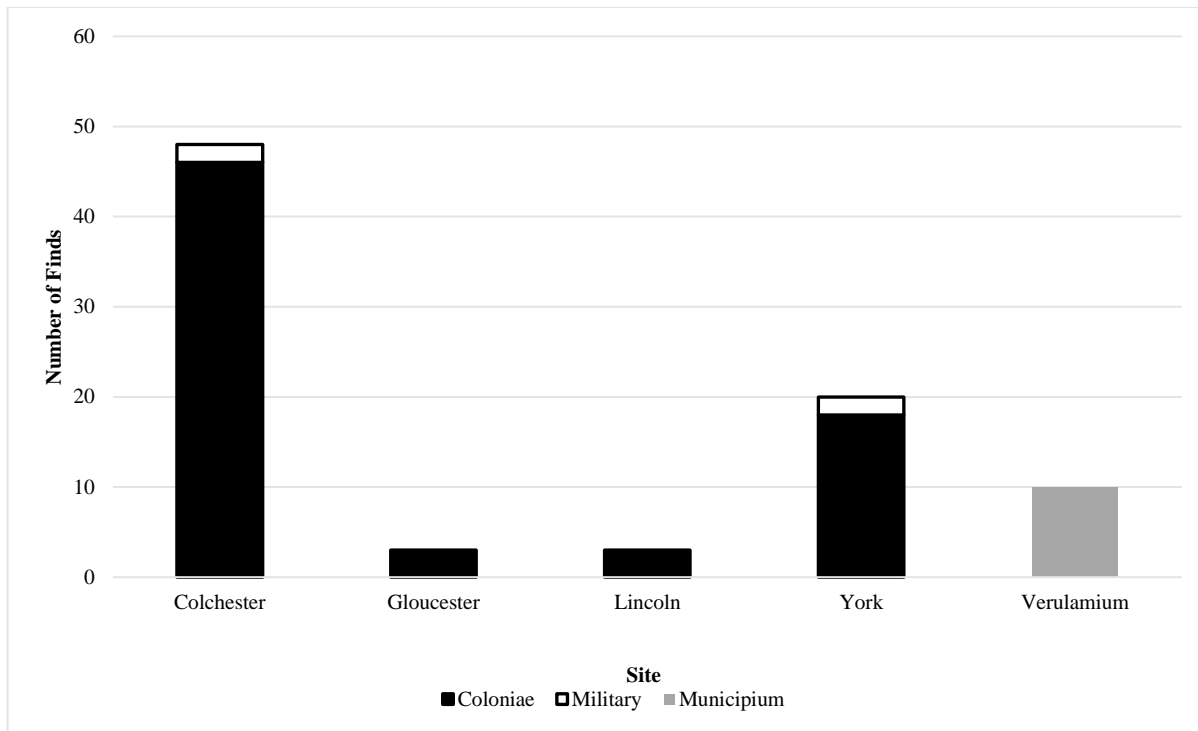


Fig. 7. 10. Number of finds from *Coloniae* and the *Municipium* of Verulamium ( $t=80$ ).

The other 24 finds from *Coloniae* are from Gloucester (three), Lincoln (three) and York (18). While the higher number of finds in York could reflect the higher amount of excavation that has been carried out in this settlement compared to the other two sites, it is also possible that it reflects real differences in usage levels between these sites.

The number of finds in some *Coloniae* are supplemented by a small number of finds that might be associated with earlier military activity. In Colchester this includes two finds: an egg from a pit dated *c.* AD 44-49/55 at Lion Walk (no. 619; Crummy 1983: 143), and a fragment from a pit more broadly dated between *c.* AD 60/1-c.250/275 at the Gilbert School site (no. 839; Crummy 1992b: 240). However, both Colchester finds could belong to a post-fortress phase. In York, the two figurines are from probable burials that may or may not be linked with military activity in Fishergate Cemetery (nos. 124, 257 - see above). Thus, while a military

presence can sometimes account for the number of pipeclay finds from *Coloniae*, this is not always the case, but those that do seem to provide a greater number of finds. These sites and finds possibly reflect the closer relationship between the military and civilian populations in *Coloniae* than on any of the other types of urban site.

Moving on to *Civitas Capitals*, while the 104 objects from these make up a fifth of all finds from urban sites, the numbers vary considerably between different sites (Fig. 7.11). For instance, while only a handful of finds have been found between sites across the province like Aldborough (one), Brough-on-Humber (one), Caerwent (seven), Carlisle (four), Carmarthen (two), Chichester (six), Dorchester (one), Exeter (three) and Winchester (five), the sites of, Canterbury (23), Cirencester (11), Leicester (13), Silchester (14) and Wroxeter (13) make up 70 percent of all the finds from *Civitas Capitals*. Some of this variation may be due to the different amount of excavation on each respective site, although even some of the best excavated sites like Canterbury, Silchester and Winchester, have significant differences in numbers between them that probably reflect differences in consumption levels and use.

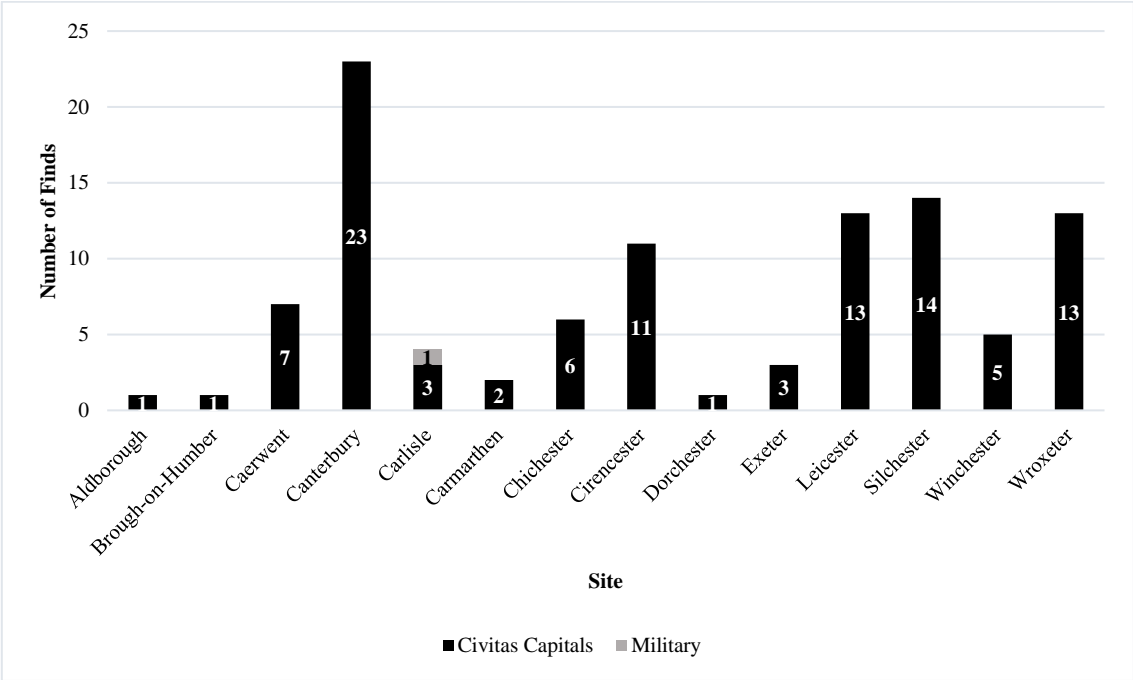


Fig. 7. 11. Number of finds from *Civitas Capitals*.

A small number of objects in this group are possibly associated with military activity. This selection includes a Venus figurine from Carlisle (no. 82) that might be associated with the town's Roman fort but it is from an undated deposit. The other examples are either antiquarian discoveries or modern finds from poorly recorded or undated contexts at sites like Exeter and Wroxeter that might be related to the military phases or parts of these sites, but in general a civilian use is more likely given that the objects themselves are all second century types or older that were made after the military phases of the sites concerned.

The 104 finds from Romano-British small towns are spread across 40 sites (Fig. 7.12). This group is about the same size as the *Civitas Capital* group but the spread of *Civitas Capitals* finds over just 14 sites indicates a 'thinner' spread from small towns with single examples from many sites. The varied number of finds from each site is to some extent a reflection of their varied excavation records. Some sites, like Bath, Catterick and Springhead, have been dug extensively and have produced many finds: Bath is a special case given it is the site of a temple

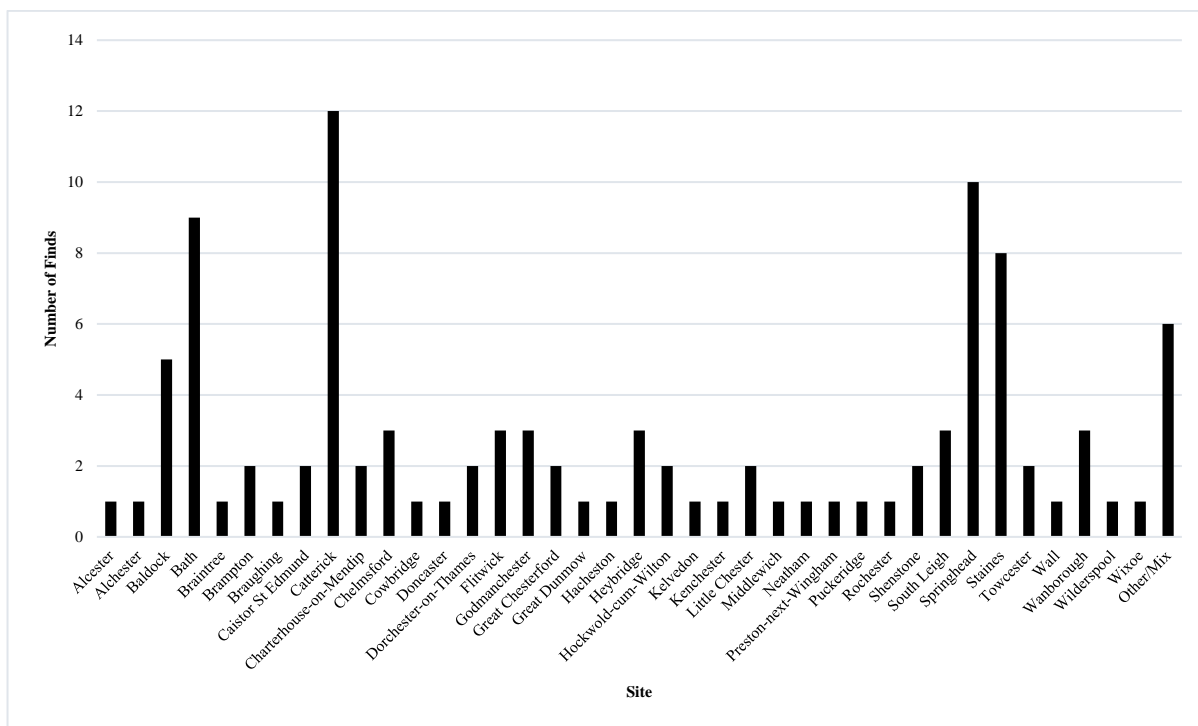


Fig. 7. 12. Number of finds from each small town (t=104).

and spa, as is Springhead with its temple complex, while Catterick has strong military connections. On the other hand, sites such as Alchester and Dorchester-on-Thames that have also been subject to quite extensive excavations have provided few, while several of these small towns have barely been excavated at all. None of the small towns has provided finds with military associations.

Of the 531 urban finds, 262 come with more detailed contextual information. This kind of data varies considerably in terms of detail and quality, but it does highlight some of the circumstances in which pipeclay objects were used throughout Britain. Most of the objects from urban sites are from contexts that can be broadly defined as occupation deposits, a group that includes pits, ditches, dumps, floor levels, drains, occupation layers and/or destruction layers. Many of these deposits were found in private rather than public areas of settlements, the majority of which were within the vicinity of buildings that might have been domestic in character. A few others, like the figurine of Apollo (no. 234) in a disused bowl furnace (pit) are associated with metalworking and pottery production at Hacheston, and a figurine of Venus (no. 738) from a well/pit north of an iron and bronze workshop at Brampton, suggest that some were associated with industrial-type activities. Contexts like these are usually interpreted as being linked with refuse disposal in which broken or unwanted objects were conveniently thrown away, but before this, it is possible that most pipeclay objects in urban settings probably occupied shrines in domestic homes, as well as the occasional workshop. This has been suggested for some of the pipeclay figurines of Venus and Dea Nutrix found in London (Pre-Construct Archaeology, *Secrets of the Garden* 2009: 15)

Several pipeclay objects from urban sites were found with other objects (see Appendix 5) associated with a range of activities and daily life, with objects including pottery vessels and items of personal adornment. The quality and quantity of the assemblages varies considerably between deposits and between sites, and are probably more to do with excavation standards

than real levels of Roman activity. Some of these deposits may reflect higher status activity and might reflect some of the industries people worked in, but equally there are several deposits with objects that are not of a particularly high quality.

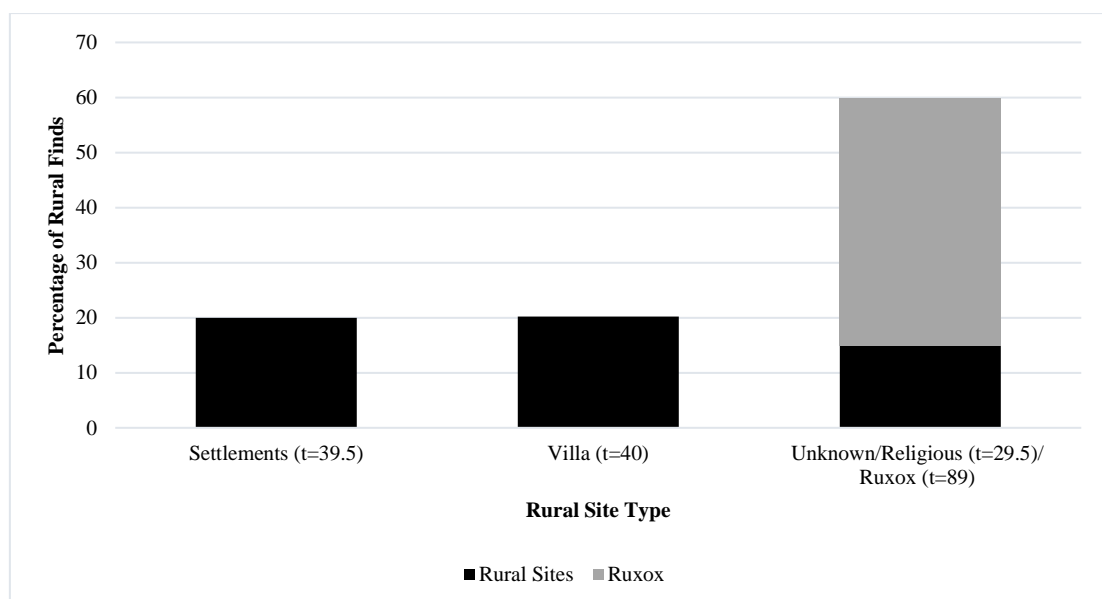
The rest of the urban finds with context information (60) reflect religious or ritual activity in possible hoards, funerary contexts and temples, showing that pipeclay objects also had an important role in such practices. Urban funerary activities are exemplified by the 42 finds from burial or possible burial deposits, as well as four from other deposits loosely associated with burials or in cemeteries. The 18 finds associated with temples or possible temples – including the two possible hoards at Hockwold-cum-Wilton and Caistor St Edmund – were potentially used for ritual practices. This kind of activity occurred in small towns such as Baldock, Heybridge, Kelvedon, Shenstone and Springhead as well as in large metropolitan areas where pipeclay use appears to have been more restricted to private domestic worship and occasional funerary rites rather than more public dedications at temples. This is also true in London where there are more finds from burials rather than temples (see below).

Chapter 9 presents a more detailed analysis about the ritual use of pipeclay objects in Britain, but here it is clear that religious practices were apparently different between different types of urban site. This probably included people in the largest urban cities using them for private worship and funerary rites while more people in smaller towns and the countryside used them for religious practices in temples and occasionally burials. These activities may have been carried out by separate populations, but it is also possible that some people in large towns specifically travelled to small towns to visit the temples there to carry out ritualistic and funerary practices.

### ***Rural Sites***

The last group are the 109 finds from rural sites, most of which are in south-east Britain. It is perhaps surprising that there are so many finds in this group, with it suggesting that pipeclay objects were regularly used in the countryside, but non-villa rural settlements are probably better excavated than many other groups of site in that they have been dug in the past thirty years. An additional group of finds that might belong to this group are 89 pipeclay fragments found in the top-soil of a field at Ruxox Farm in Bedfordshire (Jenkins 1977: 296-7, 316-21, 359; Fadden 2010). If included these take the total number of finds from rural sites to 198. The site itself has been interpreted as either the location of a villa or, based wholly on the presence of the fragments, a temple (Simco 1984: 56; Dawson 2004: 33; James 2009: 58). Here, they are kept separate from the other rural sites so as to not give a disproportionate representation of how pipeclay objects were consumed on rural sites overall – but they are in the next graph.

The rural sites are divided into three groups: those from small settlements, villas and religious sites like temples and burials (Fig. 7.13). The settlement group (39.5 finds) is diverse but little is known about the true character of these sites, although the Rural Settlement Project



*Fig. 7. 13. The proportion of finds from different rural site types (t=198).*



means that much more is now known (Smith *et al.* 2016). Most rural settlements provided no more than one or two pipeclay objects, with Mucking providing three (Lucy & Evans 2012, forthcoming). The site of Nor'nour in the Isles of Scilly is one of the more interesting collections in this group. Thirteen pipeclay figurine fragments are recorded from an occupation layer in a small structure here along with a selection of pottery, beads and brooches (Jenkins 1967: 20-1) but the character of the site is still debated, with interpretations ranging from a domestic site, a temple site, the remains of a shipwreck or a hoard (Butcher 2000: 5-7; Fulford 1989). Finds from villas (40) include those from Birdcombe, Box, Fishbourne, Folkstone, Stanwick, Wall, Welwyn and Wilcote. These are all in the southeast of Britain where most sites have only provided single examples. The remaining objects include the large assemblage of figurine fragments from Ruxox Farm and those from unknown (Orpington) or religious sites.

Only 18 other finds have detailed context information. Most of these contexts are the standard range of disposal-related pits and ditches near roads and buildings where they may have been used in private household shrines. Three finds also suggest their occasional use in industrial settings in the countryside: an Apollo figurine (no. 235) from a kiln site at Bedford (Jenkins 1977: 364-66), a cockerel head (no. 739) from another kiln site at Wakerley, Northamptonshire (Jackson *et al.* 1978: 147-9), and a Venus figurine (no. 943) that comes from an unknown type of industrial site from Lenham, Kent (Philp 1994). In the site report it is suggested that the cockerel at Wakerley may well have been deliberately put inside the kiln when the site was abandoned by the potters that worked there as a ritual act of closure because of the close association they had with Mercury – a god closely linked with these birds (Jackson *et al.* 1978: 147-9).

Forty objects are from villas, of which there are 28 sites. As few as six (nos. 70, 122, 154, 571, 614, 798) were actually found inside villa buildings, but most were found within the vicinity of such structures rather than inside them. Of all the villa finds, only 15 have well-

recorded contexts that can tell us about how they were used. Finds from ditches and occupation layers again point to the disposal of most objects rather than their daily use, as do the several finds from what are clearly destruction deposits. Four finds - two from Welwyn, Hertfordshire (nos. 15, 242), and two from the same grave in Brighton, Sussex (nos. 243, 248) - also evidence the occasional funerary role that some pipeclay figurines had for people living in villas. These finds, and their social and cultural significance, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9.

Other pipeclay objects were used for religious purposes in the countryside, as evidenced by the 25 finds from temple and burial sites, but some practices were more popular than others. Out of this number, eleven are from temples or possible temples at sites such as Ashwell, Hertfordshire (five finds), Harlow, Essex (two), Hawkedon, Suffolk (two) Lowbury Hill, Oxfordshire (one) and Nettleton, Wiltshire (one). Not all are from identifiable or dated deposits but all but one were found in or near complexes or enclosures that were probably temples or shrines. The difficulty of establishing ancient useage can be seen at Nettleton where a cockerel figurine (no. 573) is from a possible iron-smelting shop inside the temple complex. This might be a redeposited temple offering but equally could have occupied a shrine in the workshop.

The other 14 finds are from burial contexts. One of these is related to a cemetery - a Dea Nutrix figurine from a mid-Antonine cremation in a possible cemetery at Snodland, Kent (no. 9): there is also a bust of a woman from a cemetery at Hassocks, Sussex (no. 249) that may be from a burial but is not counted as being so here. However, the rest of the finds (13) are from rural burials that might perhaps reflect a slightly different kind of funerary practice. These objects come from just three graves. The largest collection (10 finds) is from Arrington in Hertfordshire (Taylor 1993 – see later discussion in Chapter 9). The other finds from burials (or possible burials) are a Dea Nutrix fugurine (no. 10) from a cremation in an open field at Arkesden in Essex tentatively dated *c.* AD 190-200 (Neville 1848: 40-2; Jenkins 1977: 2867), and two Venus figurines (nos. 210-11) from Hawkedon, Suffolk. Where the Venus figurines at

Hawkedon were found is unclear but their discovery inside an *amphora/dolium* with several nails suggests their part in a cremation burial near this Romano-British temple (Franks 1888: 10-2; Jenkins 1977: 353, no. 2; Alcock 1980: 50). All of these burials are discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 where I suggest they probably reflect the funerary practices of Gaulish foreigners rather than Romano-British people.

### ***London***

The collection of finds from London are considered separately because they would otherwise over represent how pipeclay objects were consumed and used in urban settings. Fittock (2015) recorded 168 pipeclay objects from London but the number now totals 242 - an increase of 74. The large size of this collection is probably due to several factors. The first is the extensive amount of excavation that has been carried out in the city. As a rule, excavating more of a site will produce more finds but, as we have seen, many other urban sites in Britain that have also been well excavated have produced far fewer finds (e.g. Colchester and York). As a result, the large London group may, secondly, actually reflect higher levels of consumption in the settlement compared to any other urban site. Although several of the London finds are older antiquarian discoveries, the other benefit of a site extensively excavated by modern standards is the availability and quality of contextual data it provides that can tell us more about how objects were used in the settlement.

If we accept that finds from London do reflect levels of ancient activity in the city then London's role as a major Roman port is probably the other reason why there are so many finds from the settlement. Noting the large proportion of finds from the city and tracing the likely importation routes these objects took from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region into Britain, Jenkins (1978: 149) was the first to suggest that London was probably the point at which most

pipeclay objects arrived in Britain from where they were then sold, stored and redistributed not just in the city itself, but also to the other settlements located throughout the province.

As the provincial capital of *Britannia*, London was, of course, a place with a complex and dynamic social character during the Roman period. As a settlement entirely conceived of and constructed during the Roman period, merchants and traders probably occupied most of the early town regardless of whether or not there was an early military fort (Wallace 2016), before the military presence at Cripplegate fort diminished (Howe & Lakin 2004) and the number of civilians and administrative officials increased from the second century (Marsden 1980, 1996; Perring 1991; Swain & Williams 2008). As a result, by the time that the use and importation of pipeclay objects peaked in the second century, London was a city filled with a mixture of people and social groups of different ages, genders, occupations, cultures, wealth and status. It was some of these same people who bought and used pipeclay figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks to symbolise their beliefs and use as part of their religious practices in the town.

This diversity is reflected in the range of pipeclay objects that have been found in the city, which are the most typologically diverse from any single site in Britain. The total of 242 pipeclay objects from London includes 109 deity figurines (64 per cent), 28 of birds or other animals (17 per cent), and four of humans (two per cent), as well as 15 shrines, three animal vessels and three masks. The other 37 objects are unidentifiable types or bases. A list of the pipeclay forms and types from the city is given in Table 7.1. Although it is still true that this collection can act as a useful snap-shot of pipeclay consumption in Britain (Fittock 2015), it should be stressed that the London group does have some unique typological qualities that makes it stand out from other sites in Britain.

While the finds from London include many common Gaulish types depicting deities (e.g. Venus, Dea Nutrix and Minerva), animals (such as dogs and birds) and humans (e.g. *Risus* and busts of women and boys) and these generally reflect the beliefs of large groups of people in the wider province, it also includes several of the rare Gaulish types (e.g. the Type 7 Venus figurine and the dolphin, panther and lizard figurines) not found elsewhere in Britain. They were probably only used by a small proportion of the London population - perhaps individuals

FORM	TYPE	NO.	
<b>DEITIES</b>	Dea Nutrix	26	
	Diana	2	
	Juno	1	
	Leda and Swan	1	
	Luna Lucifera	1	
	Minerva	5	
	Venus	106	
	Vénus à Gaine	1	
	<b>ANIMALS</b>	Cockerel	5
		Dog	6
Dolphin		1	
Dove		1	
Hen		1	
Horse		4	
Horse and Rider		1	
Lion		1	
Lizard		1	
Panther		1	
Unknown		12	
<b>HUMANS</b>		Draped Boy	1
		Female	1
	Gladiator	1	
	Risus	1	
	Thorn-Puller	3	
<b>SHRINES</b>		15	
<b>ANIMAL VESSELS</b>		3	
<b>MASKS</b>		3	
<b>UNKNOWN</b>		37	
<b>MISIDENTIFIED</b>		3	
<b>TOTAL</b>	(excluding misidentified finds)	242	

Tab. 7. 1. The pipeclay objects from Roman London.

- who either travelled to Britain with them from Gaul or had the means and connections to buy rare varieties that reflect slightly different beliefs and practices than the norm.

There are also, of course, the interesting group of rare types in London produced in the Rhine-Moselle region that symbolise very different religious beliefs and practices that include deities such as Diana, Juno and Luna, as well as the masks. These rare types make London especially stand out from the other sites in Britain and suggests that some of the people here were perhaps more connected and culturally diverse than the populations who used more common pipeclay types in the rest of the province. Another section below analyses more thoroughly the distributions of common and rare pipeclay object types in all of Britain to again highlight the special social character of the London assemblage. What I will do now, however, is analyse the social distribution of the London finds and see what more it can tell us about the different ways in which they were used throughout the settlement.

The detailed contextual data from London means that the 155 objects from known site types can be divided into three categories: those from habitation, trade and religious sites. Habitation sites are sites where archaeological evidence reflects occupational and/or industrial activity. The trade category includes the sites that are connected with the infrastructure and buildings of the city's port that was situated on the north bank of the River Thames. Finally, the religious group is made up of the finds from cemeteries, burials and possible ritual deposits. The finds from each site type are plotted on a distribution map in Figure 7.14.

Most of the pipeclay objects in London are found on habitation sites (110 finds). These are distributed across the settlement. A small number of finds have been found along the main road and near the southern bank of the Thames in Southwark, several from sites that are industrial in character (e.g. Cowan 2003; Hammer 2003). Most of the finds on habitation sites across the settlement are from deposits such as pits, ditches and landfills that are associated

with refuse disposal and possible domestic use nearby, with a small proportion of finds from contexts such as floor levelling deposits and foundation deposits that may be associated with construction activity. The concentration of finds (most of which are Venus figurines) found in the area around the Walbrook stream has been a topic of debate. It could be argued that some of these finds may be related to ritual acts of deposition, that some, like Merrifield (1995: 38), suggest were carried out in this area, but the more likely explanation is that they are simply objects that were thrown away. This is not only suggested by the fact that most of the figurines are broken, but also because few of them are from the stream itself, but rather the banks or

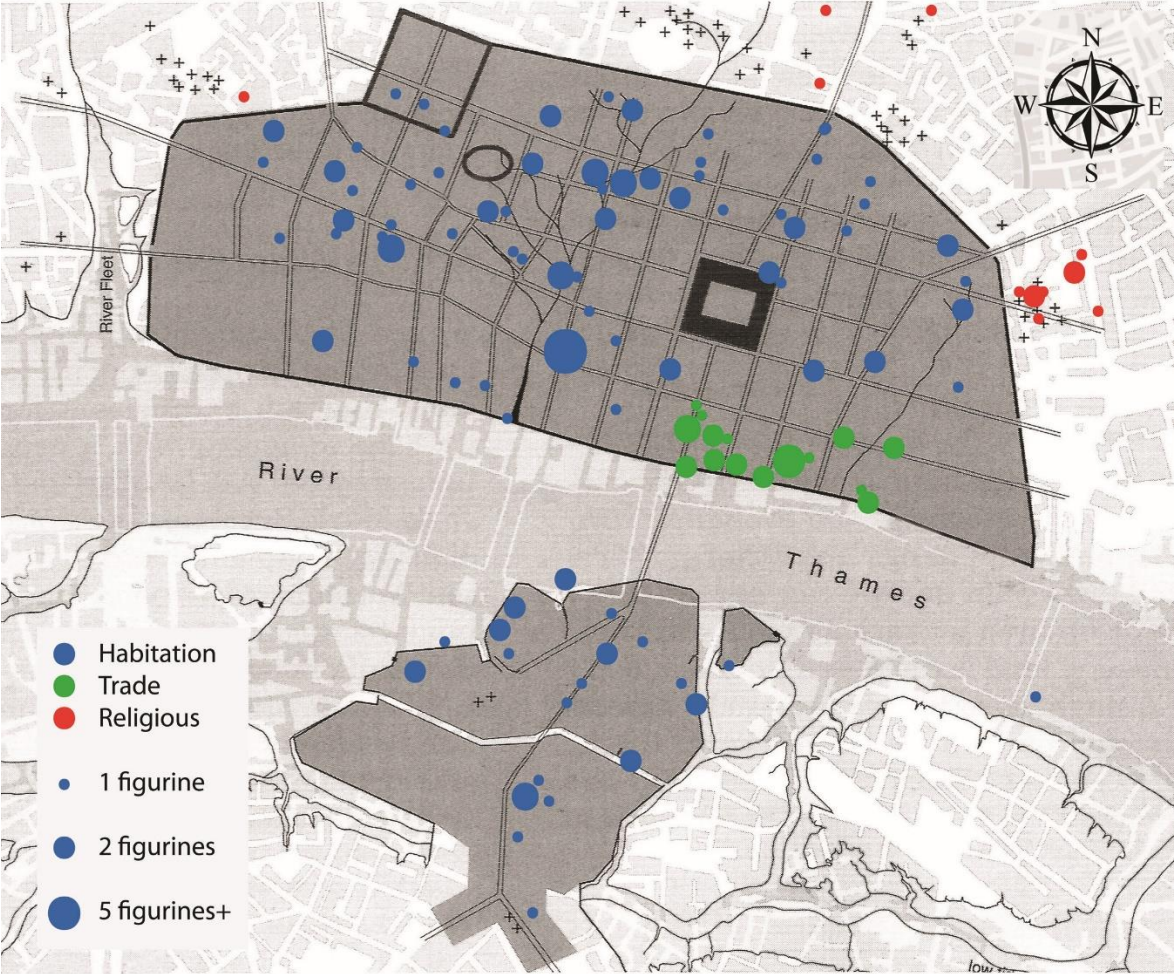


Fig. 7. 14. The social distribution of pipeclay objects in Roman London.

nearby dumping deposits (Wardle 2011: 347; Marshall forthcoming on the Bloomberg site; although see Crummy with Phol 2008 for an alternative view).

A total of 35 finds are from deposits that are associated with London's port and waterfront structures on the north bank of the River Thames. All the finds with contextual information are from deposits such as infills and levelling deposits that are in some way connected to wooden quayside revetment structures and/or buildings located nearby. Many of the finds from poorly recorded or unspecified deposits in this area that were found close to the revetment are also probably linked to this structure or the fills that were used to construct and support it. Some of the deposits with pipeclay objects also contained other goods that typically reflect trade and dumped goods in this area. This group includes the finds from sites like Custom House, New Fresh Wharf and Three Quays House that all produced objects like broken pottery, fragments of wood and ceramic tile, and wooden beams, woodchips, charcoal and samian that reflect construction activity as well as trade in and out of the port.

Finally, 10 pipeclay figurines have been found in religious contexts, namely two possibly related to temples and eight from burial contexts, all with varying amounts of contextual information. The two from possible temples possibly considered as being ritual in character are a residual Venus (no. 478) figurine from a refuse pit near the location of a possible public shrine at the Courage Brewery site (Wardle 2003: 174); the second is a Venus figurine (no. 492) from a poorly recorded refuse pit overlying a timber drain outside the city's Mithraeum (Wardle 1998: 111, 178). This context does not have any stratigraphic connection to the temple itself but does date to the late third- to early fourth-century when the temple started to be used (Perring 1991: 104–5; Shepherd 1998: 221–2).

The other eight objects are from funerary contexts in London's northern and eastern cemeteries. Five are from residual or poorly recorded contexts that might have been part of



burials at some point. This includes a *Risus* bust (no. 259) from a possible cremation at Liverpool Street to the north (Jenkins 1978a: 160-1), and to the east, a Venus figurine (no. 480) from an irregular truncated double inhumation burial (B156) with disarticulated human bone at Tower Hamlets (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 263), a depiction of Juno (no. 518) from a disturbed deposit at Mansell Street, another residual fragment (no. 663) from a stacked inhumation burial (B159) from Haydon Street (*ibid*), and a Venus figurine (no. 662) from the backfill of inhumation B4 at St. Clare Street (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 262). The sooting on the Juno figurine may have been caused by its close proximity to a lamp or its use on a pyre (see chapter 9).

The last three Venus figurines (nos. 441-3) are from a mid-third to mid-fourth century inhumation of a child (B392) discovered in the city's eastern cemetery at Mansell Street, Tower Hamlets (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9). This rather ornate burial consisted of a single lead coffin decorated with beads in which the dead child was placed, along with a number of grave goods arranged around the head-end of the coffin. The latter was encased inside an exterior wooden structure. The rich assemblage of other grave goods included both whole and fragmented glass bowls and vessels, several glass bottles, a pair of gold earrings, a bone pyxis, an ivory figurine and a coin dated to the Hadrianic–Antonine period (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 186–9).

Even though the number of finds from burials in London is low, they make up a large proportion of such grave goods from Britain, and suggest that pipeclay figurines and busts were important funerary objects for some of the population in the settlement. It is also significant that all of the types that we see in such contexts are mother-goddesses or related types that are typically associated with protection and fertility, namely Venus and, more rarely, Juno. *Risus* busts, meanwhile, like the one from Liverpool Street (no. 259), have often been found in graves and shrines associated with children in Gaul, especially at healing sanctuaries (e.g. Green 1993: 196; Crummy 2010: 51.). The analysis carried out in Chapter 9 suggests that such use might have been a particularly important aspect of the funerary rites of children for a certain part of

the population in south-east Britain, and that these people might have been immigrants from Gaul.

Out of the 242 pipeclay finds from London, only 67 from habitation, trade and religious sites were found with other objects. Most of those on habitation sites are typically interpreted as discarded broken objects associated with daily domestic or, occasionally, industrial life, while those on trade sites are usually identified as objects that were unfit for sale or left unsold that were consequently discarded in revetment and construction fills as the port was expanded (e.g. McIsaac 1974: 155; Miller *et al.* 1986: 50). However, there are several deposits with object assemblages that may reflect the disposal of household rubbish in *Londinium*.

One example of this is the Venus figurine from a levelling/dumping deposit at the site of One Poultry (no. 494) that was found with a range of objects such as samian vessels, a melon bead, a copper-alloy mirror fragment, a needle and part of a lock, 23 glass vessel fragments, an unguentarium and various small cylindrical and prismatic bottles, and various copper-alloy, iron and lead pieces (Hill & Rowsome 2011: 139). Another Venus figurine from a revetment dumping deposit at Upper Thames Street (no. 472) in the area of the city's port was found with a similar collection of goods that included local pottery as well as a crucible, several coins (one Trajanic, one Vespasianic and one of the Atrebatian king Eppillus), a copper-alloy brooch, a wire bracelet, a copper-alloy key ring, a complete nail cleaner, mirror fragments, a military belt, a highly decorated tinfoil sheet decorated with a design in repoussé (a design hammered into relief from the reverse side), a piece of Carrara marble and a sea-urchin shell (Brigham & Woodger 2001; Wardle 2001). Two finds: a pipeclay fragment (no. 751) at Angel Court and a Venus figurine (no. 436) from One Poultry, were also found alongside writing tablet fragments, suggesting a degree of literacy amongst some of the people who deposited these objects.

### *Summary*

To sum up, the widespread distribution of pipeclay objects across the settlement hierarchy in Britain portrays a complex picture of consumption and use by different social groups of people, with consumption levels differing between site types where they were used in various ways. Such a wealth of available information helps us to see, for instance, that pipeclay objects – mostly figurines – are mainly found in civilian areas and that even the small proportion found on military sites are overall more closely associated with the civilians (possibly the families) that lived in and around forts and fortresses than the soldiers themselves. It has also been shown that consumption patterns differed within and between urban sites, which could reflect differences in status between social groups. In this sense the few finds from higher status sites such as *Coloniae* and the *Municipium of Verulamium* are considerably outnumbered by those from sites that are lower in the legal and social settlement hierarchy, such as *Civitas Capitals* and small towns. The availability of products in London where most objects were imported, probably meant that a wider social mix of people used them here than in other large settlements, with certain exotic types pointing towards some being the possessions of higher status people in the city. Conversely, the considerable number of finds from small towns and rural settlements implies that many pipeclay objects probably belonged to less affluent members of Romano-British society who did not live in the largest urban centres.

The amount and quality of contextual information there is with pipeclay objects varies considerably but the available evidence shows that the majority of finds are from contexts associated with habitation (refuse deposits, destruction and occupations layers) on military, urban and rural sites. The small proportion of finds from more explicit religious contexts also suggest pipeclay objects were occasionally used for temple-based rituals and as grave goods in burials, but that these practices were carried out on different types of site, with ritual activity at temples being mainly associated with rural areas and populations, and burials in both urban and

rural settings. Further analysis conducted in Chapter 9 shows that these temples and burials are mainly located in the south-east and suggests that some of the burials in particular were probably carried out by foreigners from Gaul.

This analysis has therefore provided a good overall picture of where and how pipeclay objects as a group were consumed throughout Roman Britain. In a next step I will examine in more detail if there are any other meaningful patterns of consumption and practice by analysing the distributions of different forms (e.g. figurines vs. animal vessels vs masks) and types in the province.

### **The Distribution of Selected Forms and Types**

In this section I will try to analyse the distributions of different pipeclay forms and types in greater detail to see if there are any finer patterns of consumption and practice. To do this I first analyse the spatial and social distributions of different pipeclay forms (i.e. figurines/busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks) before analysing and comparing the distributions of specific figurine types. I then directly compare the distributions of common and rare types to establish if there are any notable concentrations anywhere in the country, and also consider if there are any differences between the distributions of male and female figurine types and discuss what this might reflect about the people that used them. Overall this mapping and analysis generally shows that pipeclay forms and types could get anywhere and were used by various people, but there is always a risk that the numbers of both common and rare types are too small to mean anything significant, and that people may not have had much idea about the meaning of the objects they were using anyway. The lack of contextual information that often comes with them and the possible underrepresentation of finds from less well excavated sites - whether in urban

or rural areas - are other concerns. However, this kind of analysis might at least start to give an indication of any potentially subtler patterns of use and practice throughout the province.

### ***Figurines and Busts, Shrines, Animal Vessels and Masks***

Figure 7.15 shows the distribution of pipeclay figurines, including busts (broken down into deity, animal and human forms), shrines, animal vessels and masks. Figurines are the most widely distributed of these groups, being found across Britain with the largest concentration of finds in the south-east. However, there are some differences between the distributions of deity and human forms that make up this group. For instance, as well as far outnumbering the other two groups, deities are the most widely distributed with notable concentrations in the south-east and in the north along Hadrian's Wall. Animals and humans on the other hand are mainly found across the south of the province with smaller groups in the north, but with humans less widely distributed overall. More limited distributions include shrines that are only found on a small number of sites distributed widely across the province, and animal vessels that are almost entirely associated with the south-east. The distribution of masks is even more limited, with most occurring on sites in the south-east, and a single find from Maryport in the north-west.

Figures 7.16 and 7.17 present the social distribution of the figurines (deities, animals and humans), shrines, vessels and masks. Overall Figure 7.16 shows that figurines are widely distributed across different types of site, with differences between deities, animals and humans. Deities are most common on all sites. Animals are unusually popular in London, but were less so in other large urban sites, small towns and rural sites – and especially on military sites and *Coloniae* where they are outnumbered by both deities and humans: animals are also the only group not to feature at the *Municipium of Verulamium*. Humans, meanwhile, are more evenly distributed between military sites, *Coloniae* and rural sites, but were slightly less popular in

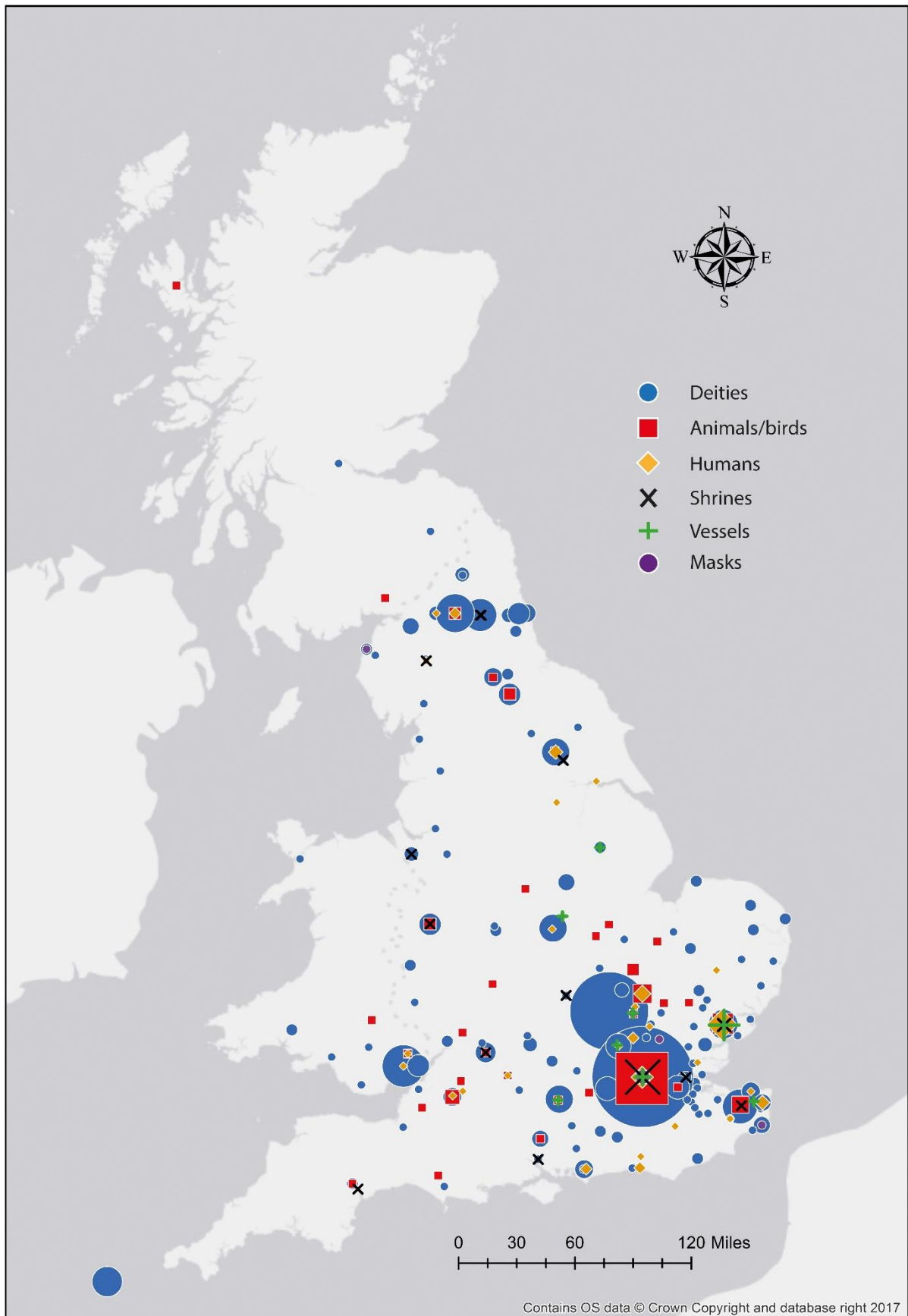


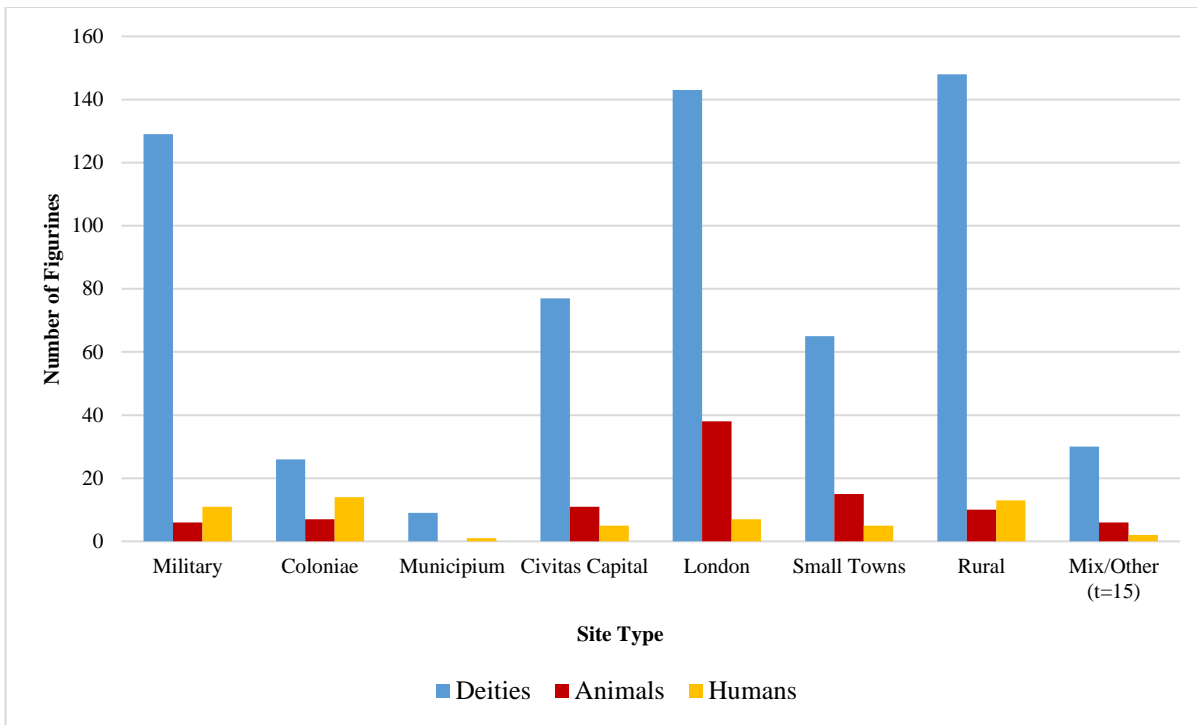
Fig. 7. 15. The distribution of different pipeclay forms and depictions in Britain.

London and *Civitas Capitals*, and do not appear to have been common at the *Municipium* of St Albans either.

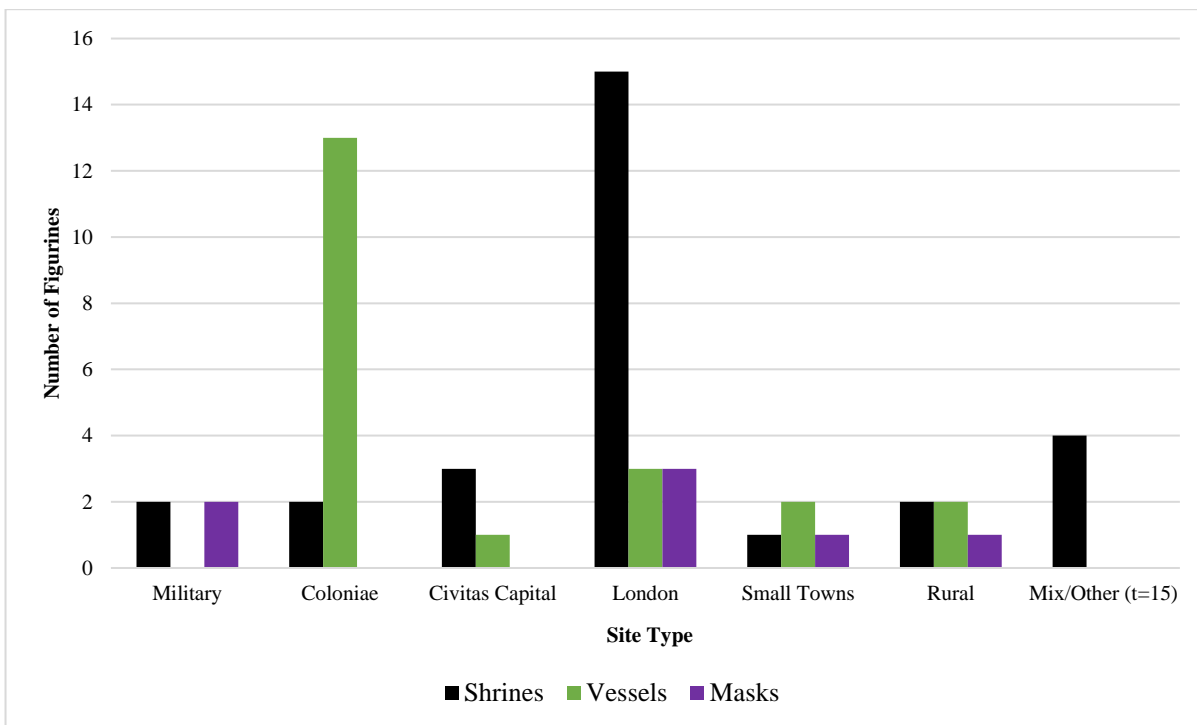
Shrines, vessels and masks all appear in only low quantities but each with its own unique distribution pattern (Fig. 7.17). Starting with shrines, the 29 finds are quite evenly distributed across the social hierarchy, appearing on all site types, but with a large peak in London that probably highlights where they were imported and mainly used. This distribution also suggests that shrines were only redistributed on a limited scale after they arrived in London from Gaul. This could either reflect the small-scale trade in this commodity to several different social classes, or possibly use by a specific social group who lived on many different site types.

At first sight, the 21 animal vessels in Britain appear to have strong association with civilian groups across urban and rural sites, with a large concentration on *Coloniae*. A deeper inspection of the assemblage shows that ten are, in fact, from the same high-status child burial in Colchester, Essex (Eckardt 1999: 66-8). Two of the other three objects from *Coloniae* are also from Colchester – a crouching lion (no. 322) and a boar (no. 323); the other find is an unknown type of animal vessel from Lincoln (no. 976). While it is possible that the ten vessels in the child grave and the two extra vessels in Colchester belonged to the same person, we cannot know for sure, but it is likely that all the finds from Colchester and Lincoln belonged to people with shared religious ideas and beliefs, possibly related to the contents (perfume?) of these vessels. The small number of other animal vessels in London, small towns and rural sites were probably also used by people sharing similar practices.

Although the ten finds from Colchester are the only ones directly associated with burial rites, the crouching lion from Baldock (no. 767) is another example that points towards animal vessels being important early religious objects in the first century in that it comes from a pre-Flavian to Flavian ditch at a possible temple site (Stead & Rigby 1986: 234). However, the



*Fig. 7. 16. The social distribution of figurines (deities, animals and humans) in Britain (t=627).*



*Fig. 7. 17. The social distribution of pipelay shrines, vessels and masks.*



crouching lion from Silchester (no. 749) from a pre-basilica rubbish pit dated *c.* AD 40 to 50/60 is probably rubbish and not from an obvious foundation deposit (Fulford & Timby: 2000: 394).

Many of these vessels are possibly associated with high-status activity, as indicated by the grave goods they are often found with. As well as the Colchester Child's Grave that contained an array of high status goods including coins and fragments of a bone funerary couch, the unusual collection of pottery wares and vessels from a possible grave (pit?) in Preston-cum-Wingham's cemetery included a hare vessel (no. 324) (Dowker 1893: 51, 53; Jenkins 1977: 409). Some of the other vessels from non-funerary contexts were also found with potentially high-status objects. This includes the lion vessel from Silchester found with an unworn, and presumably unused, silver coin of Verica and stamped samian, while the boar from Leadenhall Court in London (no. 756) from a late first century midden came with a moderate selection of objects indicative of wealth and, indeed, literacy, including an iron knife and stylus, an amber bead and a glass counter (Milne & Wardle 1993: 89). Meanwhile, the lion vessel at Baldock (no. 767) was found with a pin from a La Tène III brooch (Stead & Rigby 1986: 234).

Overall then, the distribution and contextual information suggest that pipeclay vessels of animals were relatively rare, high-status objects that were used for religious purposes, including burials, in the first century only. Aside from the high number of finds from *Coloniae*, the second highest peak in London may again reflect where these objects arrived in Britain. The most interesting point here though is that very few animal vessels actually come from London, which may well mean that people brought these vessels directly to Britain from Gaul before London's trading port was fully operational. This may have been done by individual merchants and traders who then sold them in the south-east of Britain, but the other, more likely, scenario is that they were brought over by a group of Gaulish immigrants who settled in this part of the province.

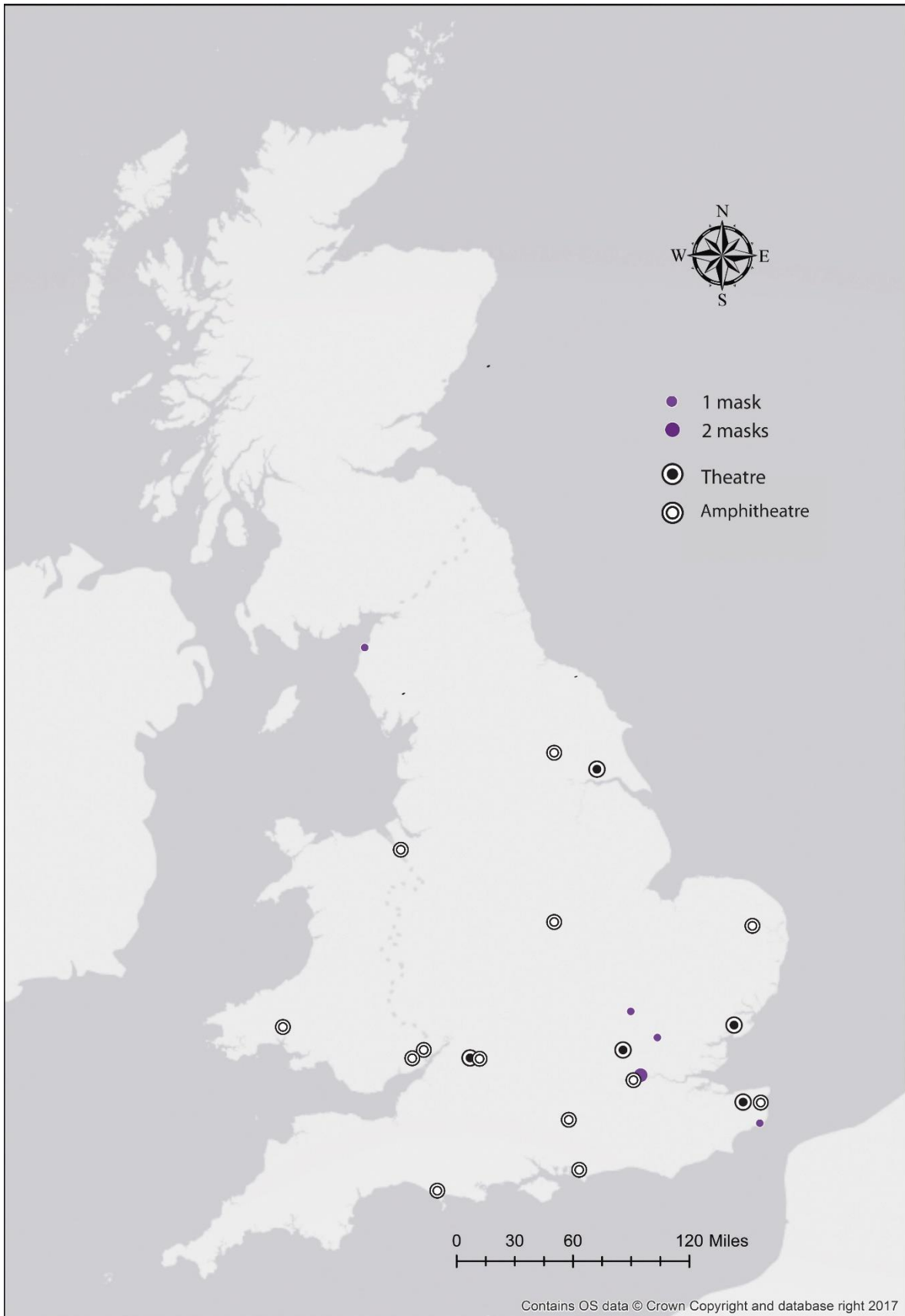
Masks have the most limited distribution of all the pipeclay objects in Britain spatially as well as socially. Overall, they are tentatively associated with military activity at Maryport (no. 137) and Dover (no. 952) – as they occasionally are in Continental regions such as the *Limes* (Boekel 1987: 803) – or related urban and rural civilians, but not those that lived in potentially higher status *Coloniae* and *Municipium*, or even *Civitas Capitals*. In this respect the small peak in finds from London stands out. This again might be because masks may well have arrived here from Cologne or Trier in the second century (Boekel 1987: 813), but overall their spatial distribution seems to suggest either that the trade in masks was only small-scale, or that people who came to Britain from the Rhine-Moselle region and settled in different parts of the province brought them with them as their personal possessions. Whatever the case, the small distribution of masks with a form and style indicative of Rhine-Moselle production suggests that they probably belonged to incomers from this region in much the same way as people from Gaul may have brought rare Gaulish figurines and animal vessels with them to Britain.

It is still unclear how masks were used and the little contextual information from Britain does little to improve this picture. The only well recorded ‘military’ find is the mask at Dover (no. 952) that was found in the upper fill of an undated ditch associated with the fort that may or may not be connected to military or nearby civilian activity. The three other finds are from possible religious contexts that may reflect the occasional use of masks for ritual practices by people in Baldock and London. The mask from Baldock (no. 766) is the most likely example of this, coming from a pit dated AD 150-80 close to a timber building that might have been a temple. Stead and Rigby (1986: 86-7) point out that there is also a known Romano-British temple at the settlement nearby that influenced activity on this site. The other two finds from London may be part of the same mask (nos. 769-70). Both pieces were found in an unspecified deposit dated to between the Flavian and Antonine periods in or near the Walbrook stream, but

were probably just conveniently discarded there rather than being ritually significant in any way (e.g. Wardle 2011: 347; *cf.* Merrifield 1995: 38; see also Crummy with Phol 2008).

Although the pipeclay masks are life-size and were probably designed to be worn (see Appendix 1), comparing the distributions of masks and theatres in Britain suggests that they might not have been used for traditional theatrical performances in Roman Britain (Fig. 7.18); amphitheatres have also been included on this map for completeness but were the settings for combat rather than theatrical performance. The map compiled by Jones and Mattingly (2002: 164, Map 5:15) on which my map is based shows that only a few theatres have been found in Britain at sites like Canterbury and Colchester (and amphitheatres in Caerleon, Silchester, Carmarthen, Chester, Dorchester, Cirencester, St. Albans, Richborough, Chichester and Charterhouse-on-Mendip). The only site to produce both mask fragments and have an amphitheatre is the large urban site of London. But even these are unconnected, with all the mask fragments coming from the other side of the city to the amphitheatre, at the St. Magus House (no. 771) and Bank of England sites (nos. 769-70).

The other masks are from sites without theatres at Baldock, Dover, Harlow and Maryport. Two of these are from temple or possible temple sites (Baldock (no. 766) and Harlow (no. 824)), which points towards masks having a more ritual rather than theatrical (in the sense of entertaining) function. It is possible that some people carrying out ritual practices at temples wore masks to improve the visual spectacle of the rites being performed, but their main reason for wearing them was probably the religious rather than theatrical element. Boekel (1987: 814-5) concludes that masks were used for similar practices in the *Limes* and the Rhine-Moselle region. More masks come from theatres in these areas - including 30 mask fragments from a theatre located within the walls of the Trier-Altbahtal sacred precinct - but many of these theatres are closely associated with temples or temple complexes where they were probably worn for religious ceremonies and processions.



*Fig. 7. 18. Distributions of pipeclay masks and theatres and amphitheatres in Britain.*

### ***Individual Figurine Types: Deities***

Analysing the distributions of individual common figurine types (and their associated animal types) further reveals the complex nature of their consumption in Roman Britain. Venus is the most popular deity and the most commonly depicted pipeclay type in the province overall. As the goddess of love and sex, the beliefs and ideas associated with Venus were revered by many Romano-British people, of which pipeclay figurines are the most numerous medium. She is only very occasionally depicted in other art forms, like mosaics – at Low Ham in Somerset, for example (Lloyd-Morgan 1986: 185, figs. 18-9) – and Durham only records about 30 metal figurines of her (2012: 3.31, 2014). Common types of pipeclay Venus (Types 1 and 2) are widely distributed across Britain with dense distributions in the south-east – notably in London and along Hadrian’s Wall. Adding the rarer figurines of the goddess (Types 3-9), and the depictions of her associated bird – the dove – adds to her primarily southern distribution.

The social distribution of Venus figurines (Figs. 7.19-21) adds detail to the ‘non-military’ picture given by Jones and Mattingly (2002: 282-5) by showing that Type 1 and 2 figurines are more widely distributed on a range of urban sites (mainly *Civitas Capitals* and small towns) and rural settlements but do occur in considerable quantities on military sites, too. The rare types have a limited distribution but mostly (seven of the 12) on large urban sites. There is little indication that rare types were military objects as only one find is from a fort or fortress - a Type 3 figurine from an unstratified deposit from the fort in Dover (no. 165).

The sparse distribution of dove figurines - a rare bird type - implies that very few people used them in Britain. Doves are found on similar types of site and contexts, such as habitation deposits in London (no. 522) and the *Civitas Capital* of Exeter (no. 590), but not often enough to confidently associate them with the beliefs and practices embodied by Venus figurines.

Dea Nutrix figurines – the second most common pipelay type in Britain overall – have a similar spatial and social distribution as Venus, but with smaller numbers and were not as popular in the south or along Hadrian’s Wall, for instance (Fig. 7.22). Jones and Mattingly’s map (2002: 283, Map 8.19) shows that the distribution of Venus generally mimics other occasional evidence of mother-goddess and fertility cults in southern and some parts of northern Britain, but overall my new map shows that Venus was more widely venerated than previously thought. This is not just true in southern Britain, but also in the north, especially on the Roman frontier of Hadrian’s Wall where several inscriptions directly referring to mother-goddess cults (*ibid*) are now joined by a larger collection of Venus figurines and Dea Nutrix.

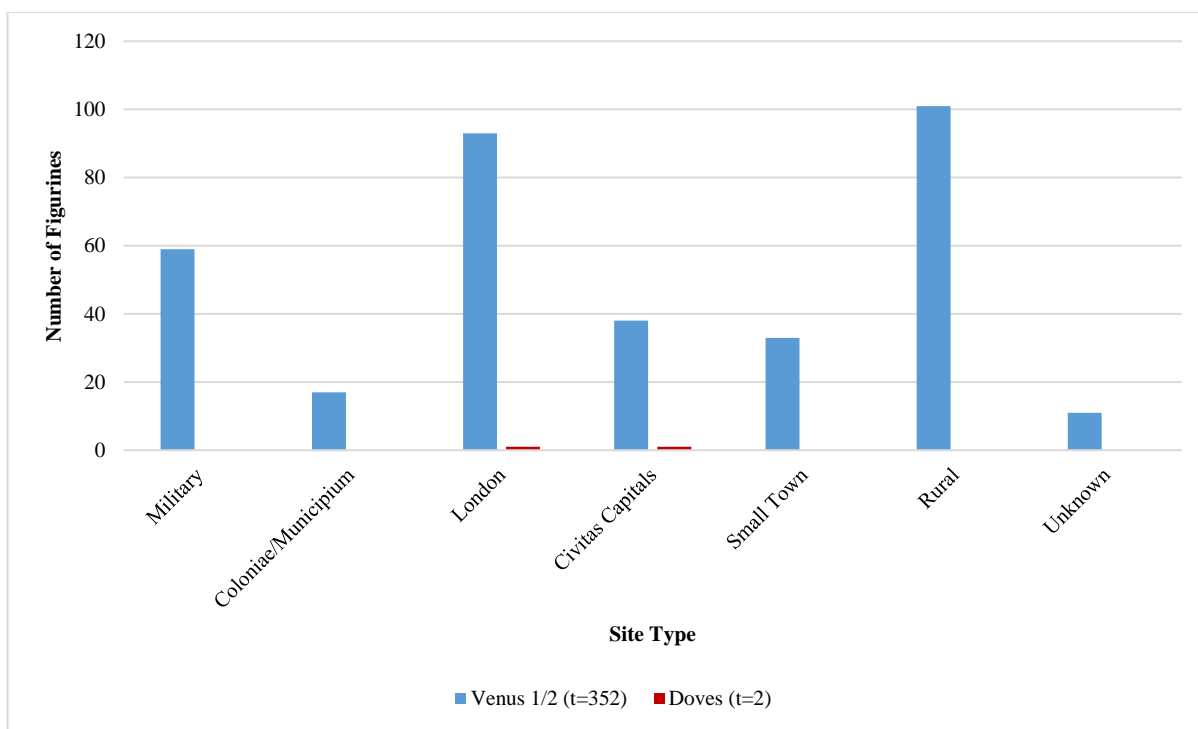
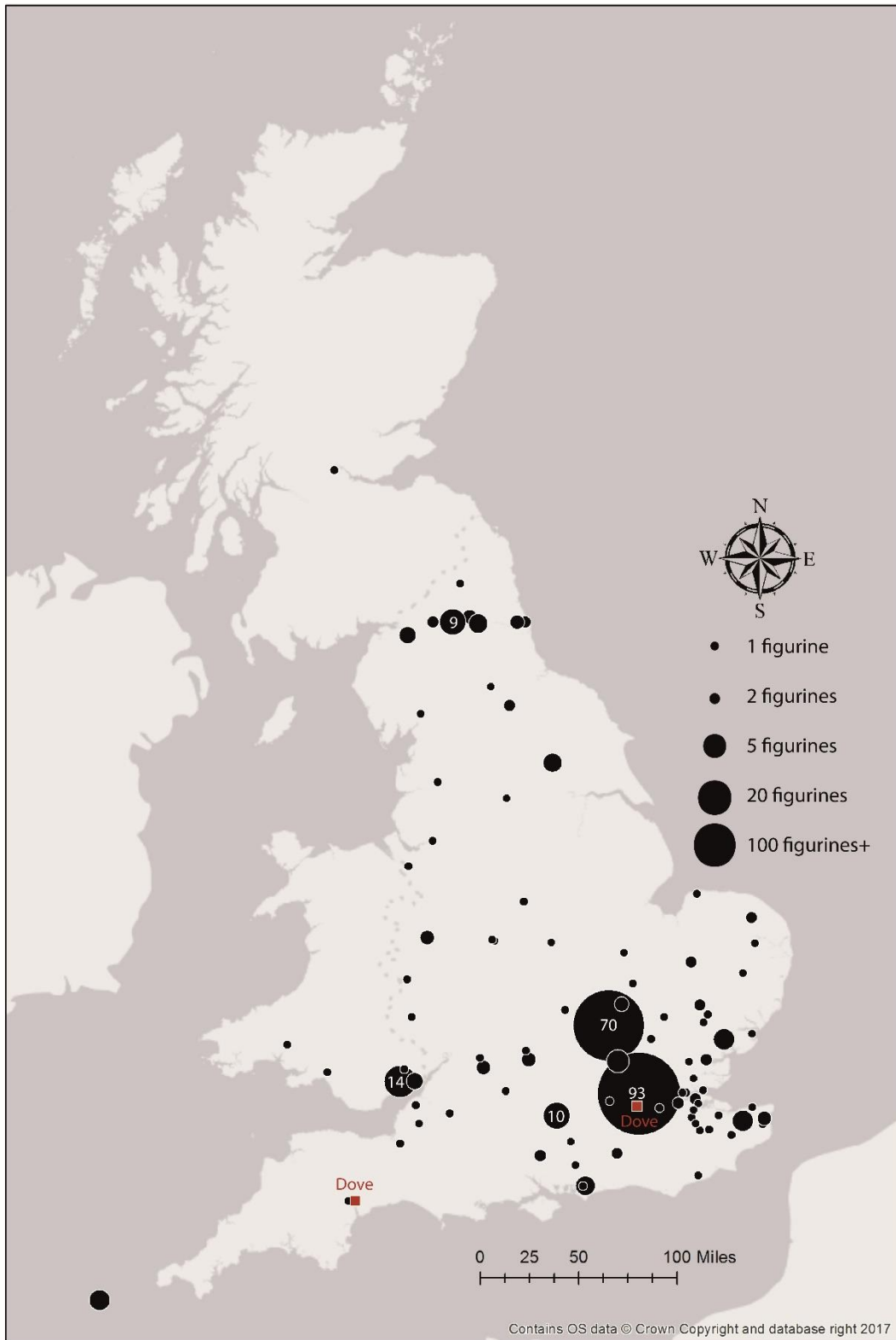


Fig. 7. 19. The social distribution of Venus and dove figurines.



*Fig. 7. 20. The distribution of Type 1 and Type 2 Venus figurines (t=350) and dove figurines (t=2) in Britain.*

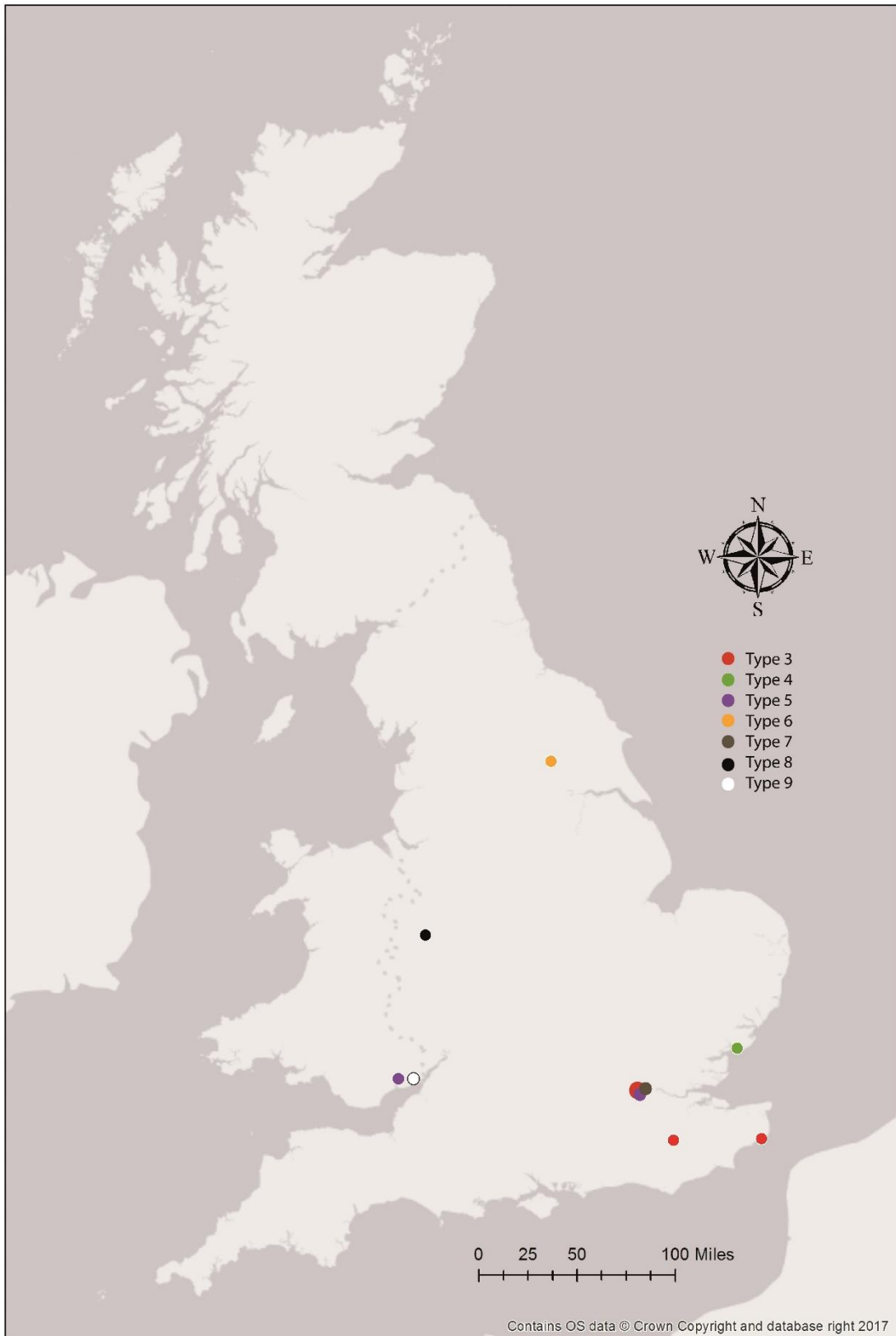
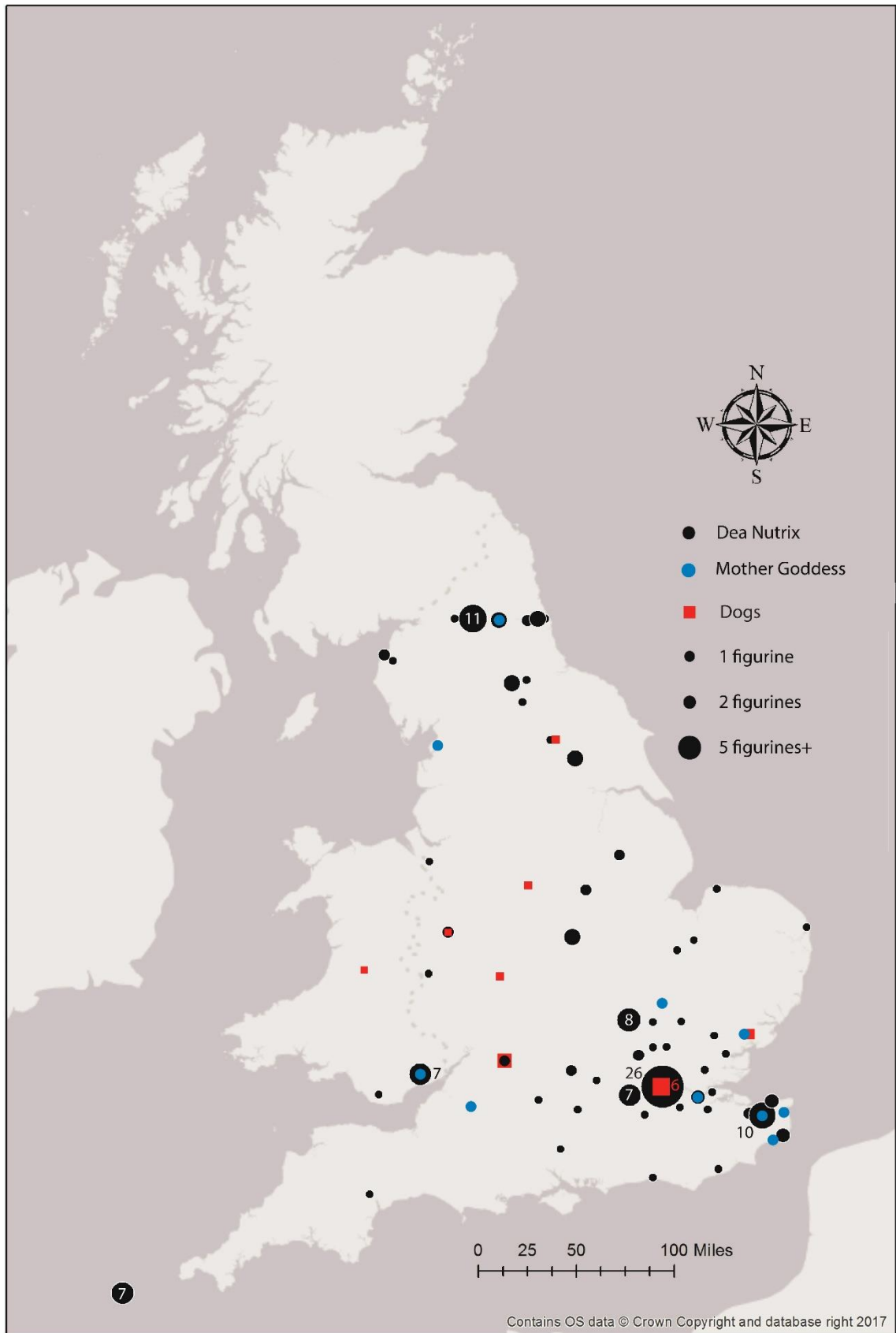
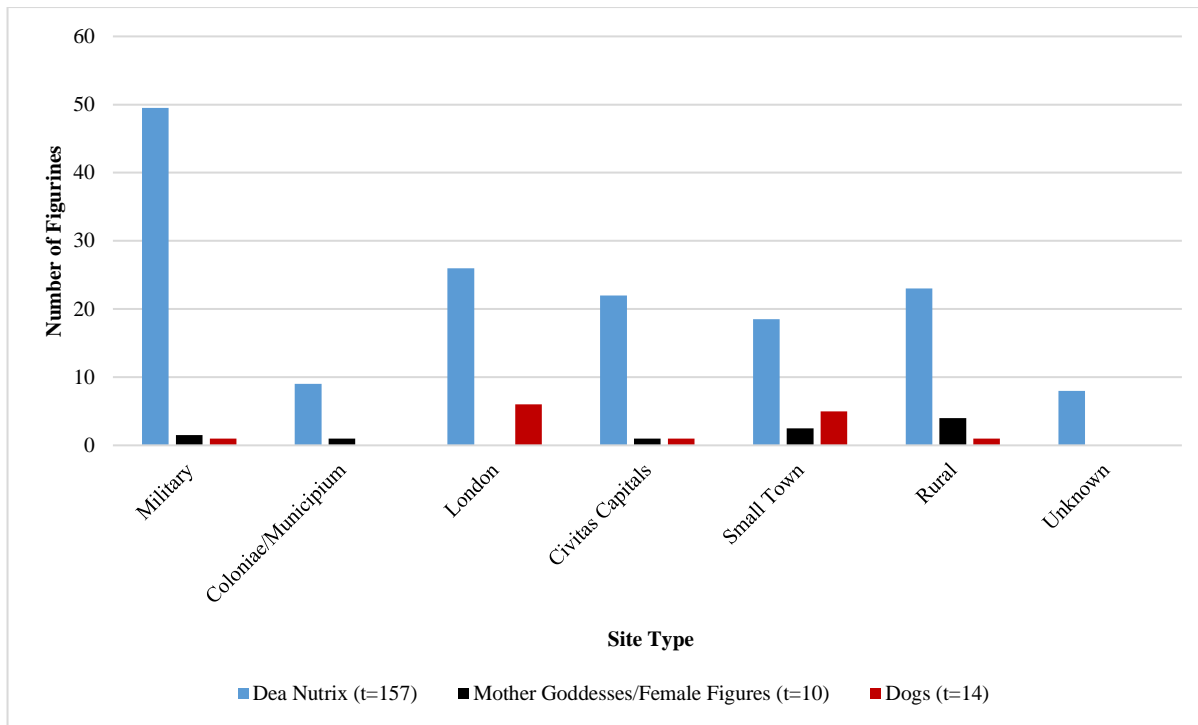


Fig. 7. 21. The distribution of rare Venus figurine types in Britain ( $t=12$ ).





*Fig. 7. 22. The distribution of Dea Nutrix (t=157), Mother Goddess/Female Figures (t=10) and dog (t=14) figurines in Britain.*



*Fig. 7. 23. The social distribution of Dea Nutrix, Mother-Goddess/Female Figures and dog figurines.*

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Dea Nutrix figurines are also found in some areas that have already provided evidence of the mother-goddess cult in Britain in the form of inscriptions and depictions on stone reliefs (see Jones & Mattingly 2002: 283, Map 8.19 for examples and their distribution), but my new map shows their more widespread popularity in Britain than Jones and Mattingly illustrate but that they have a less widespread distribution than other ‘mother-goddess’ related material overall which may suggest a distinctive ‘cult’ with a particular following in Britain. In terms of their social distribution (Fig. 7.23), and unlike the ‘civilian’ maps provided by Jones and Mattingly, Dea Nutrix are sharply associated with the military, but also appear on various other urban and rural types of site. Interestingly, there are some slight differences in the social distribution of Dea Nutrix (Fig. 7.24) and Venus figurines (Fig. 7.20). This includes a lower quantity of Dea Nutrix figurines from London and rural sites, and fewer finds (nine) from cemeteries, burials and temples in urban towns and rural settings. This might

suggest that Venus figurines had a greater role in ritual and burial practices, but also more importantly highlights that some people chose to use figurines that reflect alternative beliefs for similar religious practices.

Interestingly, the ten rarer Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines in Britain (a group that includes the Matrona figurine (no. 708) and the possible Matrona figurines (nos. 59 and 867)) have a slightly different, more limited, spatial and social distribution than Dea Nutrix figurines. Although Mother-Goddess figurines have occasionally been found on the same sites as Dea Nutrix figurines in northern (Corbridge) and southern (Caerleon, Canterbury and Springhead) Britain, most of these are found in the south-east corner of Britain, with other finds on only occasional sites further afield, as at Corbridge and Caerleon. These Mother-Goddess/Female Figures and Matronae figurines also have a very different social distribution to Dea Nutrix figurines, characterised by only occasional finds on military, urban and rural sites and a small number from small towns and rural sites. These different distributions could therefore suggest that Dea Nutrix and the group of Matronae and other Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines were being used by different groups of people with different cultural (and religious) ideas and practices. Such differences are perhaps emphasised given that the Gaulish Dea Nutrix figurines are all quite different in their overall form and style to the other Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines mainly from the Rhine-Moselle region (see Appendix 1 for details of each respective type and figures of some examples found in Britain).

Where Dea Nutrix and the other group of Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines were made may help to explain these distributional differences further. Up to seven (nos. 59, 60, 61, 62?, 65, 708, 867) clearly originate from the Rhine-Moselle region where the Mother-Goddess cult was generally very important to several different cultural groups of people, but a further distinction can be made in relation to the Matronae figurines (e.g. no. 708) from Arrington that, based on its dress (see Appendix 1, as well as Carroll 2013, 2015), could well

be an ancestral mother of one specific ethnic group: the Ubii (Derks 1998: 119-22, figs. 3.16-7, but also Bauchhenß & Neumann 1987, Carroll 2001: 112-122 and Woolf 2003 for studies of the *Matronae* of the Ubii and the relationships they had with clans). Although such goddesses are usually depicted as a triad, this single figurine, as well as the two similar ones from Colchester (no. 59) and Corbridge (no. 867) that may have been similarly dressed and belonged to the same or different clans, probably belonged to a specific family or clan within the Ubii community and clearly represents something distinctive from the other figurines in the wider Mother-Goddess/Female Figure group, and indeed the Gaulish *Dea Nutrix* figurines.

What these *Matronae* figurines are doing in Britain is a difficult question to answer but I would suggest that their rarity means that most Romano-British customers probably would not have had access to them or understood their meaning even if they saw them, and that they therefore probably belonged to a small group of Germanic traders, soldiers and/or merchants living in Britain from that particular area of the Rhine-Moselle region with their own unique take on a local goddess. The minimal context information available for most of these figurines makes it very hard to distinguish between any further differences in terms of how they were used or by whom, but the *Matrona* from Arrington (no. 708) is from a child burial that also contained the unique and interesting mix of Rhine-Moselle as well as Gaulish figurine types (Green 1993) in a combination that might reflect a person or group who was more well-travelled and collected and deposited these objects together for some reason.

It is not possible to tell whether these people knew about the cultural associations that all the figurines in the burial had, including that of the Ubii; perhaps they just liked the look of them – but they do suggest people with more mixed cultural and religious beliefs, and used them for this kind of funerary practice. Either way, the collection from Arrington, and some of the other rare Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurine types from Gaul and Rhine-Moselle region generally, may well have belonged to incomers to Britain who worshipped what were



*Fig. 7. 24. Left: Dea Nutrix figurine found in London (no. 7) produced in Central Gaul. Right: Matrona figurine found in Arrington (no. 708, after Green 1993: 195, fig. 3) produced in the Rhine-Moselle region.*

probably their local Continental deities they most identified with and which they visualised in the rare figurine types we see in Britain (Fig. 7.24).

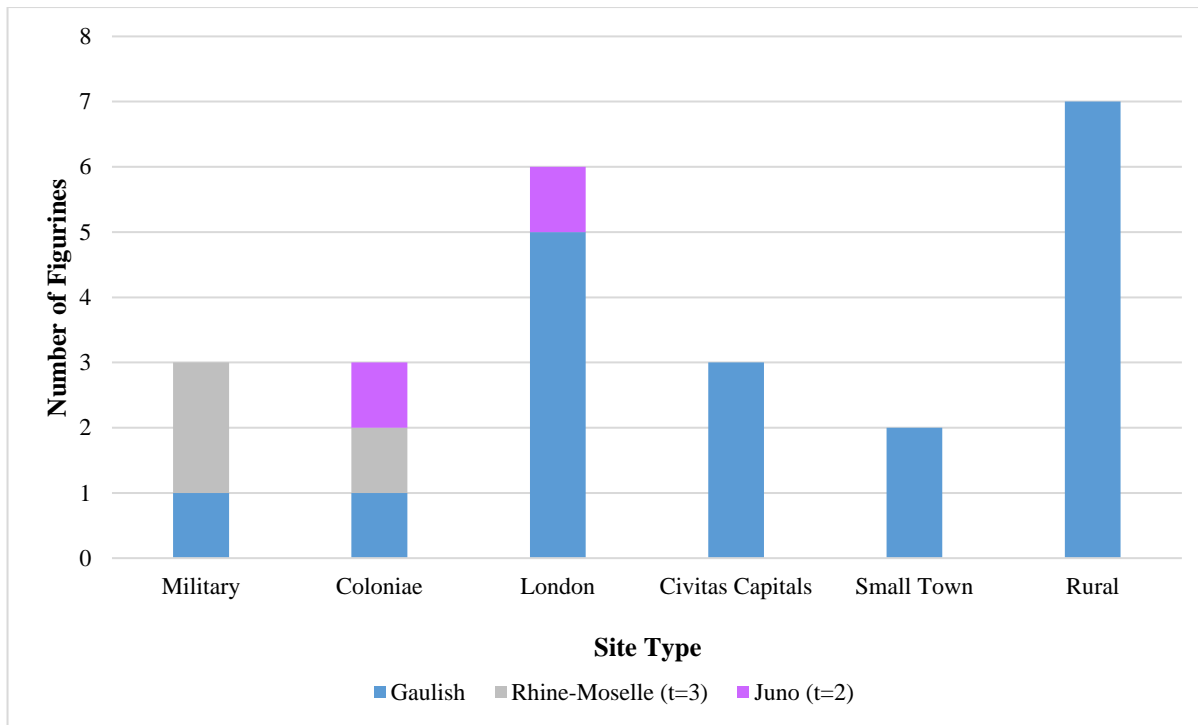
Dogs are animals that are strongly associated with mother-goddesses and it is therefore interesting to compare the distribution of pipeclay dog figurines with Gaulish Dea Nutrix and Rhine-Moselle Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures as well (see Figs. 7.22-3). Most dogs are also found in the south of Britain and occasionally in the north (e.g. Catterick), while their social distribution shows use by various urban and rural populations, but mainly in London and in small towns. It is not clear from their rather different distributions if pipeclay dogs are more closely associated with figurines of Dea Nutrix or other Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures. However, the fact that both Gaulish made dogs and Dea Nutrix figurines occur more frequently on the same sites, if not in the same deposits, including London, where they were both probably imported, probably means that there is a closer relationship between these two types, even if dogs were much less popular.

Minerva figurines were not that common in Britain but are the third most common pipeclay type in the province overall (t=22). Spatially, their distribution is very different to Venus and Dea Nutrix, and can be split into Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types (Fig. 7.25). The Gaulish types are spread widely throughout southern Britain, with maybe a slight concentration in the east close to the Welsh boarder and only a few finds in the north, with the largest groups in London and nearby Ruxox Farm, where they might have been used for a religious purpose. The distribution of the Rhine-Moselle region Minerva figurines is more disparate, with two in the north at Newstead (no. 230) and South Shields (no. 683), and one in Colchester (no. 836) that were more likely personal possessions. As a fellow member of the Capitoline Triad, Juno figurines are also considered alongside Minerva figurines. The Juno figurines from London (no. 518) and Colchester (no. 746) add to the southern distribution of the Rhine-Moselle region types overall.

Even though quantities are low, their social distribution (Fig. 7.26) suggest that Minerva figurines made in Gaul are more closely associated with London, smaller urban settlements and rural sites. The Rhine-Moselle region types are from military sites, and sites like London and *Coloniae* where populations were more culturally diverse. The few recorded contexts of Gaulish Minerva figurines suggest domestic use in urban and rural areas, but two from wells in London (nos. 515-6) might have some ritual significance. The Minerva figurine at the GPO site (no. 515) is from a well dated AD 70-120. Out of the Rhine-Moselle region types, the one from Newstead fort (no. 230) is from an undated deposit and is only possibly related with the military, while the find from South Shields (no. 683) is from a post-Roman layer but inside the civilian *vicus*. The Minerva in Colchester (no. 836) from a more secure second to third century habitation layer is the most indicative of habitational – possibly domestic - use but was not found with anything else indicative of status. The two Juno figurines mentioned above have no contextual data but these, too, are good indicators of the greater



Fig. 7. 25. The distribution of Minerva figurines in Britain ( $t=22$ ).



*Fig. 7. 26. The social distribution of Minerva and Juno figurines.*

cultural and religious diversity within the larger metropolitan populations of London and Colchester.

There are a few distributional patterns among the remaining rare deities. For example, both Apollo figurines are associated with rural sites: one from a kiln site in Bedford (no. 235), the other the site of a possible temple that may or may not have been dedicated to the god at Ashwell (no. 728). These sites are less than 24 kilometers apart as the crow flies, making it possible that they were deposited by the same person or group. Most of the other rare deities such as Diana, Fortuna, Luna and Leda and Swan (none with useful contextual details) are a mix of Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types that highlight the mixed population and diverse beliefs of people in London.

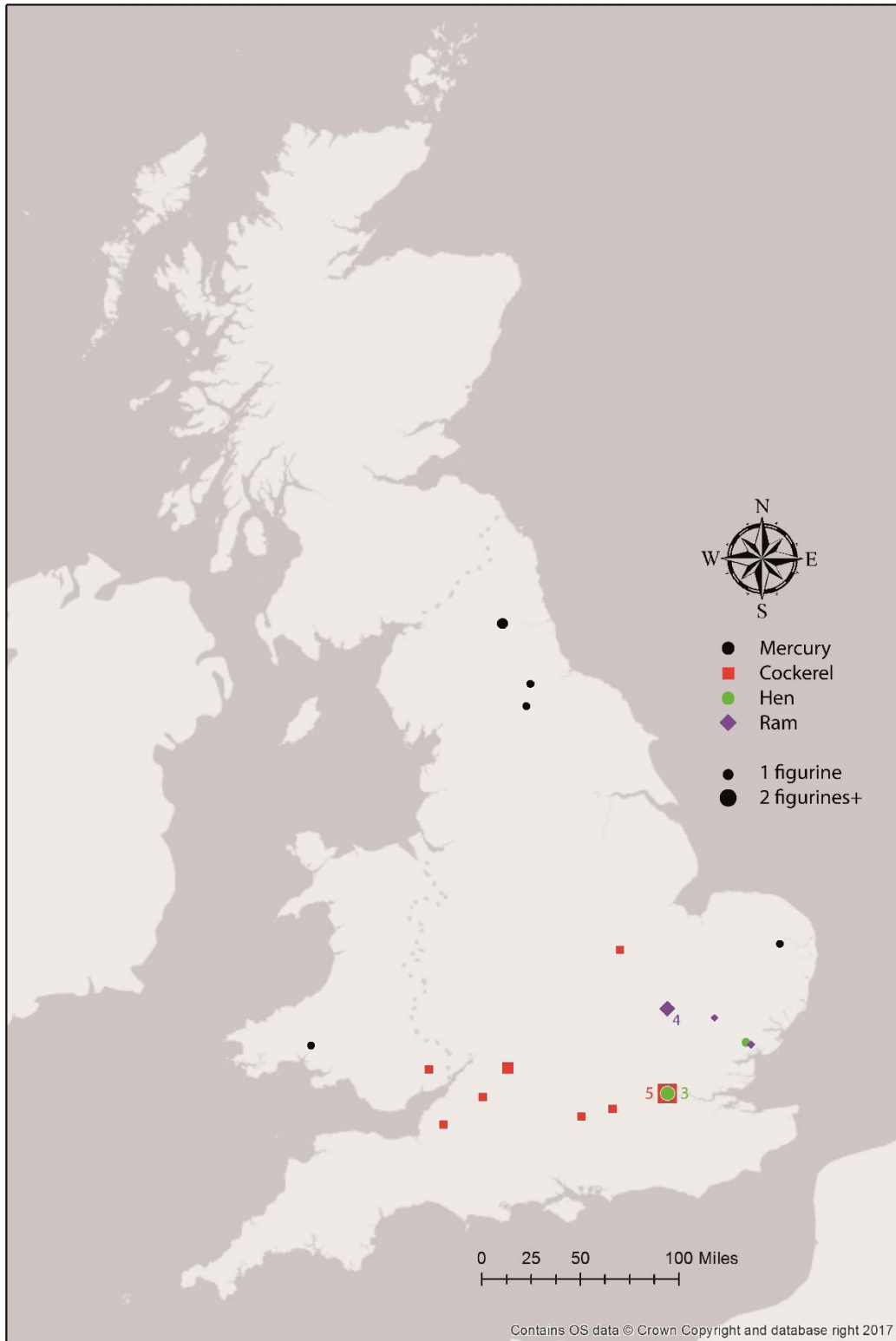


## *Animals*

Other than the dogs mentioned above, cockerels and horses are the only animal types that occur in significant numbers. Cockerels, a bird usually associated with Mercury, are concentrated in southern Britain (Fig. 7.27), mostly towards the south-west and in London. Mercury is also plotted on the map but interestingly these are not near any of the cockerel figurines. The Mercury figurines from Corbridge (no. 634) and Piercebridge (no. 851) are Rhine-Moselle types not found near what are nearly all Gaulish produced cockerels and hens, but it is maybe surprising that the other Gaulish Mercury figurines at Corbridge (no. 239) Catterick (no. 965), Caistor St Edmund (no. 971) and Carmarthen (no. 640) are not closer to them.

Rams are another animal normally linked to Mercury but again these appear in their own small cluster in the south-east. This heavier southern circulation aligns with the overall distribution of non-epigraphic evidence for Mercury in Britain (Fig. 7.28; Jones & Mattingly 2002: 271: Map 8:6), but it also suggests that cockerels were more popular than Mercury figurines in pipeclay and that these have different distributions: cockerels a southern region one, and Mercury a more sporadic but widespread one. This does not necessarily mean that figurines of cockerels and Mercury are unrelated, but probably that each type was used in different areas of the province by different groups of people.

The social distribution of these figurine types reflects this somewhat, though numbers are very small (Fig. 7.29). Most of the animals are from London: six of the seven finds from the countryside are religious in nature: two cockerels from temples - one at Lowbury Hill (no. 302) and one at Nettleton (no. 573), and four rams from a single child burial at Arrington (nos. 713-6). Hens, along with a ram, from a large house in Colchester (no. 633) are only found in *Coloniae* and London, tentatively suggesting an affiliation between this bird and the religious practice of higher status people. The contexts of Mercury figurines show that the three finds



*Fig. 7. 27. The distribution of Mercury (t=6), cockerel (t=13), hen (t=4) and ram (t=6) figurines in Britain.*

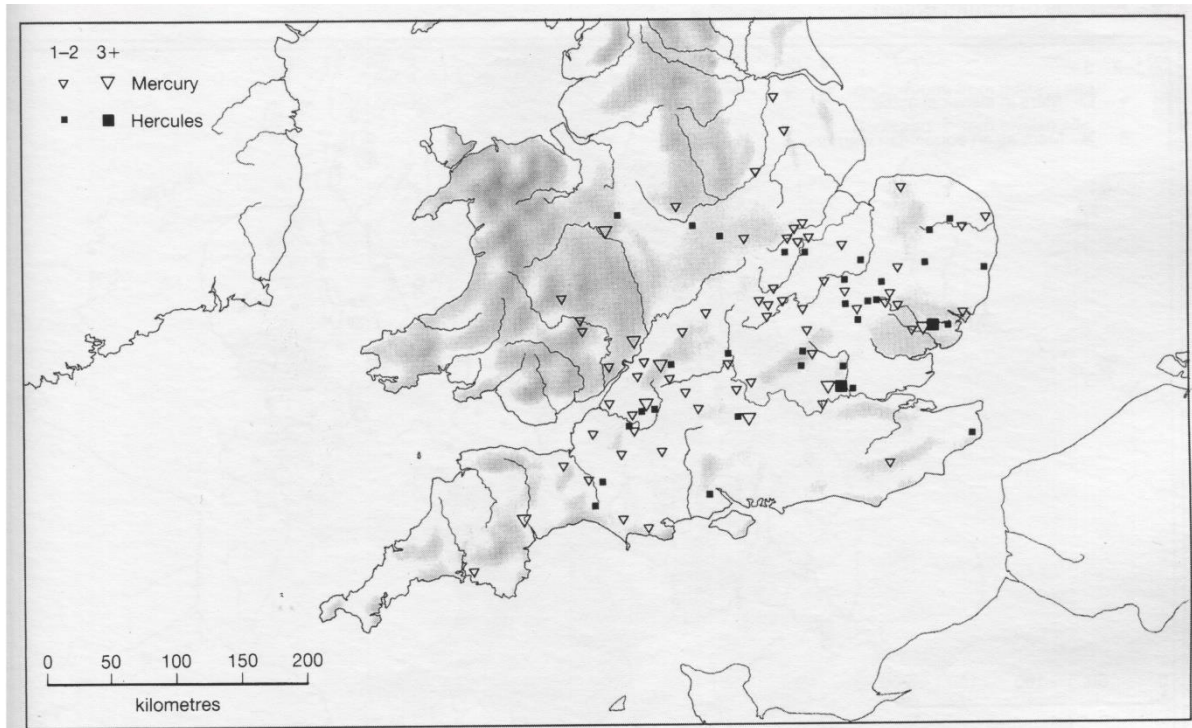


Fig. 7. 28. Evidence of non-epigraphic dedications to Mercury and Hercules in Britain, after Jones & Mattingly (2002: 271: Map 8:6).

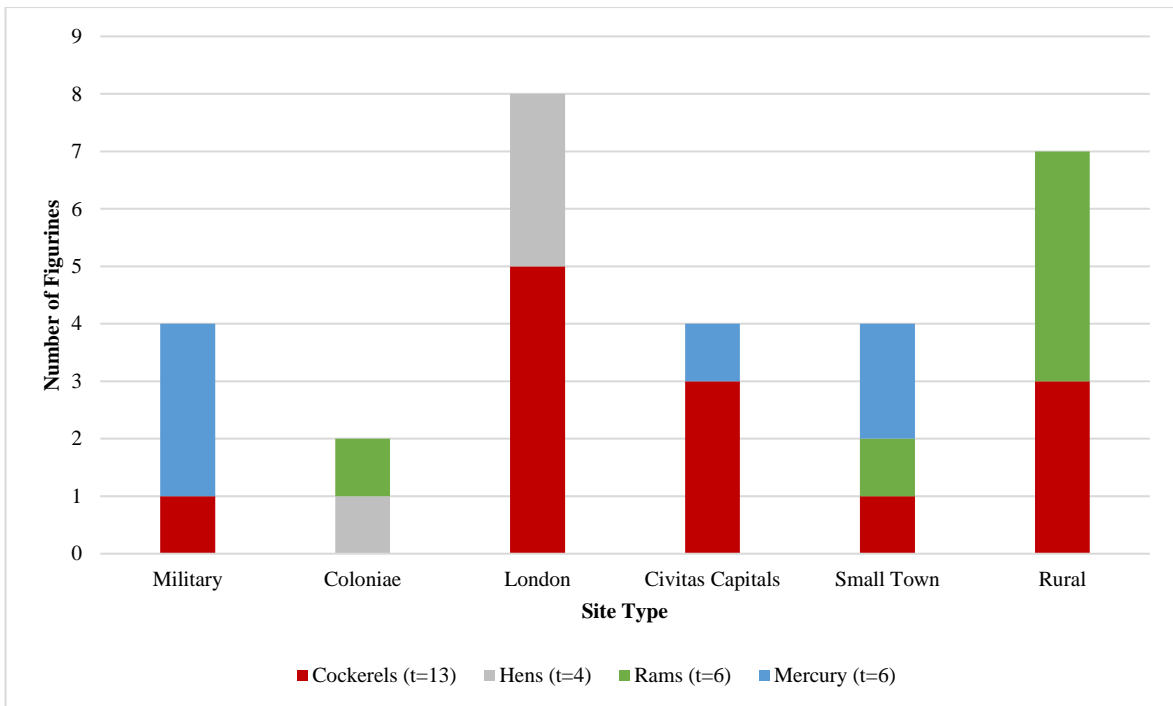


Fig. 7. 29. The social distribution of cockerel, hen, ram and Mercury figurines.

from military sites were probably the possessions of civilians who moved, possibly with their military partners, to northern sites from southern Britain or, in two possible cases, as incomers from the Rhine-Moselle region, while Gaulish depictions of the same god also had a small following in *Civitas Capitals* and small towns.

Horse figurines have a slightly different distribution yet again. Many of these are found in the south-east of the province but there are also a few finds in the west and the north (Fig. 7.30). Horse and Rider figurines are known from Great Chesterford (no. 274) and London (no. 532), and the single figurine of Mars who is occasionally associated with horses, from Mucking (no. 240). Another figurine of an often horse-related goddess, Epona, sits more on the periphery of this distribution in Caerwent (no. 233). Few of these match the distribution of non-epigraphic evidence for the cult of Mars in Britain (Fig. 7.31; Jones & Mattingly ([sic] 2002: 272: Map 8:7) except for in the north, where there are numerous dedications to the god instead (*ibid*: 269: Map 8:4). The southern distribution of Horse and Rider figurines and brooches may be associated with a local god who may or may not have been equated with Mars (Eckardt 2005, Fig. 6; Fillery-Travis 2012).

Horses have quite an even social distribution across different site types in Britain (Fig. 7.32), with little difference between military and most urban sites, and only the occasional finds from *Coloniae* and rural sites. The three horses from the northern military forts of Newstead and Vindolanda may well be linked with the military presence in these areas. Notable patterns amongst the rarest animal types include the bulls from the first century cremation at Colchester (no. 286), a mid-second century cremation at Godmanchester (no. 736), and a second century inhumation at Arrington (no.717) that seem to transcend the change from cremation to inhumation burial sites in the second century. Like rare depictions of gods, all the other rare animal types, such as the dolphin, lizard, lion and panther are more exotic mammals and



*Fig. 7. 30. The distribution of Mars (t=1), horse (t=16) and Horse and Rider (t=2) figurines in Britain.*

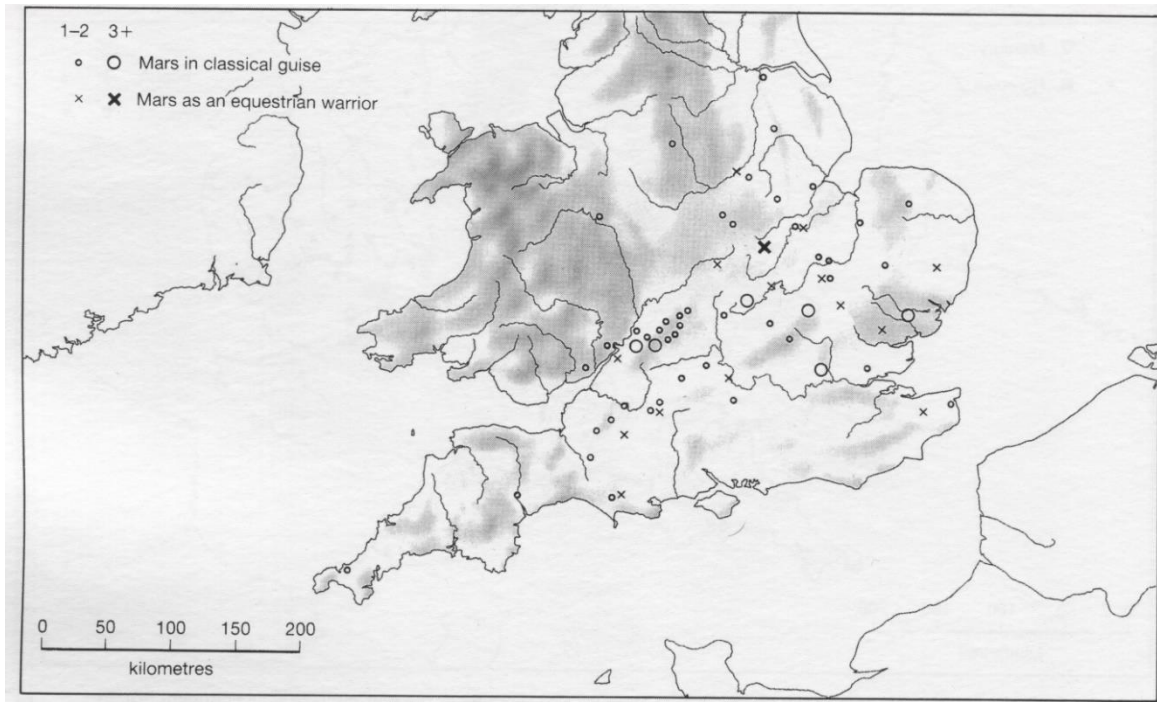


Fig. 7. 31. Evidence of non-epigraphic dedications to Mars in Britain, after Jones & Mattingly ([sic] 2002: 272: Map 8:7).

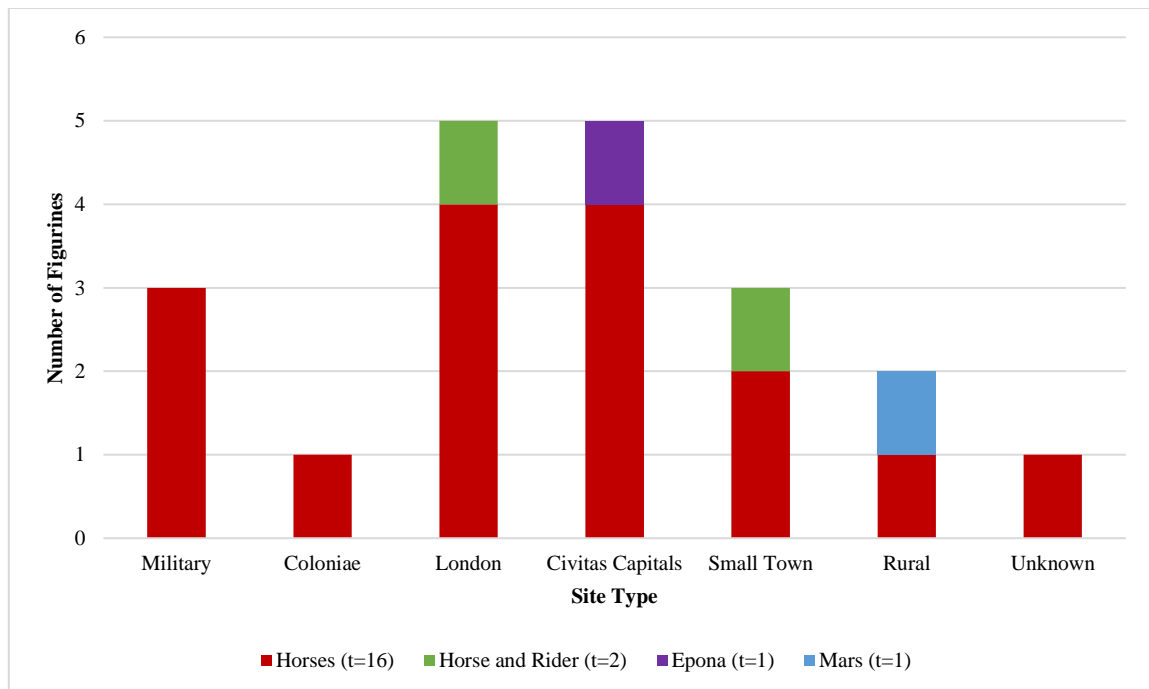


Fig. 7. 32. The social distribution of horse, horse and rider, Epona and Mars figurines.

reptiles that were imported from Gaul that together possibly reflect a specific group of metropolitan Gaulish incomers – most of which were found in London.

### *Humans*

All human types are relatively rare in Britain and consequently have limited distributions (Figs. 7.15-6). *Risus* busts and the different women busts have the widest distributions. Unlike deities and animals, there are several rare human types from London, *Civitas Capitals* and the countryside, and what appear to be an unusual number from large towns – especially on *Coloniae*. Seven of the 13 on rural sites are from ritual contexts. One is from a cemetery at Hassocks (no. 249), and one from a possible shrine at Ashwell (no. 729). Five are from burials: one from an undated cremation at Welwyn (no. 242), and four from the second century inhumation at Arrington (nos. 709-12), highlighting their significance as grave goods for a small number of people in Roman Britain. One *Risus* figurine (no. 257) also comes from the pre-*Colonia* cemetery at Fishergate in York. Their importance as grave goods is further emphasised by the fact that 13 out of the 32 human depictions from urban sites come from burials: one from an Antonine cremation at Puckeridge (no. 247), another from a probable undated cremation in London's Liverpool Street cemetery (no. 259), and the final 11 from the late Claudian-early Neronian child burial in Colchester (nos. 256, 275-84).

Few of the other military, urban and rural finds have any context information. One of the most interesting objects is the Gladiator from Queen Street in London (no. 273). This Gaulish or Rhine-Moselle type with very few Continental parallels is typical of rare types that are mainly found in the city and is one of the few human types that depict a profession. It is from an unrecorded deposit but it might not be coincidental that London had an amphitheater where gladiatorial combat probably took place (Bateman 2011).

### *Rare Figurine Types*

While the analysis above considers the spatial and social distributions of mostly common deity, animal and human types, it is hard to draw much meaning from rarer types in Britain other than noting their diverse and disparate distributions on military, urban and rural sites. It is generally hard to explain how rare types reached these sites given the limited supply and availability their distributions imply. It is possible that they were just shipped in small quantities or were directly brought over by individuals travelling from neighbouring regions. They do, however, indicate something about the people that used them and the different beliefs that they had and displayed. Durham (2010: 305–37) has suggested that the presence of rare and exotic metal figurines may highlight the presence and impact of eastern cultures in large urban areas like London in the same way that depictions of eastern and exotic deities do on other material culture like hairpins (Hall & Wardle 2005: 176, no. 13, fig. 3, 177, nos. 14-16, fig. 5), as well as the identities and beliefs of the local elites who governed Roman Britain. Rare pipeclay types imported from the Rhine-Moselle region, like the Mother-Goddess/Female Figures with Fruit, as well as ‘exotic’ animals, like the panther and lizard, that, despite being produced in Gaul, also have close associations with eastern gods and beliefs (see Appendix 1), may then also reflect such beliefs by some people in Britain but they probably did not belong to governing elites given their low value.

Additionally, it is useful to look at rare types as an overall group and consider, for example, where different rare types from Gaul the Rhine-Moselle regions are found in the province. If we assume that individuals or small groups of incomers brought these objects to Britain, we might be able to see where these individuals and different cultural groups lived out their daily religious lives. The available data are of course limited by the small number of finds but analysing the spatial distribution of the rare Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types together does reveal several interesting trends (Figs. 7.33-4). The first thing this shows is that although rare

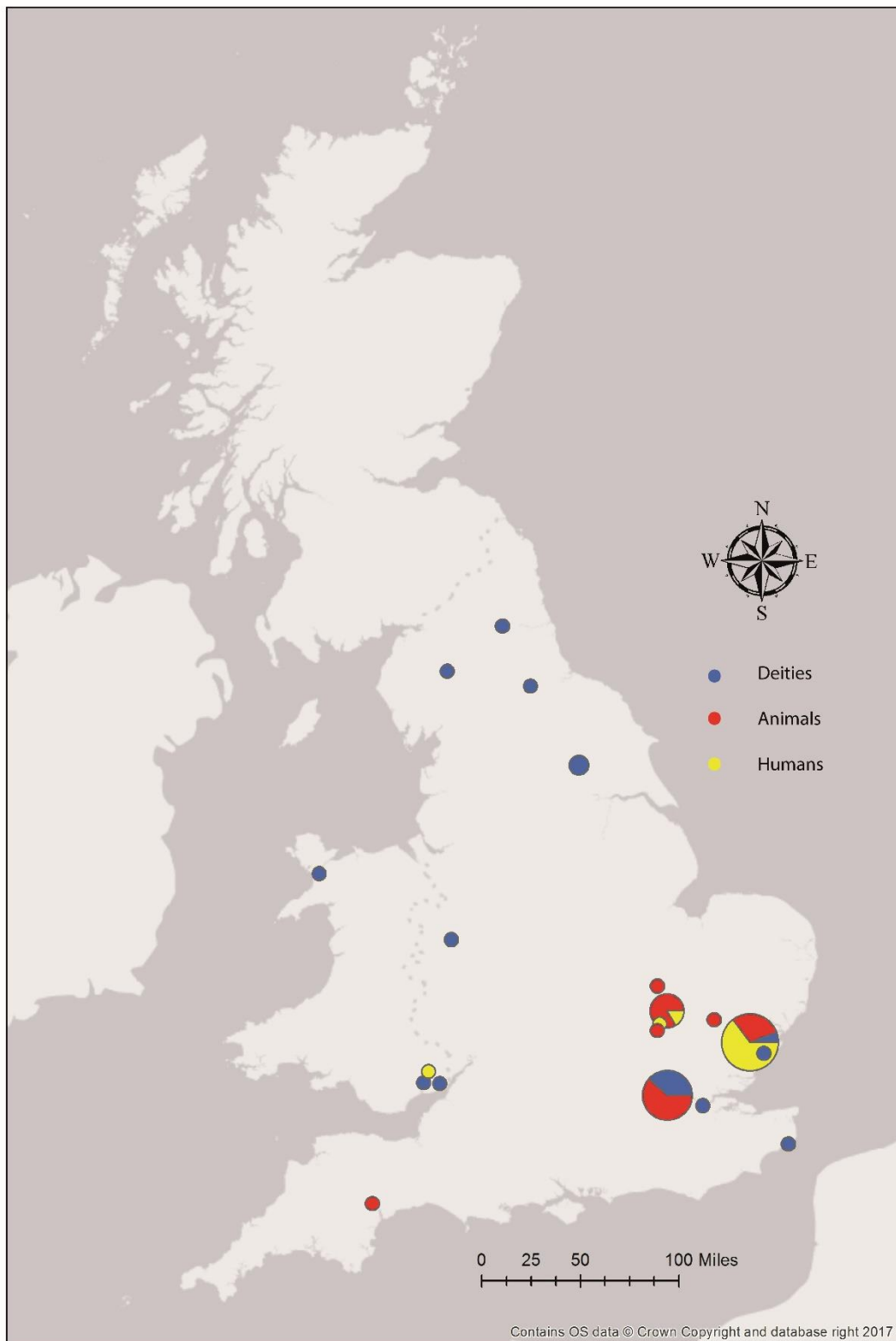


types from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region are found in some of the same areas and on some of the same sites in Britain, their overall distributions are slightly different, with Rhine-Moselle types slightly more widely distributed in the south-east than the Gaulish types.

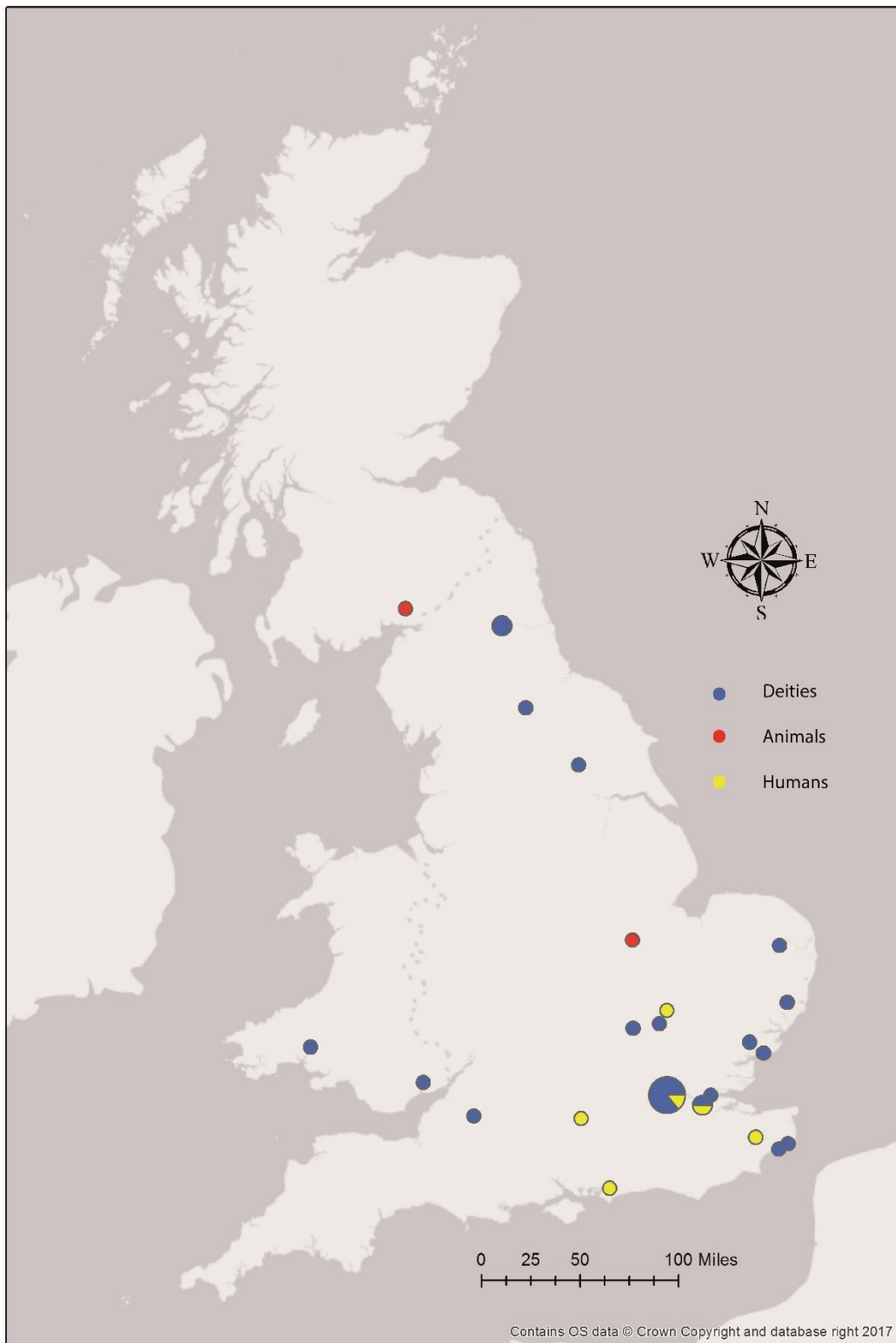
There are also differences between the figurine depictions found in certain areas of the province. For example, more Rhine-Moselle region deities and humans appear to have been used in the south-east compared to the larger proportion of Gaulish animals in the same area. Rare Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types are occasionally found on the same site, as in London where it might reflect their importation through the port there, and other large urban centres like Colchester with larger and more diverse populations, but few of these rare types are found together in the same contexts or deposits. The only example of this is at Arrington in Cambridgeshire where the range of different Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types from a single grave may have belonged to someone, or a group, who obtained types from both regions. This may have been someone who had travelled to both regions and bought them to Britain, but they may just have been bought in nearby London where both types were probably available. The general impression is that while the foreigners that used rare Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle figurine types often lived in the areas that saw relatively widespread use of figurines, these people still had slightly different religious beliefs and practices.

### ***Common vs Rare Figurine Types***

Comparing the number of common and rare figurine types from different types of site can also give us an idea about the social status of the people that used each of these groups in Britain. For the purposes of this study the distributions of the most common deity, animal and human types have therefore been compared with the rarer types in each respective group. The combined group of Venus, Dea Nutrix and Minerva figurines are compared to all the other rare



*Fig. 7. 33. Spatial distribution of rare Gaulish types in Britain (t=54).*



*Fig. 7. 34. Spatial distribution of rare Rhine-Moselle types in Britain (t=32).*

deities in the province, while for animals, the distributions of horses and dogs are compared to all the other animal types. In the human group, meanwhile, the most common busts of women and *Risus* are grouped together and compared with the rarer human types. One of the main problems with this analysis is that the small quantity of rare types from each site type make it hard to know how representative the results really are, but as we will see, the different distributions of common and rare types is socially significant and worth commenting on.

One aspect that stands out even before any patterns are identified is that all of the most common figurine types in Britain, whether deities, animals or humans, are Gaulish rather than Rhine-Moselle types, with most of the figurines of Venus (Type 1 and 2 only), Dea Nutrix, Minerva, horses, dogs and human busts of *Risus* and women imported into Britain during the first and second centuries AD. At the other end of the scale, while there are several rare Gaulish types in Britain, the corresponding observation is that most of the rare types we see in Britain are deities such as Bacchus, Cybele and Mars that originate from the Rhine-Moselle region. Such differences initially suggest that the supply of common Gaulish types to Britain was a larger, more sustained and organised kind of trade compared to the rare types that are perhaps more likely to have arrived as the personal possessions of people who travelled to Britain from either Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle region.

Comparing the social distributions of common and rare figurine forms (i.e. deities, animals and humans) shows a nuanced consumption pattern but one that basically echoes the overall pattern (Figs 7.35-6). Common deities (i.e. Venus, Dea Nutrix and Minerva) are mostly found on military, urban and rural sites, and less so military sites. Common animals (i.e. cockerels, dogs and horses) and human types (i.e. busts of *Risus* and women) are found on similar sites but in smaller quantities. Rare figurine types have a broadly similar distribution. Most deities and humans are from urban sites, followed by military and rural sites, with fewer animal types. The number of rare human types is higher than common human types from urban

sites. More rare than common animal and human types come from rural sites in line with the number of rare deity types from rural sites, but no rare animals come from military sites.

Most of the common deities and animals from urban sites are from London where they were probably imported to and sold from, followed by *Civitas Capitals* and small towns rather than sites like *Coloniae* and the *Municipium of St Albans* that are typically regarded as higher status sites. A small number of common deity, animal and human types do come from *Coloniae* and *Verulamium* - mainly deities – but the contexts of the few that do offer no indication as to the status of the people that used them. Most of these were probably owned by the general population, but one (Venus no. 126) from The Mount cemetery in York found with a tazza might suggest someone slightly wealthier.

In contrast, many rare deity, animal and human types derive from *Coloniae* and the provincial capital of London. Various depictions of rare and exotic deities, animals and humans appear on these two types of site; the prominence of human types on *Coloniae* might indicate a specific preference for these by some individuals but is heavily skewed by the Colchester data. No rare types are known from *Municipium*, but this site type is only accounted for by one site - *Verulamium*. The other significant point is that there are few rare types from ‘lower-status’ sites like *Civitas Capitals* and small towns. The ones that are might have belonged to a small proportion of higher status individuals that occasionally lived in or passed through smaller settlements, as well as rural areas, but overall most of the rare figurine types are synonymous with these two large urban sites.

Overall then, this analysis generally shows that common and rare deity, animal and human figurine types were used in different proportions on different types of site and that this might reflect some differences in the social status of the people that used them. However, analysing individual types and the smaller collection of rarer, more ‘exotic’, types together (see

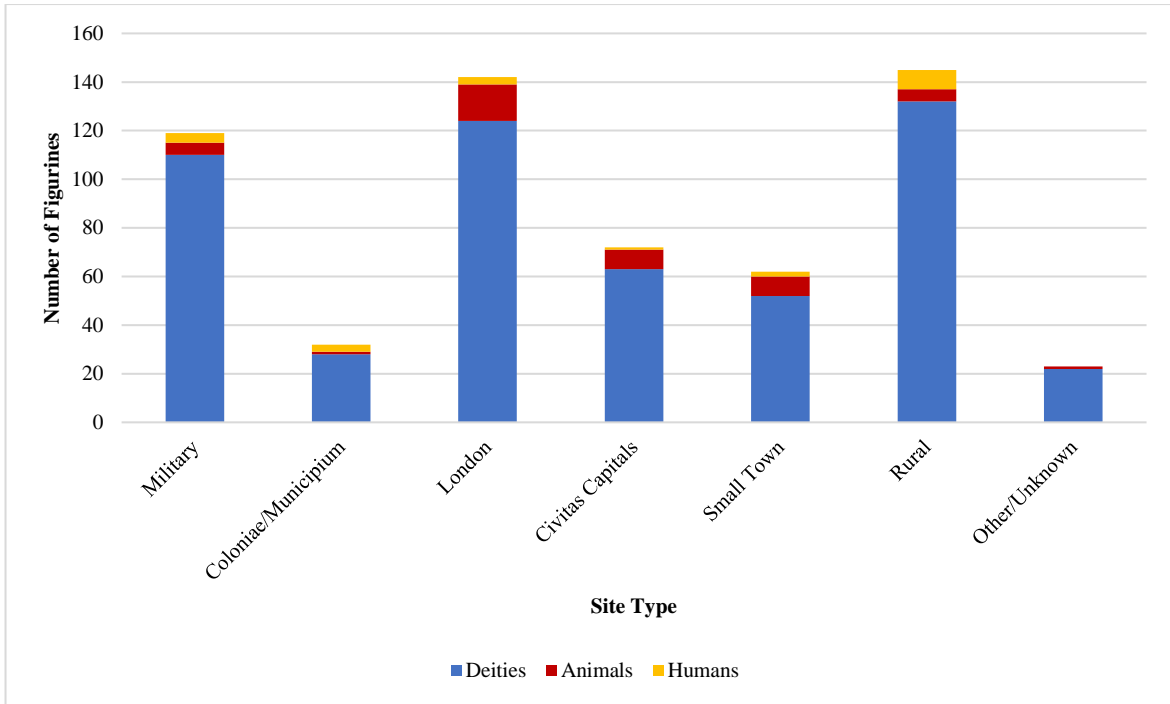


Fig. 7. 35. The social distribution of common figurine types in Britain (t=595).

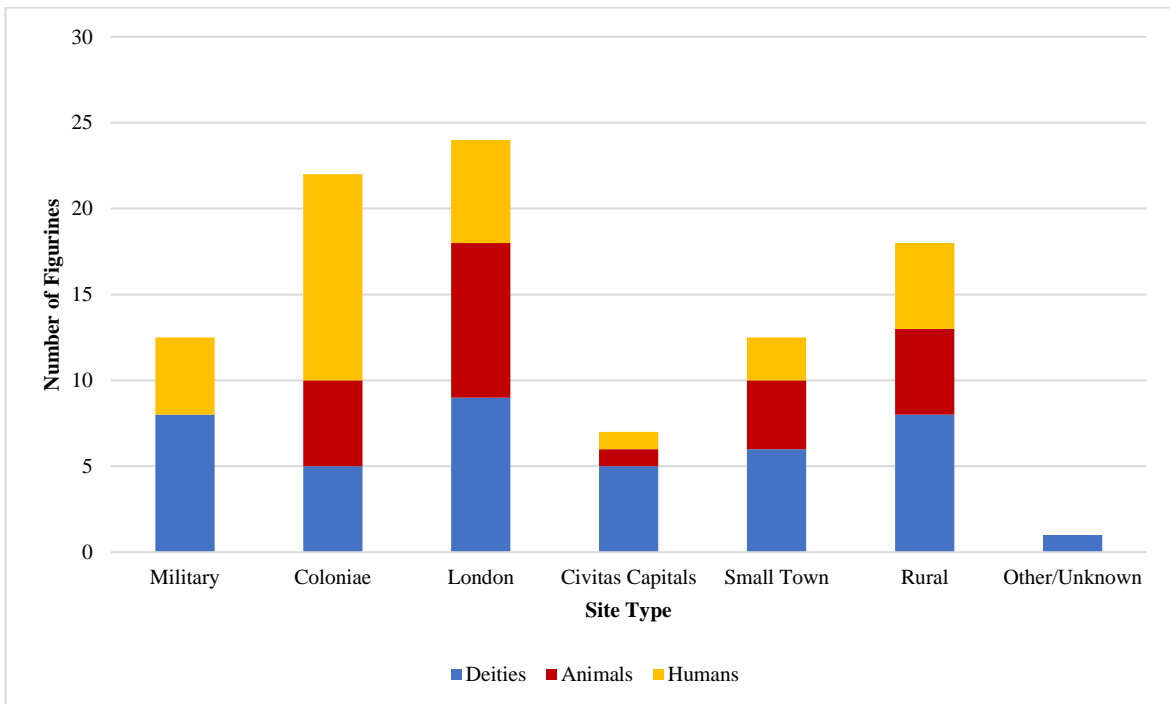


Fig. 7. 36. The social distribution of rare figurine types in Britain (t=97).

above) gives us a better idea about the popularity of different beliefs amongst these social groups.

### *Male and Female Types*

The distributions of male and female figurine types can likewise be compared to highlight some potential differences between where and how they were used, as well as the potentially different engendered social and cultural groups that may have used them for certain practices. To conduct this analysis, the distributions of male and female deities and human figurines are compared spatially on maps (Fig. 7.37) and socially across site types on charts (Figs. 7.38-9). The only group of figurines excluded are the animals. This is not only because it is usually difficult to sex them, but also because of the conflicts between their sex and the deities many of them are associated with. For example, although hens are evidently female, they are usually associated with the male god Mercury. Likewise, although it seems that some of the dogs with prominent phalluses are male animals, they are usually associated with female Mother-Goddesses.

Comparing the distribution of male (t=44) and female (t=593) forms shows that female figurines are found across the province, and occur in vastly greater numbers. These may not have been exclusively used by women, but their distribution does suggest that religious beliefs surrounding the female form were more common across the province than those indicated by the limited distribution of male figurines. The social distribution of males and females also suggests that these beliefs appealed to all levels of society in only slightly different proportions. As such, male and female depictions are associated with all populations but that the males were probably only used by a small number of individuals on each type of site.

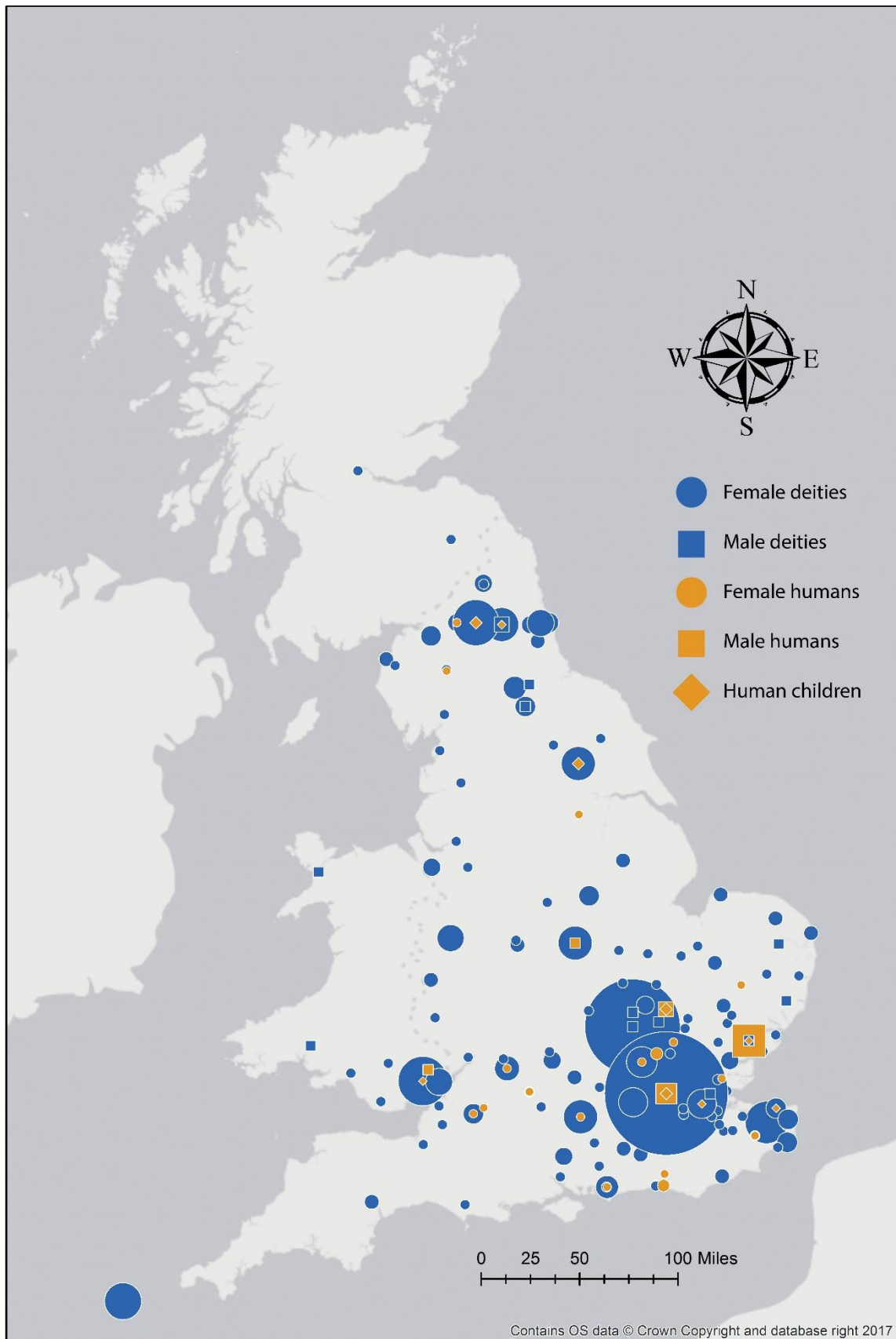


Fig. 7. 37. The spatial distribution of male and female deities and humans in Britain.



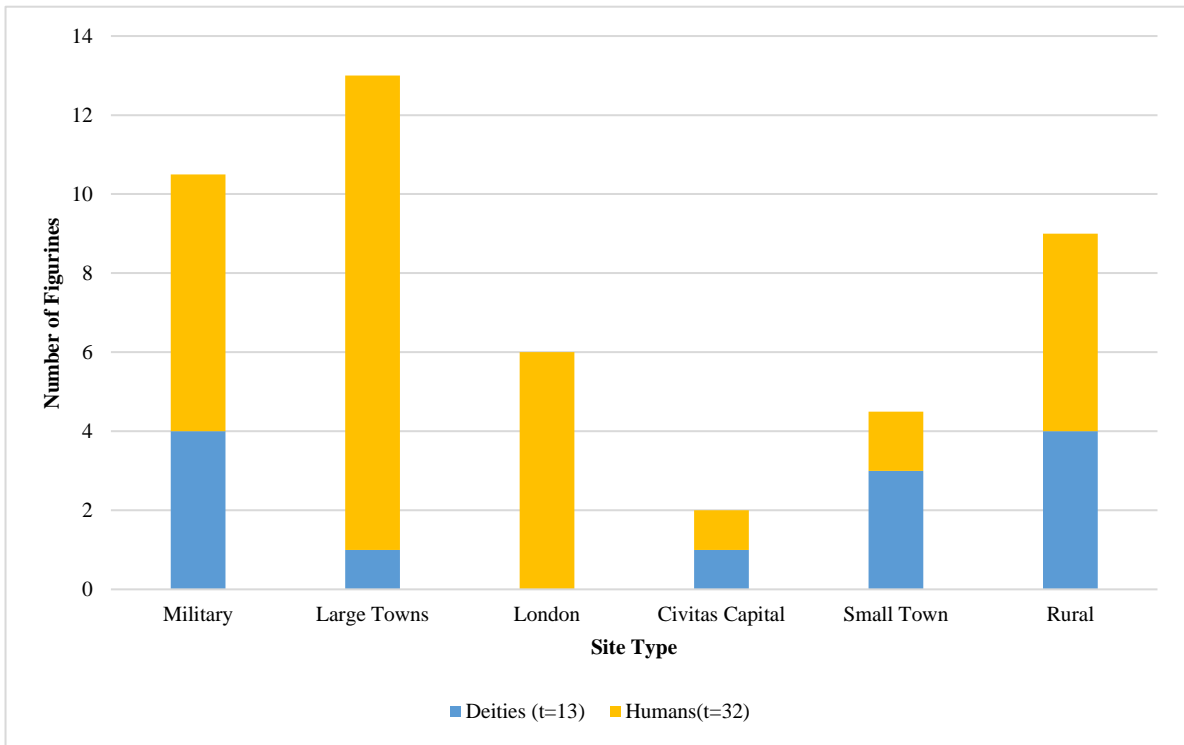


Fig. 7. 38. The social distribution of male forms in Britain.

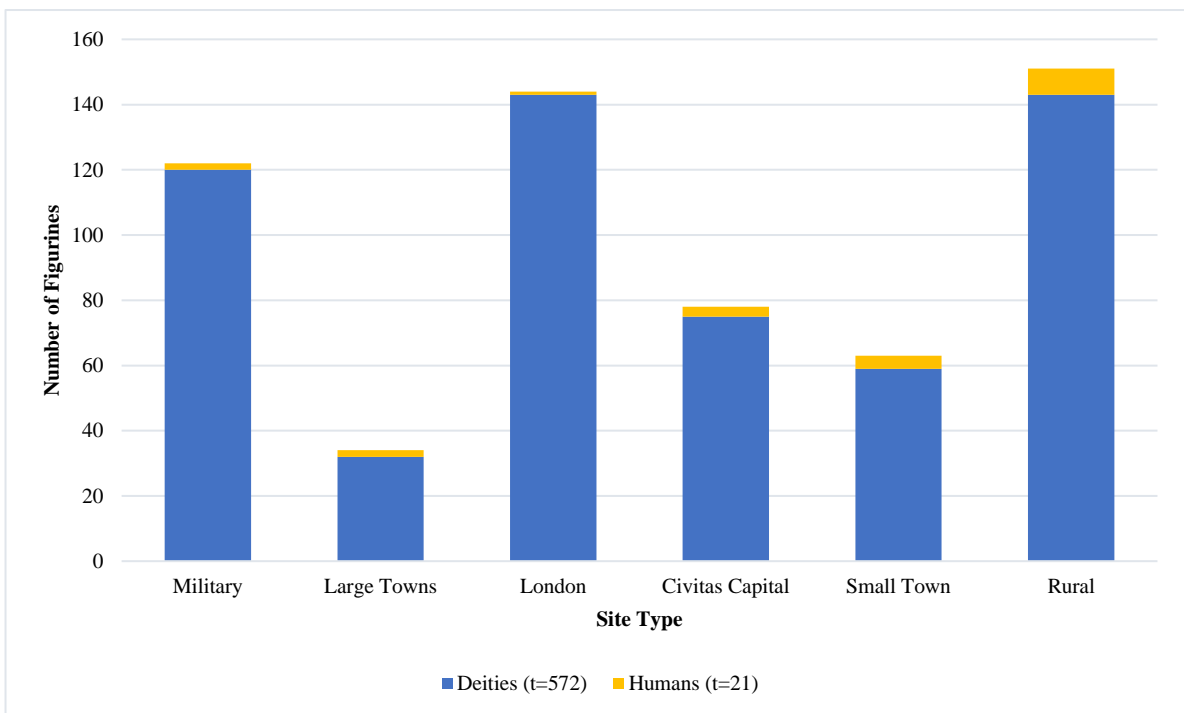


Fig. 7. 39. The social distribution of female forms in Britain.

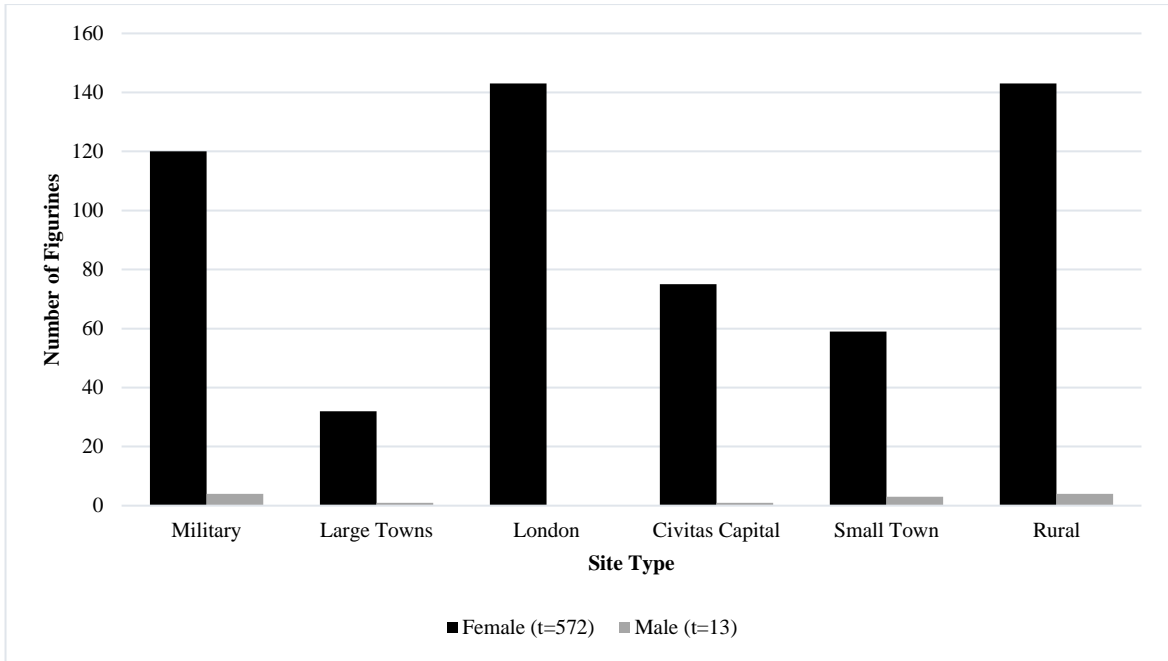


Fig. 7. 40. The social distribution of gods and goddesses in Roman Britain.

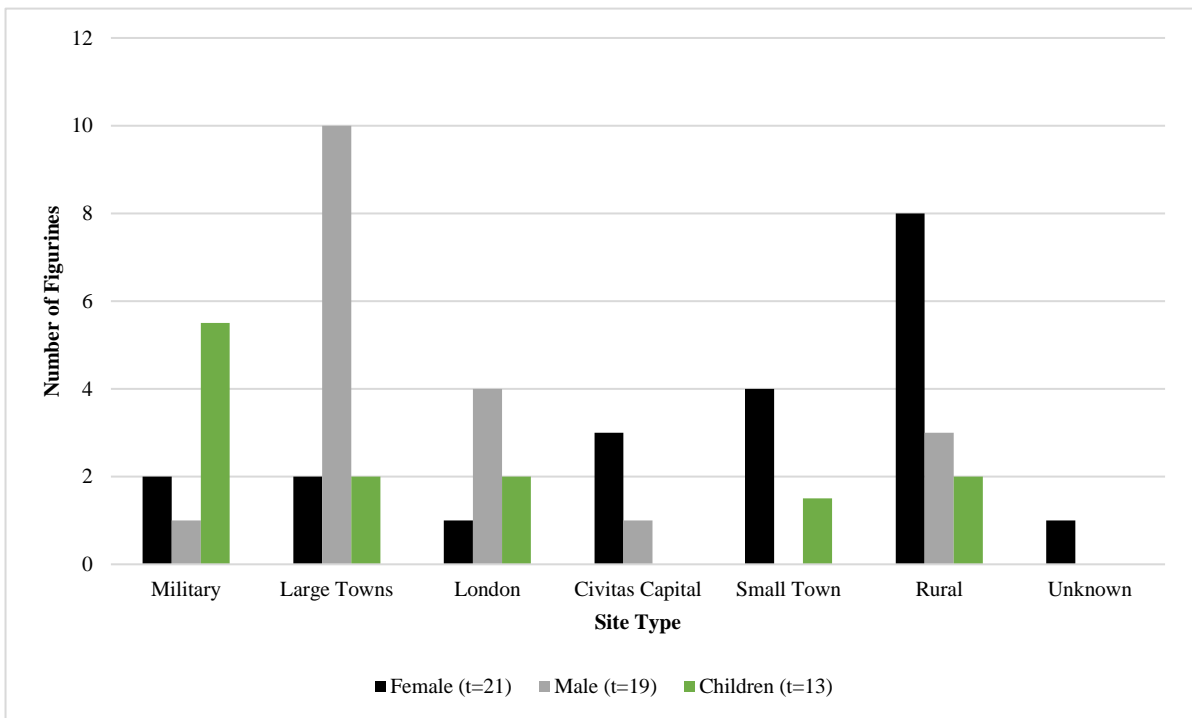


Fig. 7. 41. The social distribution of male, female and human figurines in Britain.

It is also useful to compare the distributions of male and female deities and humans separately to see if there are potentially any gender divisions or differences in the beliefs that they suggest between types of site. In terms of deities (Fig. 7.40), goddesses (572) embodying beliefs about fertility and protection are found on all types of site, with the largest distributions in London and rural areas, followed by smaller urban sites. The military group is also very large but many finds are from civilian areas – that is the people living in *vici* and *canabae*.

On the other hand, male gods (12) are only found every so often amongst each population, with the exception of London. The number of gods found on each site type are small but they again suggest that a much smaller proportion of people revered male gods that are typically associated with beliefs about sustenance, war and hunting, and that these figurines probably did not belong to the same people that owned female goddesses based on the fact that none were found together. It is also interesting that there are no rare male gods from London when so many rare goddesses have been found in the city. This is hard to explain but one idea it does fit with is that rare gods and goddesses were owned by different groups of people and that the people of London identified more closely with the beliefs and practices associated with such goddesses. Another is that it is simply to do with chance survival.

The other interesting point is that most of the male gods are rare types from the Rhine-Moselle region (seven, including Apollo, Bacchus and Mars; the Hercules from Colchester is the only Gaulish one) while the group of the rare female types are a greater mix of Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle types. Most of the rare female types are unsurprisingly from London; two of Diana (nos. 219-20), one of Luna (no. 221), one of Leda and Swan (no. 232) and one of Juno (no. 518) – where they evidently reflect the mixed cultural character of the small proportion of the population that used them here. However, the rare male types are mainly found in other urban and rural areas. While these differences are possibly to do with status, they are probably not related to gender. If they were it would give the impression that high status males from the

Rhine-Moselle region mainly lived outside of London while high status females from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region lived in London. Instead it is probably again best to conclude that these objects could have been used by both men and women from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle areas. Nevertheless, it does suggest that there were slightly more higher status pipeclay figurine owners who identified with Rhine-Moselle gods and religious culture living outside of the provincial centre of London than there were in it.

In the human group, males (19), females (21) and children (13) are quite evenly distributed between site types (Fig. 7.41), with only slight differences that might reflect minor differences in use, such as the higher number of females from *Civitas Capitals*, small towns and rural sites, the absence of males from small towns, and the absence of children from *Civitas Capitals*. The ten male humans from large towns are the Comic Figures that all come from the same child burial at Colchester. Again, such small differences in gender distributions are probably not significant because of the relatively small numbers and the probability that both men and women used both types regardless of the different forms they depict.

The more interesting point, however, is that all of the depictions of children are of young boys rather than girls. Boekel (1987: 629) suggests that this might be because of the higher social value that was attributed to boys in Roman society and how difficult it is to distinguish between the two sexes in figurine form (personally I have not found this to be a problem). Overall, depictions of children are not as numerous as male and female human types across the social spectrum, with only one site where the number of finds exceeds two. It is only our military sites where there are as many as six but many probably belonged to civilians.

In terms of detailed context information, there are 21 finds without this, but 16 from habitation contexts like pits, ditches and occupation layers and 19 from religious (one from a temple and 18 from funerary) contexts. Depictions of men and women are found most often in

religious contexts, with 14 from cemeteries or burials, but this still only constitutes a small group of south-eastern sites at Arrington, Ashwell, Colchester and Welwyn.

Meanwhile, only five child figurines appear in burials. Three finds are from the same graves at Arrington (nos. 709-10) and Colchester (no. 256) that provided depictions of adults as well, leaving two that were found on their own, both from poorly recorded deposits: one from a possible burial in London (no. 259); the other a disturbed cremation at Fishergate Cemetery in York (no. 257). The only human type with possible ritual significance is a likely comic Figure (no. 729) from a possible hoard at Ashwell that was found alongside an assemblage that included various high-status metal objects and pipeclay figurines that were dedicated to a local god.

### *Summary*

In summary, analysing the spatial and social distribution of different pipeclay forms has shown that figurines (including busts but less so) were more widely used than shrines, animal vessels and masks in Britain. Analysing individual figurine types has also shown that deity figurines such as Venus and Dea Nutrix were used more widely than less common deities, and the most common animal and humans types, and that these distributions differed between site types. There is little evidence for detailed use. Most forms and types are from what appear to be rubbish deposits, though some may have included other 'significant' objects or have been placed into features considered 'special', including a small selection of Venus figurines, animal vessels, animal figurines and human types that were used as grave good by individuals or small groups. Analysing the spatial and social distribution of rare types additionally highlights the large collection in London as a reflection of the city's cosmopolitan character, and shows that most rare types were used in small numbers - possibly by some incomers - that mainly lived in larger urban centres and used pipeclay figurines and busts as part of funerary rites.

Comparing the spatial and social distributions of common and rare figurine types not only reflects the popularity of different beliefs in Britain, but also possibly differences between the social status of the people that used each group. The gender discussion additionally shows a dominance of female forms, and that while it is possible to analyse the distribution of pipeclay figurine types according to these criteria, the slightly different patterns that emerge regarding where and how male and female figurines were used do not necessarily relate to males or females specifically. However, some patterns do tell us something about how much male and female types were used on different types of site. For example, male gods were only used by a small number of individuals in certain parts of urban and rural Britain, while depictions of adult males and females were used for mainly funerary purposes in the south-east in small numbers.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that although pipeclay objects have been found right across Britain, the distribution and use of different forms (i.e. figurines, unguent vessels and masks) and individual types varies considerably between different social groups of people. An analysis of their social distribution and contexts has shown that most of the pipeclay objects in the province are Gaulish figurines that were mainly used by civilians for their religious practices at home and that only a few people used these figurines in temples in small towns and the countryside. A small number of higher status people did use them for funerary practices, mainly in child burials. Overall comparing the distributions of figurine types shows that there is no strong evidence that pipeclay figurine consumption was divided along gender lines, but analysing unguent vessels, masks, and the most common deity, animal and human types does possibly reflect some subtle patterns of regionalised belief and practice. This also showed that rare types, which belonged to just a small proportion of the urban and rural populations, were used slightly differently – probably by higher status foreigners from Gaul and the Rhine-

Moselle region who had different religious beliefs. As we will see in Chapter 8, these people were probably wealthier than most pipeclay consumers but were still lower in status, and less wealthy and culturally diverse, than the individuals and groups who owned metal figurines – and especially the rarest of the metal figurine types - in Britain.

## **Chapter 8. Status Symbols?**

### **Comparing Ceramic and Metal Figurines in Britain**

Having considered the social distribution of pipeclay objects from Britain in detail it is now useful to compare this to the distribution of metal figurines. The aim of this is to highlight any differences between where and how they were used by people in Roman Britain. Fortunately, most of the metal figurines from Britain were collated by Durham (2010), in which she helpfully records all of the typological and social distributional data of the 1000 figurines she recorded from museum collections and published sources (see also Durham 2012, and 2014 for a closer look at the metal figurines from the Southbroom Hoard). There are inevitably problems with such a study. Firstly, the passing of time means that several finds are likely to have been made in the last seven years that are currently unaccounted for, although these are unlikely to affect the patterns Durham observed. The second is that making direct comparisons between ceramic and metal objects is difficult because metal figurines are more likely to have been recycled or put into hoards while ceramic ones are more likely to be in 'rubbish' deposits. A third problem is the value put on metal objects not just by antiquarian excavators but also modern metal detectorists and the Portable Antiquities Scheme makes it more likely that more metal figurines have been published.

The newly compiled collection of ceramic figurines presented in this thesis mitigates this somewhat, although this is also not without its own problems. The most notable of these is the possibility that the number of pipeclay objects might be underrepresented by fragments that have previously been misidentified as different ceramic objects, such as Medieval clay pipes. Another is that the pipeclay assemblage from Britain includes a diverse range of different types that includes figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks while the metal assemblage



mainly includes figurines. However, comparing the overall ceramic and metal collections from the province - both of which are quite large - is still worthwhile and highlights several interesting patterns that suggest slight differences in consumption and practice.

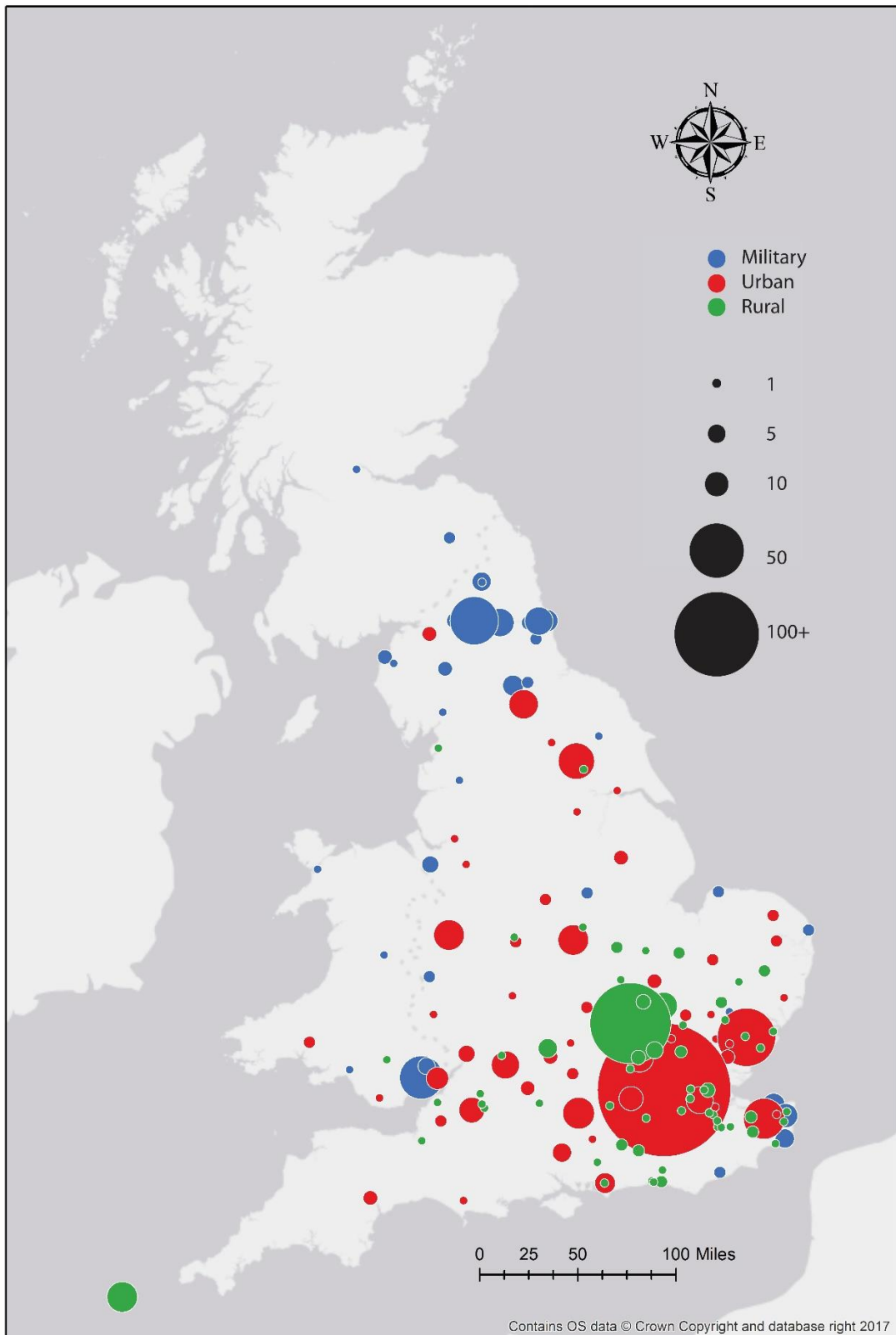
An idea at the forefront of the interpretation of pipeclay objects - particularly figurines - is that they were mass produced and hence more widely available and less valuable objects that were used by women and the lower social classes of Roman society such as the poor compared with what are perceived to be the rarer, more luxurious and more expensive metal figurines that are thought to have been the possessions of the wealthier upper classes (Jenkins 1977: 418; Boekel 1987: 902). The forthcoming paper about Venus figurines in Appendix 8 comparing the distributions of pipeclay and metal Venus figurines in Britain points out that although both pipeclay and metal types are found in south-eastern Britain, the fact that most metal Venus figurines are from *Civitas Capitals* while pipeclay Venuses are more widely distributed highlights that ceramic figurines were probably lower status objects. The contextual data show that both were used in similar ways on urban and rural sites but that pipeclay Venus figurines were used more often for religious purposes in temples and higher-status child burials. This was probably because ceramic depictions better symbolised the delicate nature of youthful life that needed protecting. In contrast, the greater number of metal figurines from hoards (five, compared with zero in pipeclay from clear hoard contexts) probably reflects the greater value of metal in general. The pipeclay figurines from Nor'nour in the Isles of Scilly are from a possible hoard but the use of pipeclay objects in this way was not a regular practice. As such, pipeclay Venus figurines were probably lower status objects than rarer ceramic and metal ones.

The new research presented in this thesis shows that ceramic objects (946 - that includes 777 figurines and 34 busts) and metal (996) figurines are in fact just as rare as each other in the province. It has already been shown in Chapter 5 that there are very different depictions seen in the pipeclay and metal assemblages found in Britain and that this probably reflects

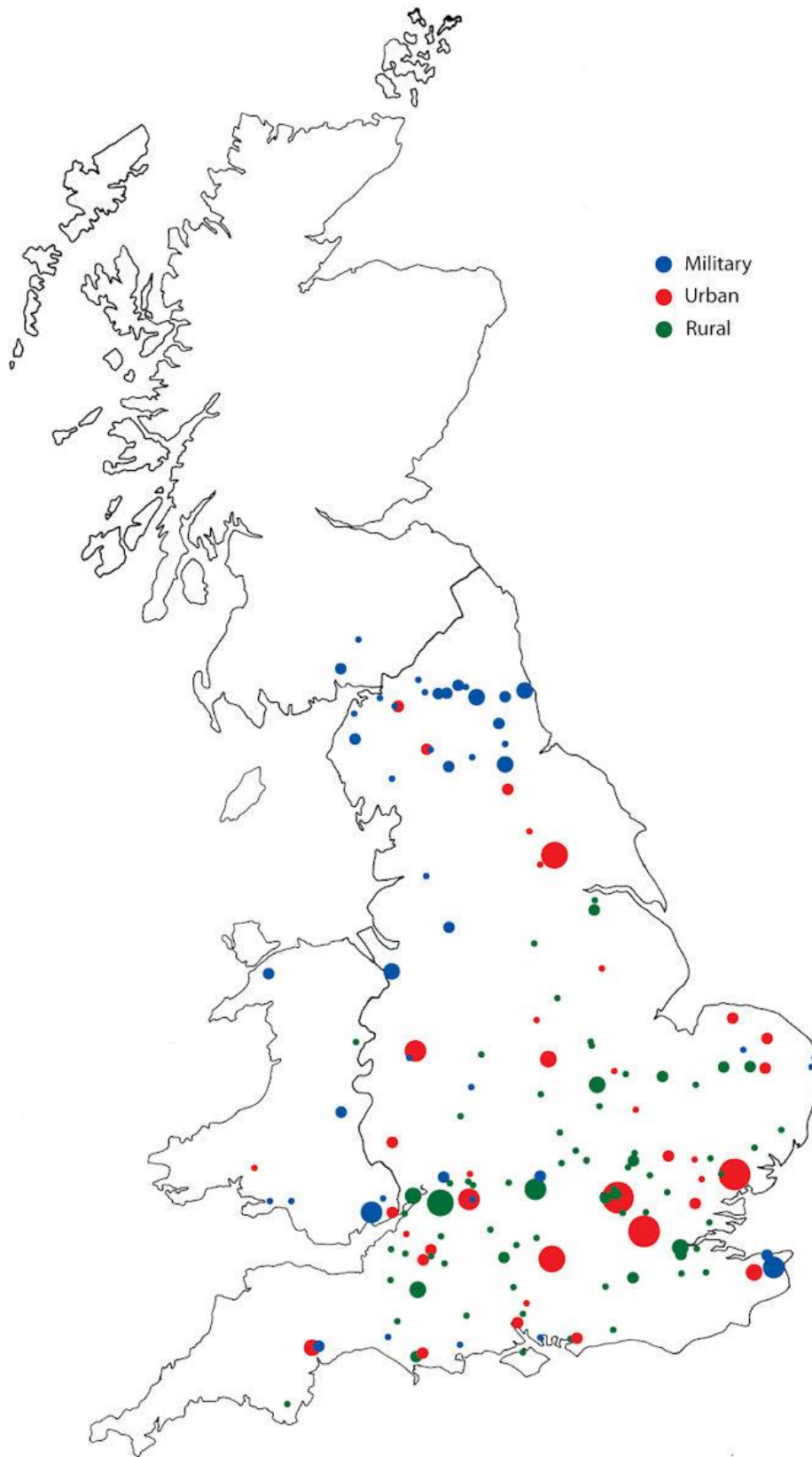
differences in how they were used by different groups of people. However, the relatively even number of pipeclay and metal objects adds another interesting element to this regarding the status of these people and is something that can be explored further by comparing the spatial and social distributions of both materials on different types of site across the province, as well as the distributions of similar figurine types, and the rare types, seen in metal and pipeclay.

Comparing the distributions of pipeclay objects – that are mainly figurines - and metal figurines on different site types shows that the two types have a broadly similar distribution across the province (Figs. 8.1-2). This may of course have something to do with different levels of excavation across the province (particularly the sparser distribution of both types in the north compared to the south), but there are also some subtle differences between the distribution and number of finds of each type on military, urban and rural sites. Figurines of both materials occur on military areas in the same parts of the country and often on the same sites, with concentrations along Hadrian's Wall. These sites usually only provide one or two finds in one or both materials but there is an unusually large group of pipeclay figurines from Vindolanda – probably because so much of the site's *vicus* has been excavated. There are also several sites that have only provided one material or the other in both the north and south.

Yet again, there are several sites that have provided both, but usually in different quantities. This is most notable in London where there are 242 pipeclay objects (including a group of 190 figurines and busts) and 79 metal figurines. This could partially be because more pipeclay objects were perhaps imported to the city than metal figurines that were more valuable and brought in smaller numbers, but it also suggests that these two types of object were used differently. Interestingly the number of pipeclay (48) and metal (50) objects from Colchester is more equal, but 23 of the pipeclay finds come from just one grave (the Colchester Child's Grave (Eckardt 1999)). Comparing these maps therefore generally suggests that pipeclay and



*Fig. 8. 1. The social distribution of pipeclay objects in Britain.*



*Fig. 8. 2. The social distribution of metal figurines in Britain (after Durham 2012, 4.3, fig. 10).*

metal objects were mainly being used by people living in the same areas and on the same types of site in Roman Britain.

Figure 8.3 further shows that pipeclay and metal objects were used differently by each population. Because far fewer metal figurines are from known site types (579 metal compared with the 911 pipeclay objects) the finds from each site type are compared as a proportion of the total number of finds in each material from known site types rather than the total number of finds in order to obtain a more representative impression of ancient patterns. Overall this graph illustrates that pipeclay objects and metal figurines are found in similar proportions across all three types of site: mostly urban, followed by rural and military, but in slightly different proportions on each site type. Slightly more metal than pipeclay objects have been found on military and rural sites, and more pipeclay than metal objects are from urban sites. Also, if figurines are to do with wealth and status then these patterns are a bit confusing. Why, for example, are there more higher value metal figurines than lower value pipeclay objects on military sites? If pipeclay objects, like figurines, were more common and less valuable objects, why are there not significantly more pipeclay than metal finds in the urban group? Meanwhile, could the greater number of metal finds from rural sites perhaps be more closely associated with higher status owners of villas rather than the pipeclay figurines that, as we have seen, are more commonly found on rural settlements?

A closer look at the contexts of the pipeclay and metal objects from each site type provides some of the answers to these questions. Starting with military sites, the small amount of contextual information available from them (Durham 2012: 4.3, tab. 8) generally shows that a greater proportion of metal finds come from contexts including barrack blocks and pits located inside forts that are more directly associated with military activity. This is in contrast to most of the pipeclay objects that are typically found in deposits located in civilian areas like

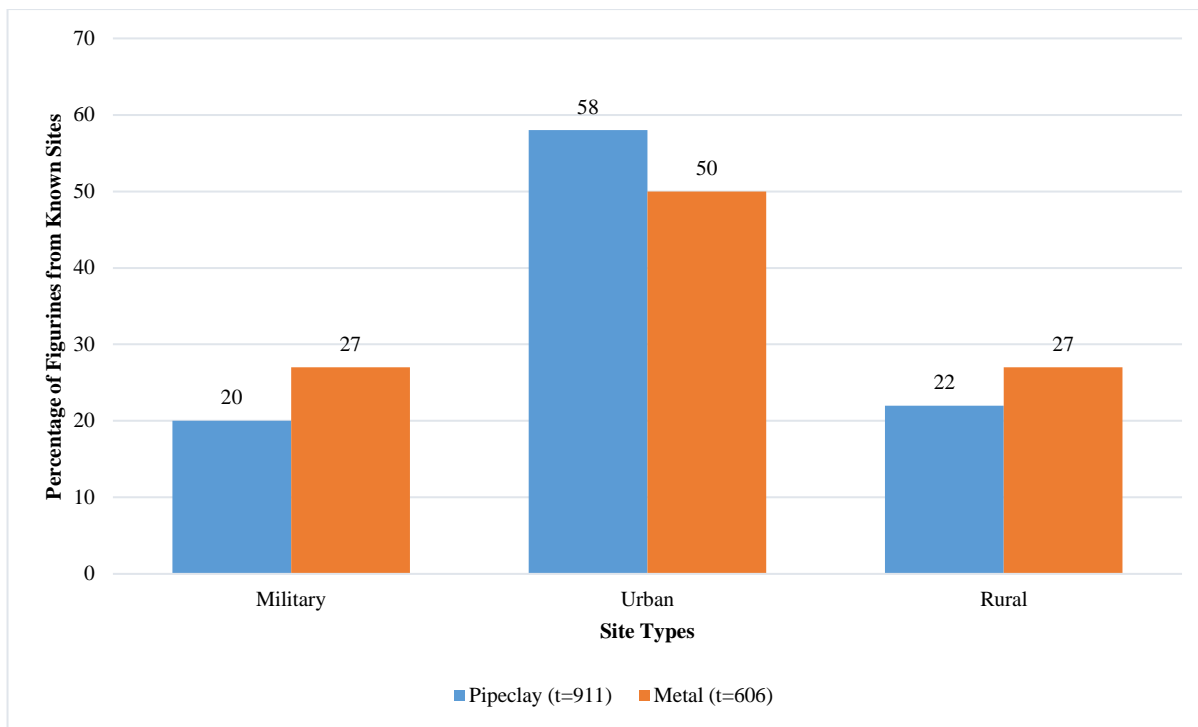


Fig. 8. 3. The proportion of pipeclay objects and metal figurines on military, urban and rural sites.

*vici* and *canabae*. It therefore seems likely that more metal figurines belonged to the wealthier soldiers than perhaps the poorer civilians who lived in the accompanying settlements nearby.

Figure 8.4 illustrates the distributions of metal and pipeclay finds on urban sites. In general, there is a higher proportion of metal than pipeclay objects across all site types except for London. One of the starkest contrasts is the overall higher proportion of metal figurines on legally and socially higher-status sites like *Coloniae*. A closer look at the finds from these sites also shows that even where they come from the same sites, these metal and pipeclay objects are rarely, if ever, found together in the same contexts. Assuming that metal equates to higher wealth and status, this pattern could mean that there were more wealthy people in *Coloniae* who could afford metal figurines and is the best indication yet that metal and pipeclay figurines were used by people in the same places, but by different wealth-based social groups.

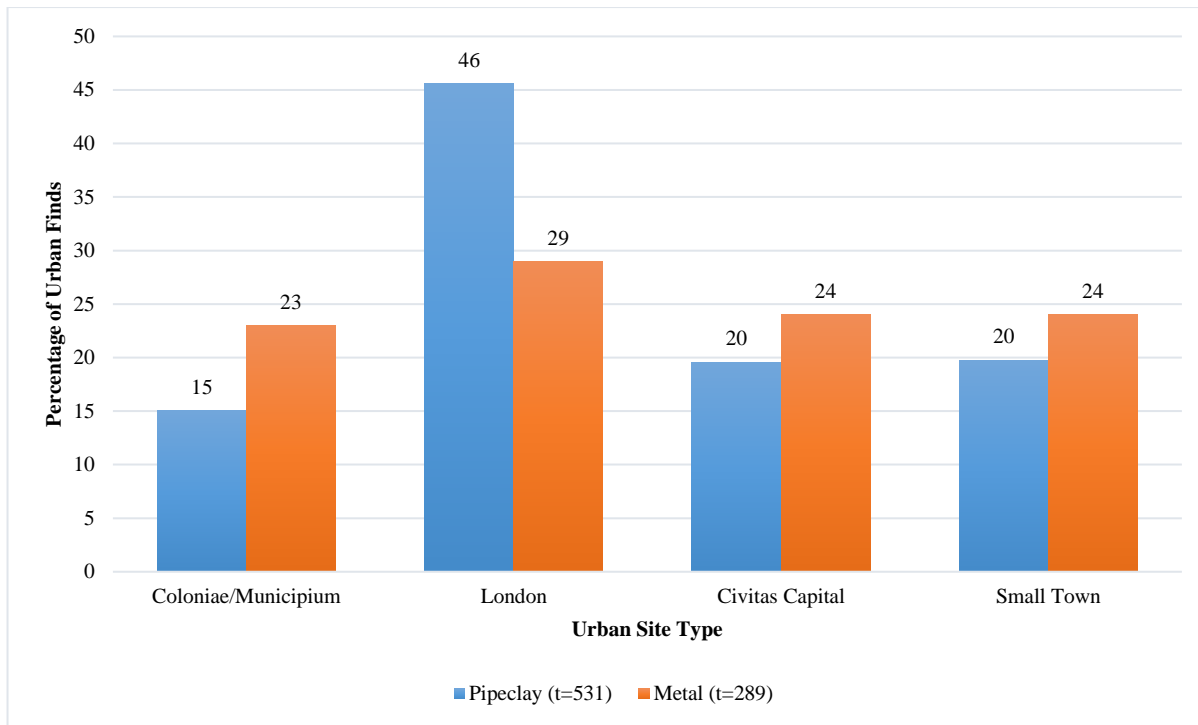


Fig. 8. 4. The proportion of pipeclay objects and metal figurines on urban sites.

This possible trend is reversed in London where the proportion of pipeclay objects outnumbers metal figurines. On the one hand, the high proportion of pipeclay finds is no doubt to do with London being the focal point for the trade of these objects. On the other hand, the proportion of both pipeclay and metal objects from the city probably also has something to do with the higher population in London than other sites (Marsden & West 1992; Williams & Swain 2008). This not only suggests that there were more wealthy and higher status people living in London than on most of the other sites in Britain, but also many potentially poorer people that may have owned pipeclay objects – particularly figurines.

The overall pattern may thus suggest that perhaps pipeclay objects were not low-status objects but more ‘middle-range’ goods that were used by a group of people socially situated in line with, but probably below, users of metal figurines. This was a group that would have lived alongside some of the wealthier metal figurine users on smaller sites like *Civitas Capitals* and

small towns as a small part of their populations and would better account for the more even distribution of each material on these sites.

Finally, breaking down the rural group (Fig. 8.5) shows that a slightly higher proportion of pipeclay objects – again mainly figurines - than metal figurines have been found on rural settlements while slightly more metal figurines have been found at villa sites. Taken together, this kind of pattern is not necessarily surprising given the higher status generally attributed to villa sites and the people who lived in them compared to people that occupied other areas of the countryside who evidently used pipeclay figurines more often. Most pipeclay and metal figurines are also from different villa sites. This may well reflect something about the different status of villa owners. It is perfectly possible that some people, as at Fishbourne (no. 122) and Gestingthorpe (no. 143), owned figurines made of both materials. However, the contextual information regarding use is vague for both the metal and ceramic types from such sites. The pipeclay and metal objects in the religious group are discussed in the next chapter.

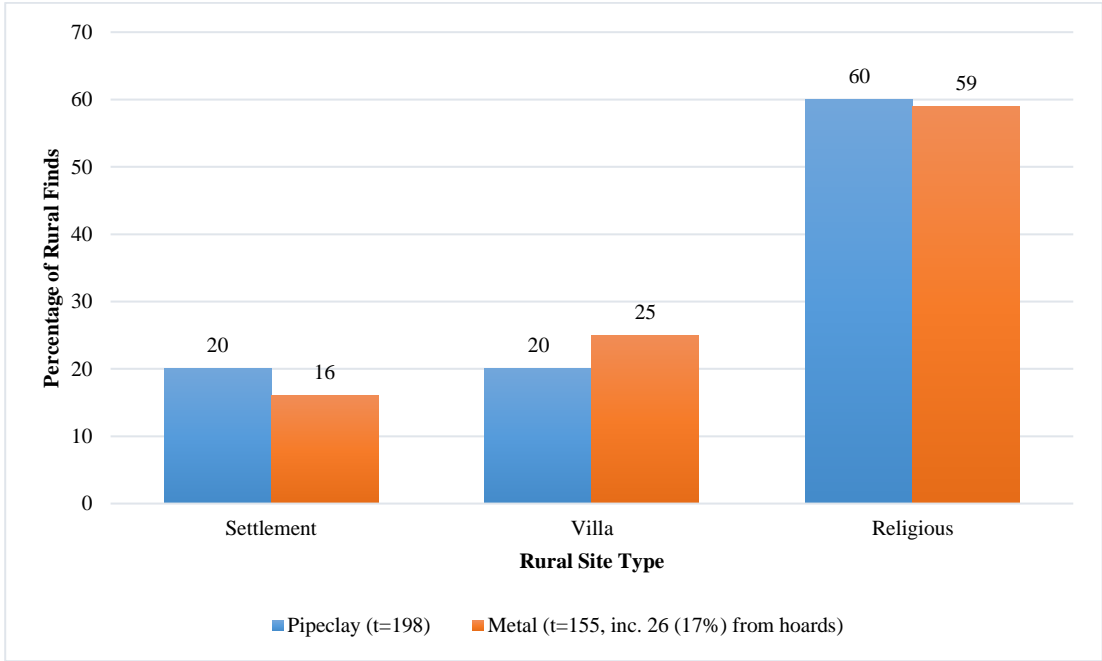


Fig. 8. 5. The proportion of pipeclay and metal figurines from different rural sites.



Overall the contexts of pipeclay objects and metal figurines on military, urban and rural sites suggests that they occur in similar types of deposits that may relate to disposal of domestic materials. However, another way in which their use did differ was in terms of their religious and ritual use (see Chapter 9). To summarise, while more metal figurines were deposited in hoards, both pipeclay and metal figurines from temples are from small towns and rural locations but few are ever found together, while those that are come from slightly different contexts suggesting slightly different ritual practices. Additionally, far fewer metal figurines (only five) are recorded from burial contexts in Britain than pipeclay (62). While most pipeclay burials are from rural areas, the few metal figurine burials occur at urban sites like Poundbury (Durham 2010, no. 671) and York (no. 875), and one rural site at Lexden tumulus (nos. 68, 98 and 1151), with the pipeclay burials in particular associated with funerary practices related to children. Nearly all of the metal and pipeclay ritual and funerary evidence is in the south-east, the likes of which overall suggests that metal figurines and pipeclay objects were used for slightly different religious practices that were probably performed by different social groups.

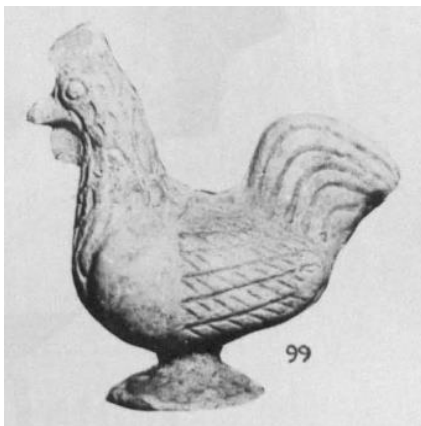
### *Comparing Pipeclay and Metal Figurine Types*

There are also differences between the form of the metal and pipeclay figurines themselves: in other words, the style of the same gods, goddesses and animals depicted in ceramic and metal is very different. This is difficult to see looking at the assemblage as a whole but examining some individual types highlights it better. A good example are the differences between the metal and pipeclay depictions of Venus. Both are roughly the same size but metal specimens are clearly finer and more ‘Classical’ in style in that they are often depicted posing in the same way as Classical statuary (that itself may suggest that they might have been made on the Continent), while ceramic examples generally depict a cruder, more simplified version of the goddess standing that is arguably more ‘provincial’ in style (Appendix 8; Webster 1997: 332- 4; 2001:

220-1). There are also differences in the shape and proportions of the goddesses body between metal and ceramic figurines, with ceramic Venus figurines generally having more pronounced lower bodies (i.e. buttocks and hips) than those in metal, as well as the larger ceramic heads that appear to be more disproportionate to the rest of her body.

There are also differences in style and craft techniques between other deity, animal and human depictions in metal and pipeclay in terms of the different shapes and decoration between materials. Metal figurines of Minerva, for example, come in several, more detailed, poses than the two cruder standing pipeclay depictions, while metal birds, like cockerels and chickens, and dogs, for instance, are more varied in shape and more ornately decorated than simpler depictions in pipeclay that are plainer with little additional decoration (e.g. Fig. 8.6). The metal and ceramic human types, meanwhile, also usually depict very different forms and styles, with more standing figures in metal, and more pipeclay busts for instance. What we appear to have here, therefore, are metal figurines that are more 'Classical' in form and style, and pipeclay objects such as figurines that also depict 'Classical' forms but in a way that is far more Gaulish and occasionally Rhine-Moselle in style and perhaps more closely associated with the shared beliefs that some people groups in Roman Britain had with people in these regions.

Having identified these stylistic differences, it is subsequently important to compare specific depictions that occur in both pipeclay and metal to see if there are any significant differences in where each type of material was used and who used them. It has been shown elsewhere in this thesis that the deities, animals and humans depicted in metal and pipeclay differ considerably, as do the proportions of similar forms (e.g. Venus and dogs) and that this may mean that metal and pipeclay figurines were used by different groups of people (Chapters 5 and 8). Having noted some of the stylistic differences between similar forms and types and armed with the distributions of pipeclay figurine types from the previous chapter, I will now take the step of comparing specific depictions in pipeclay and metal, as well as the rarest types



*Fig. 8. 6. Comparable ceramic and metal figurine types.  
Top to bottom: pipeclay (no. 515) and metal (no. 119) Minervas; pipeclay (no. 298) and metal (no. 794) cockerels; and pipeclay (no. 293) and metal (no. 1176) dogs.*

in each material, in more detail to see if it is possible to discern any further meaningful differences between them.

One of the drawbacks of Durham's (2010, 2012) work is that it does not assess the social distribution of deities, animals and humans as groups, or directly compare common and rare types or male and female depictions, meaning that identifying any such distinctions between pipeclay and metal figurines is difficult. What we can do, however is compare the most common depiction in each material and see if there are any differences in their use.

The god Mercury is the most common depiction represented in metal in contrast to the goddess Venus that is most popular in pipeclay. Although metal figurines of Mercury appear less often than pipeclay depictions of Venus (a factor that might be associated with the different value of the two materials), they do have similar distributions in Britain (Figs. 8.7), with a notable concentration of both in the south-east. While this could mean that they were being used by similar groups of people, most of the time they do not appear on the same sites, except for in a few cases that mainly include large urban centres such as London and Colchester.

A brief look at the social distribution of pipeclay Venus and metal Mercury (Fig. 8.8) figurines shows that both depictions have been found on every type of site. However, far fewer metal Mercury figurines have been found compared to pipeclay figurines of Venus overall. The large number of metal Mercury figurines from unknown site types could change this picture in some way or another, but the general picture is that even the most popular metal type was much less popular amongst these different populations. Although both types are found in broadly similar areas, this pattern probably not only means that even the most popular metal types were rare and only accessible to a smaller, wealthier, proportions of each population, but also that the owners of common pipeclay and metal types had different religious preferences.

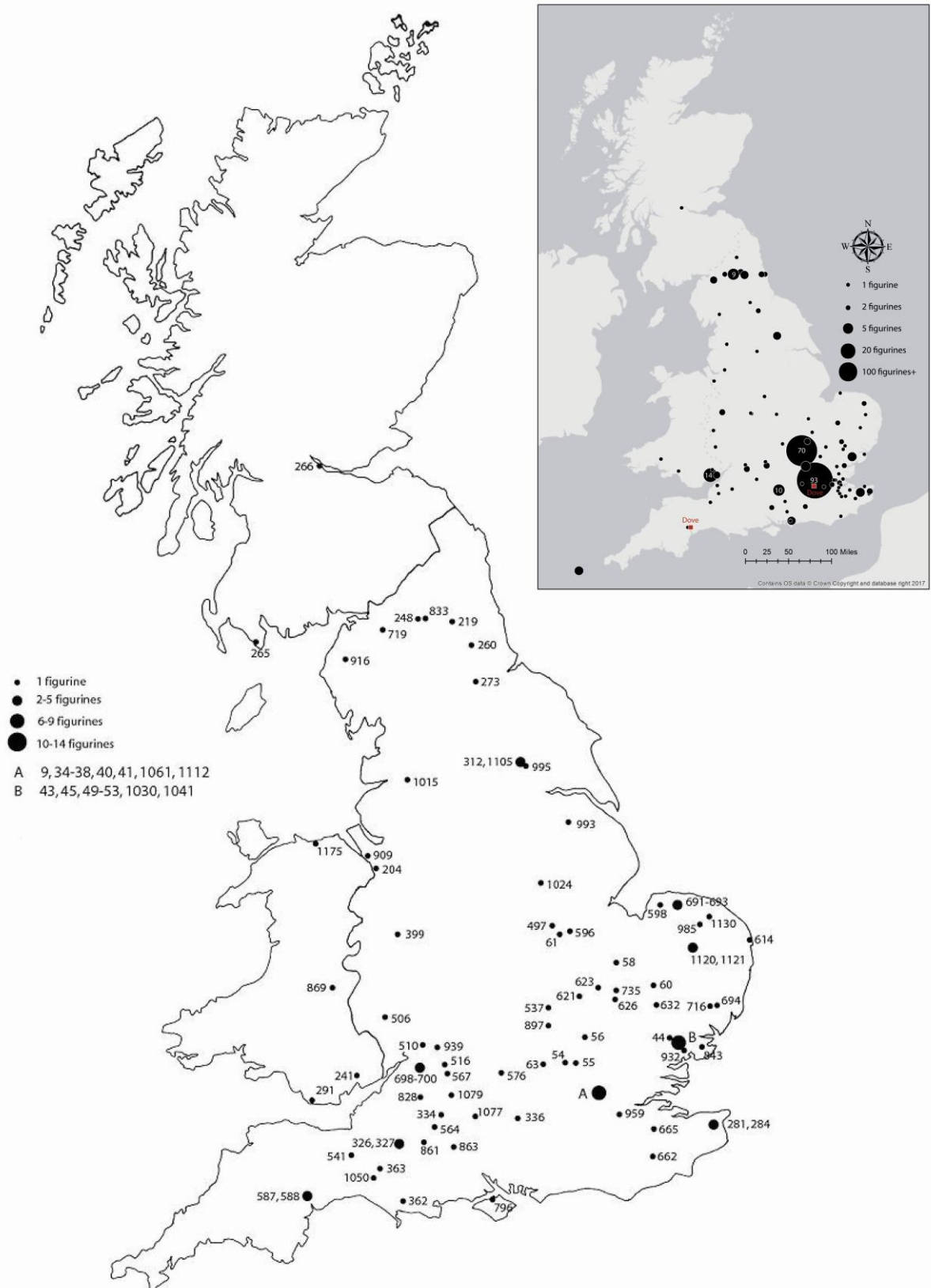
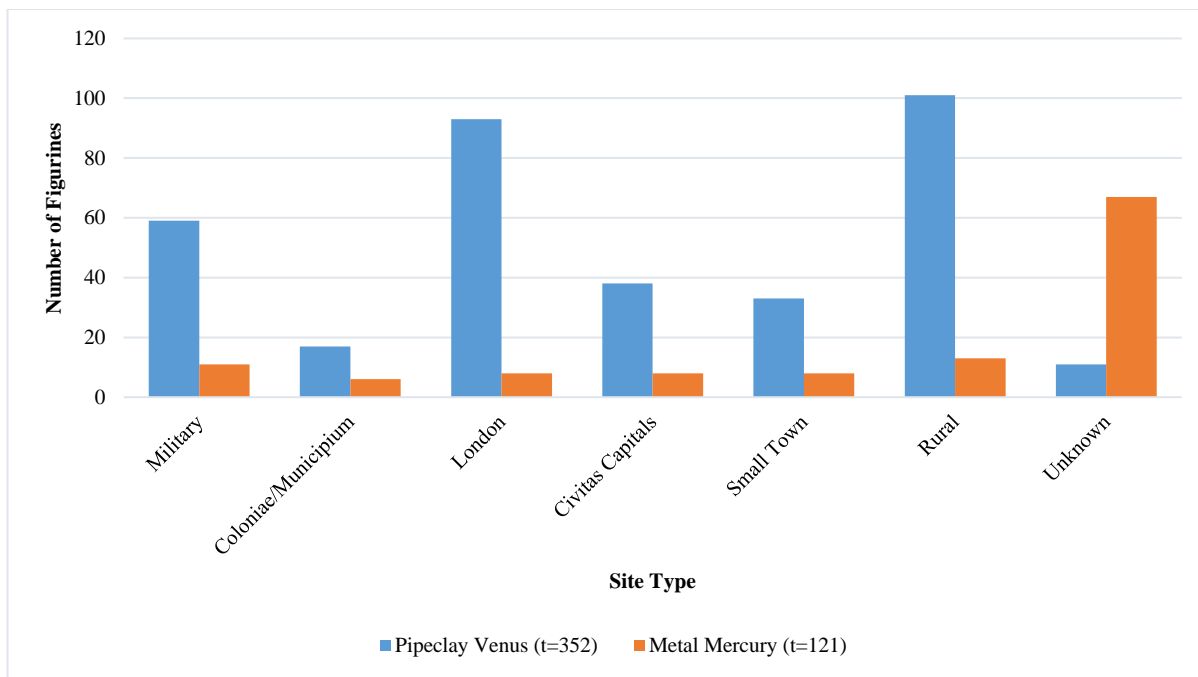


Fig. 8. 7. The spatial distribution of metal Mercury (after Durham 2012: 4.1.1. fig. 15), and pipeclay Venus (inset), figurines in Britain.



*Fig. 8. 8. The social distribution of pipeclay Venus and metal Mercury figurines in Britain.*

The available data also allow us to directly compare the social distributions of other depictions in both materials. For this study I have focussed on types that have a substantial amount of data to compare. As a result, the depictions compared in the first part of this section are typically the ones that are common in pipeclay but are not necessarily the most common in metal (i.e. Venus, Dea Nutrix/Mother-Goddesses, Minerva, cockerels, dogs and horses). The second part then more directly compares the spatial and social distributions of rare pipeclay and metal types with the aim of highlighting any similarities and differences in where and how they were used, and what this might mean about the status of the people that used them.

Other deity figurines reflect different patterns of use between their pipeclay and metal forms. Pipeclay Dea Nutrix figurines, for example, are a common pipeclay type from Gaul that are found on all types of site across Britain but especially in the south-east. Metal depictions of similarly seated Mother-Goddess figurines are much rarer in Britain and are also found mostly in the south-east but on a smaller scale and on a slightly different range of site types

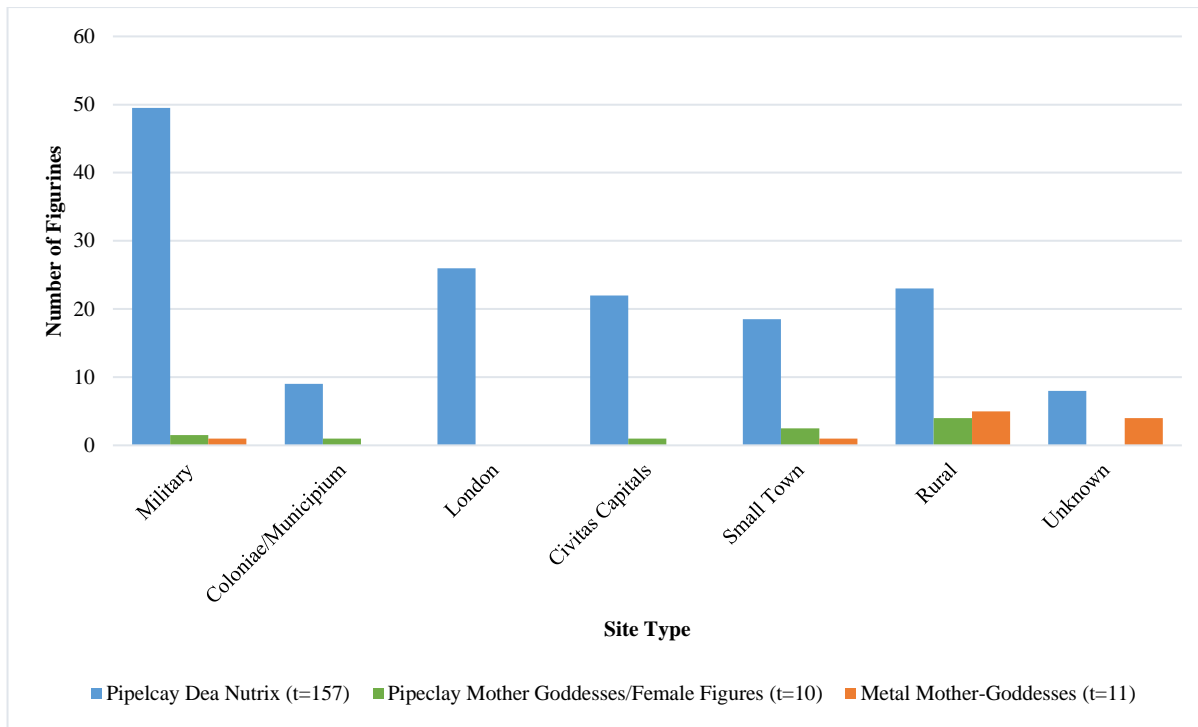


Fig. 8. 9. Social distribution of pipeclay and metal Mother-Goddess/Female figurines.

that includes military, small town, villa and rural populations (Fig. 8.9). They were also used slightly differently, with contextual information showing that some metal Mother-Goddesses from rural areas were used for ritual purposes at temples, such as at Henley Wood, Congresbury (Durham 2012, no. 5), and Woodeaton, Oxfordshire (*ibid*, no. 151), while ceramic Dea Nutrix figurines were not.

It is also interesting that several metal Mother-Goddess figurines are found on the same site types as rare pipeclay Mother-Goddess/Female Figure figurines from the Rhine-Moselle region. Although the two types do not appear to have been used by the same social groups (very few are from the same sites, and none are from the same deposits), this does further support the idea that rare ceramic types from the Rhine-Moselle region were more likely brought to Britain with foreigners who were probably higher in terms of social status than the people who used the mass-produced and imported depictions of Dea Nutrix that were exclusively produced in Gaul.

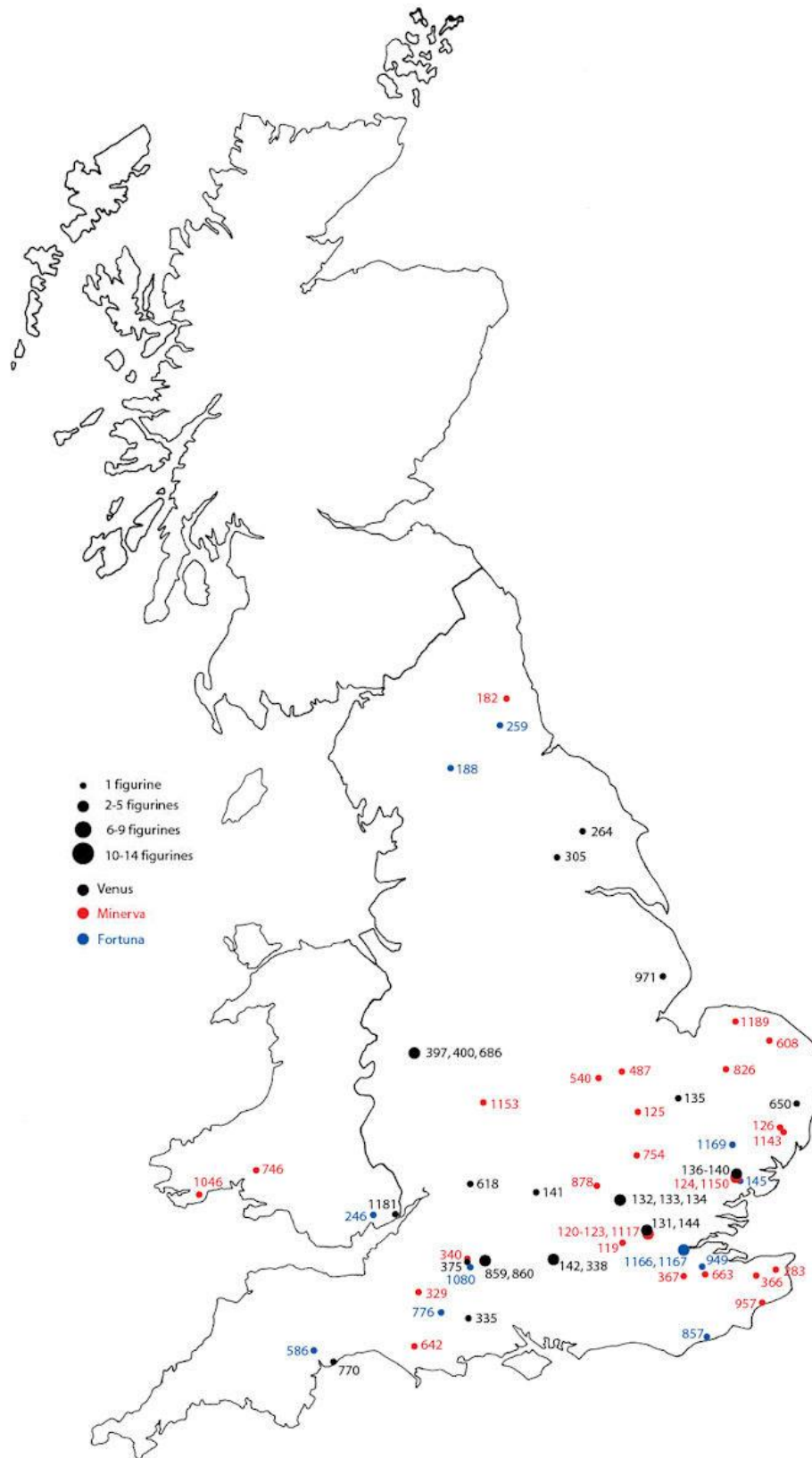
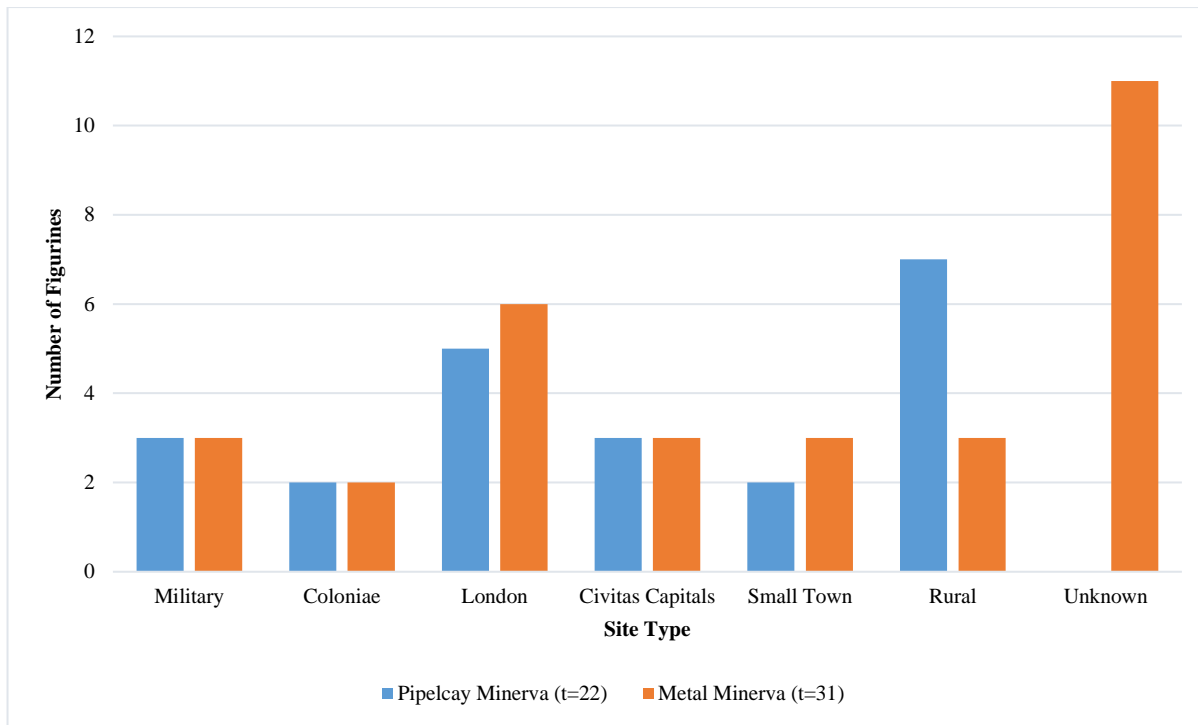


Fig. 8. 10. Spatial distribution of metal Venus, Minerva and Fortuna figurines in Britain (after Durham 2012: 4.4.2, fig. 28).

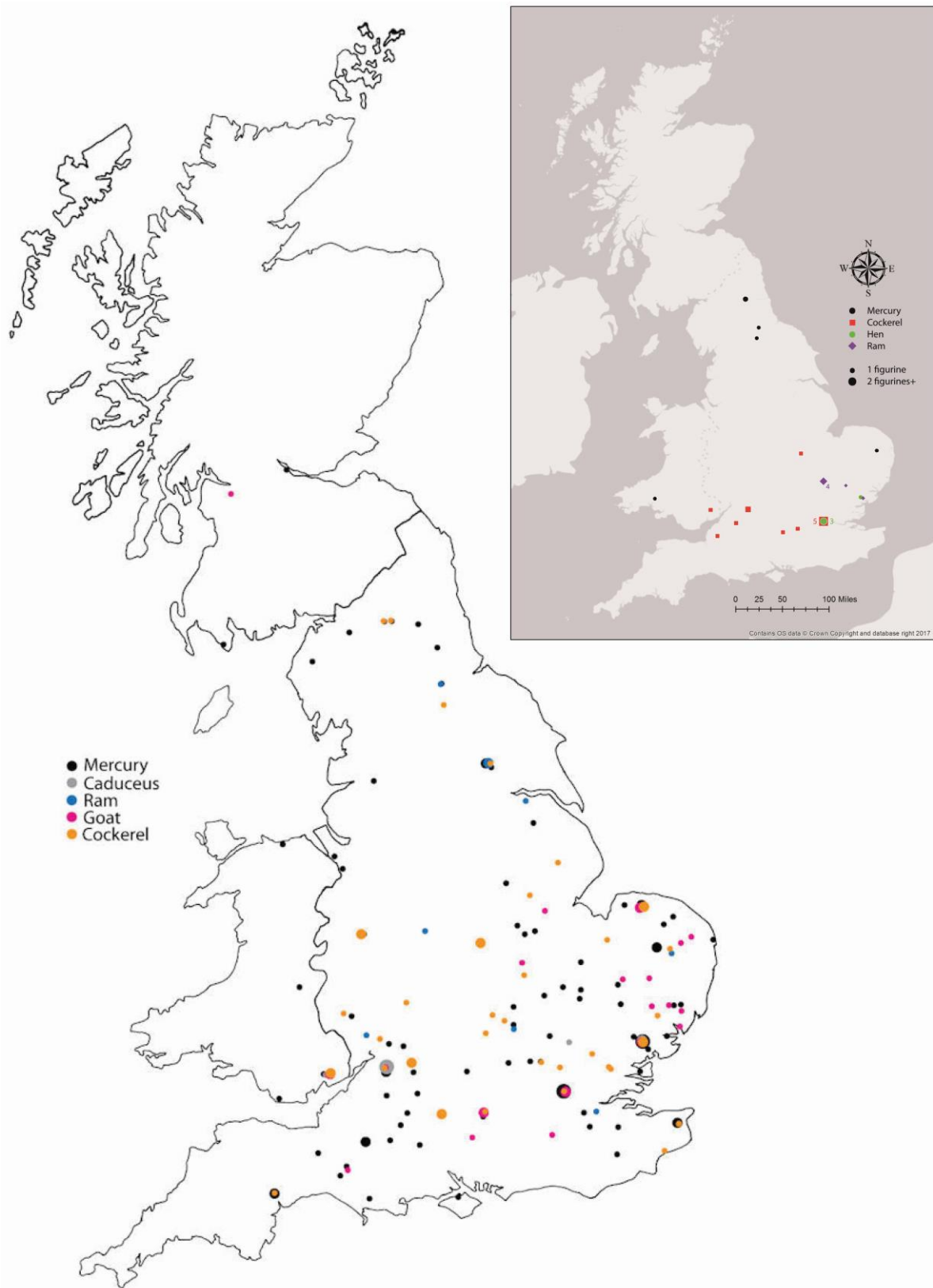




*Fig. 8. 11. The social distribution of pipeclay and metal Minerva figurines in Britain.*

Pipeclay and metal figurines of Minerva not only occur in more similar quantities than Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines and in roughly the same area of southern Britain, but also have quite an even distribution across different types of site (Figs. 8.10-11). The only significant difference is the higher number of pipeclay figurines from rural locations, where the pipeclay finds are mainly from settlements and the metal specimens a small range of villas and temple sites; a difference that may reflect a slight preference for metal figurines for certain practices by some people in the countryside. The higher percentage of unknown figurines in metal are because many are collections of antiquarian finds.

In terms of animals, pipeclay and metal cockerels, dogs and horses have been found in many of the same areas of the country on the same, as well as on different sites (Figs. 8.12-17). Cockerels and dogs are more popular in metal and on most sites except London. They are again not usually found together in the same deposits. The distributions of metal and pipeclay cockerels and dogs are, however, quite similar and might reflect similar regional beliefs.



*Fig. 8. 12. The spatial distribution of metal cockerels, (after Durham 2012: 4.4.1, fig. 16), and pipeclay cockerels and associated figurines (inset), in Britain.*

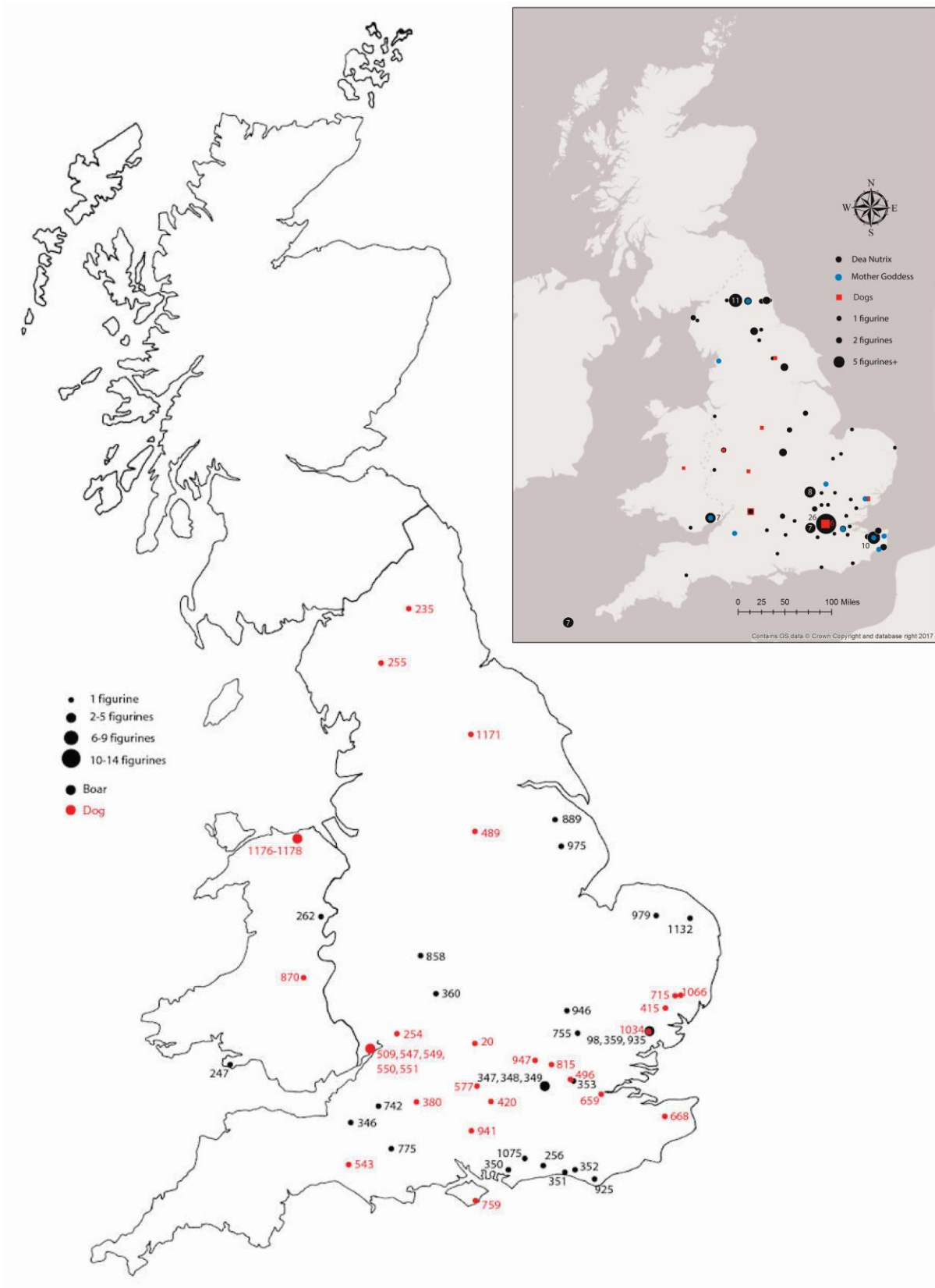


Fig. 8. 13. The spatial distribution of metal dogs (after Durham 2012: 4.4.3, fig. 29), and pipeclay dogs and associated types (inset), in Britain.

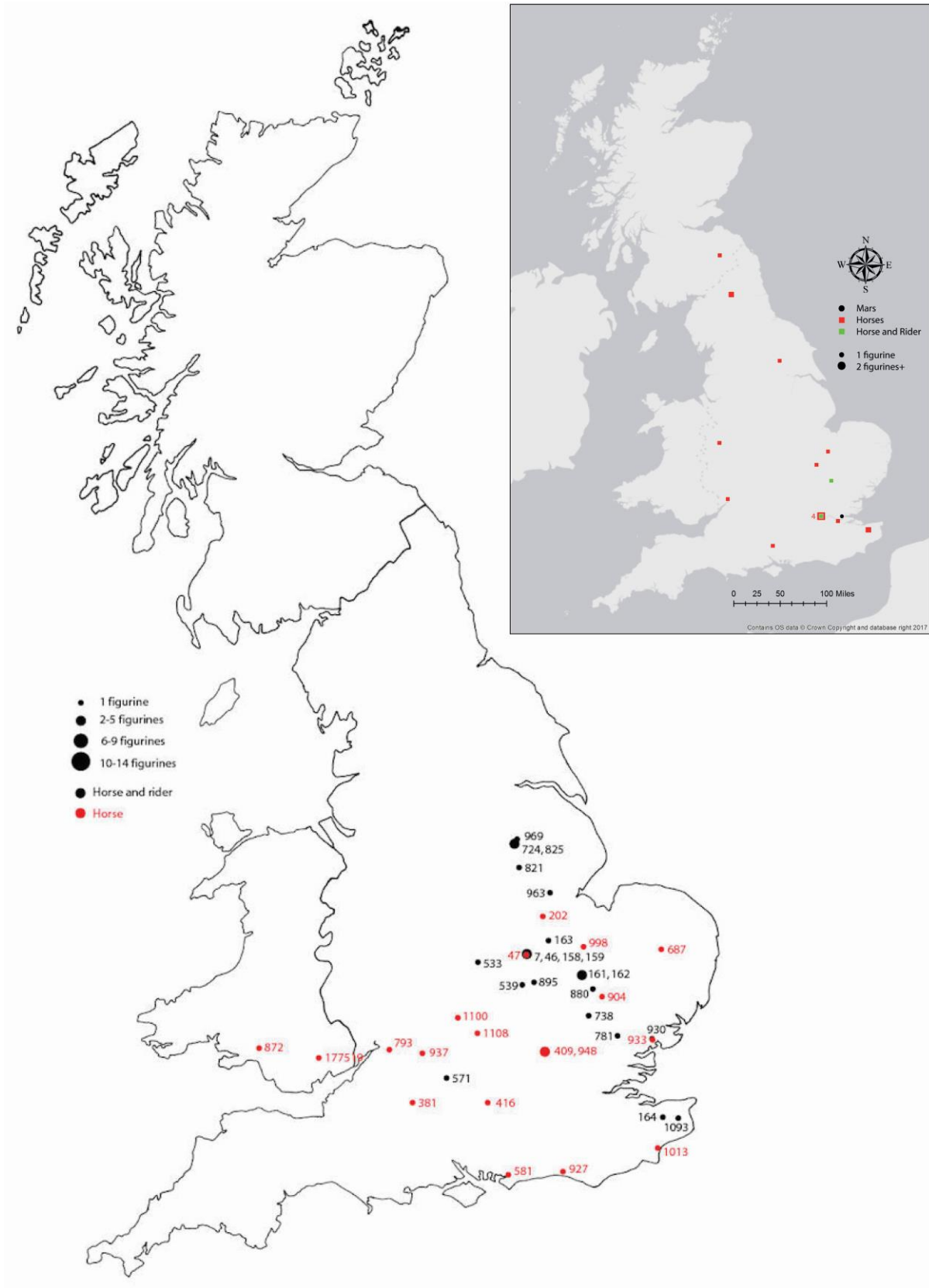


Fig. 8. 14. The spatial distribution of metal horses (after Durham 2012: 4.4.1, fig. 23), and pipeclay horses and associated types, in Britain.

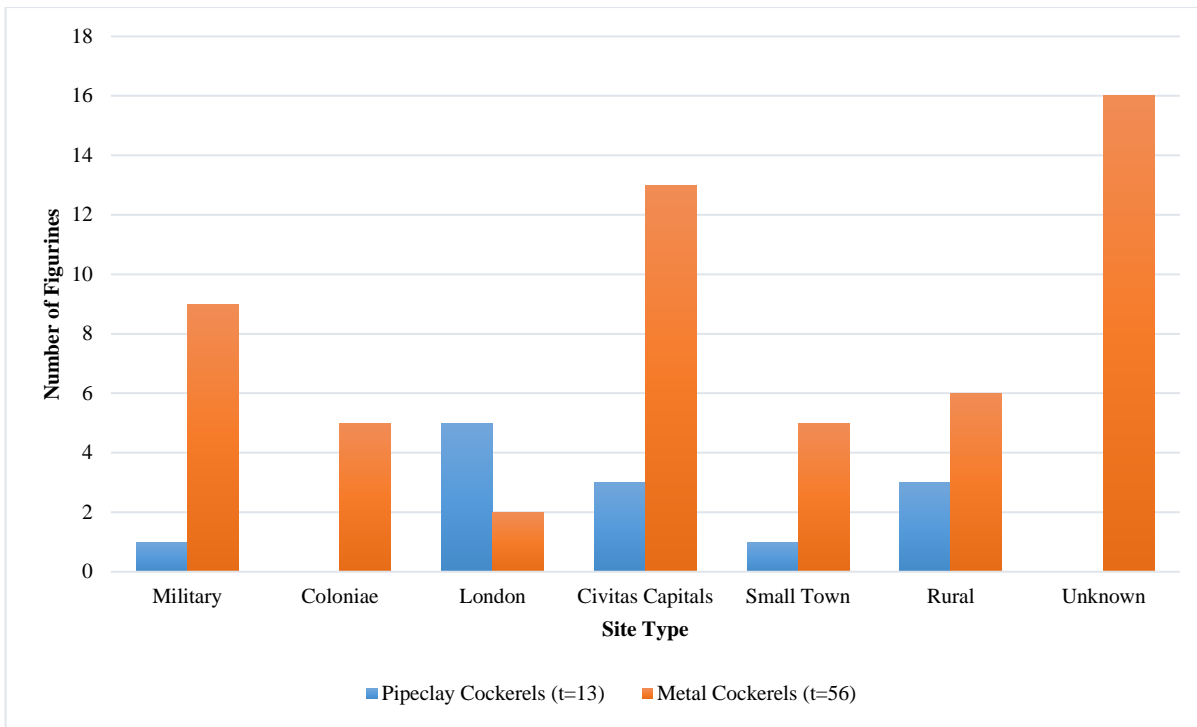


Fig. 8. 15. The social distribution of pipeclay and metal cockerels.

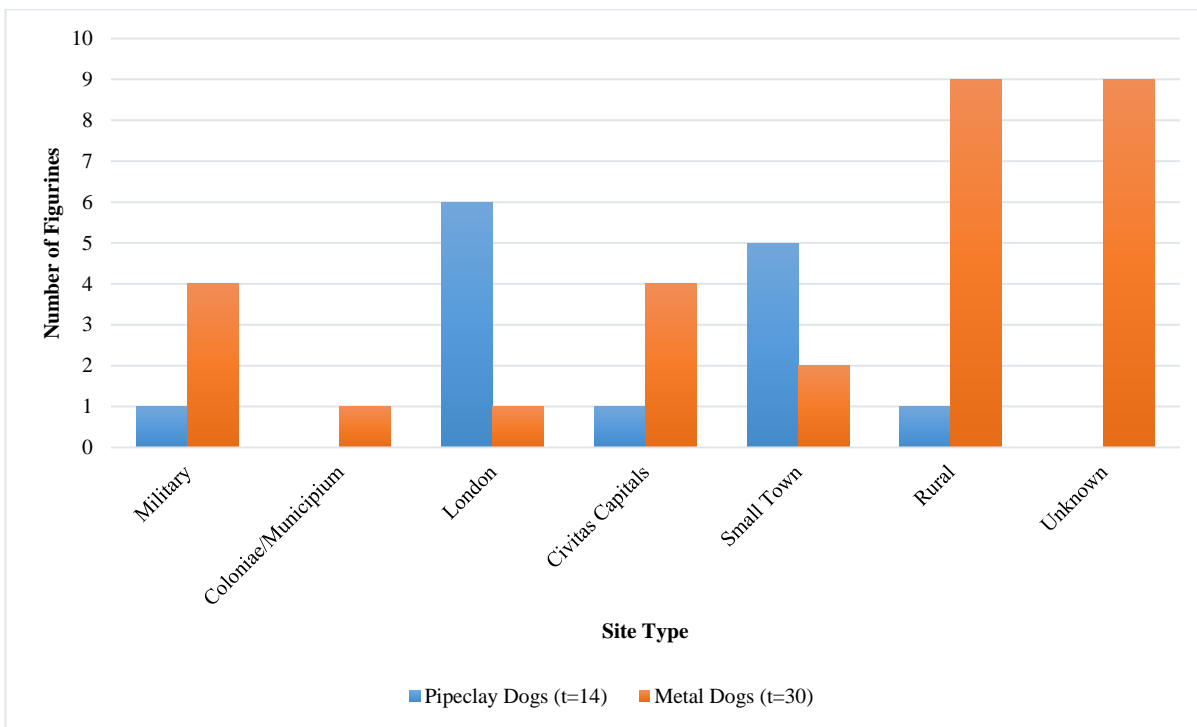


Fig. 8. 16. The social distribution of pipeclay and metal dogs.

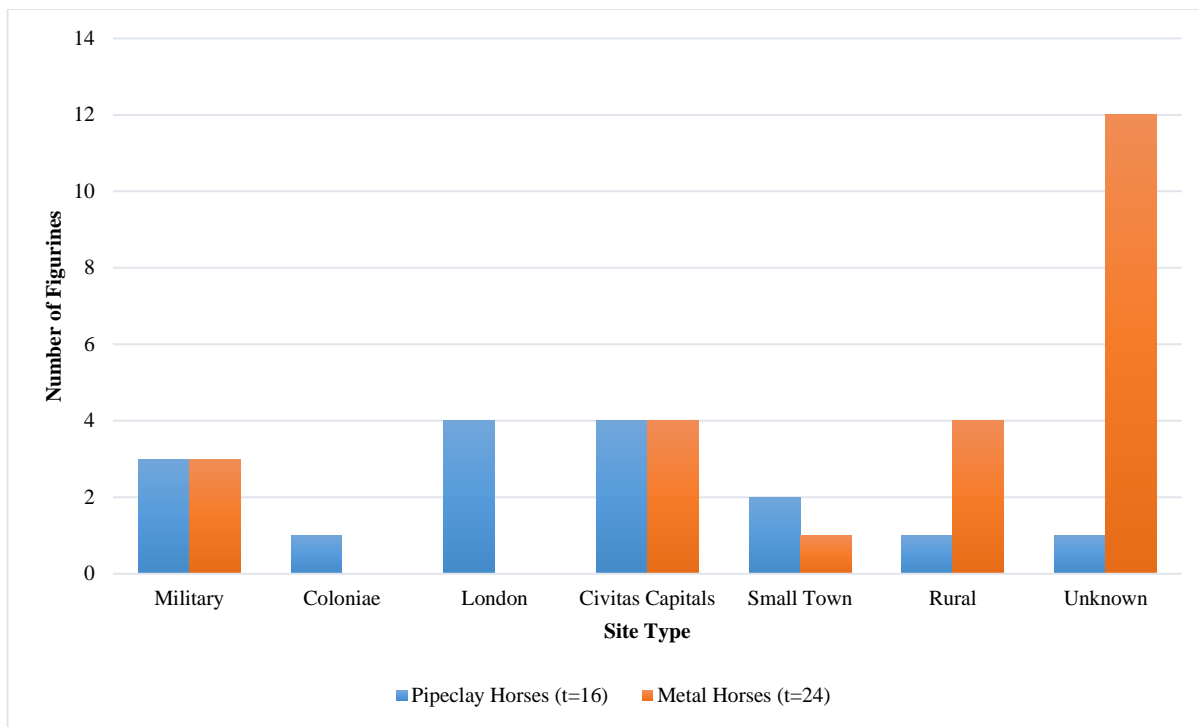


Fig. 8. 17. The social distribution of pipeclay and metal horses.

Pipeclay horses, meanwhile, occur less frequently but are more widely distributed than metal ones that exclusively come from the south-east, suggesting the pipeclay ones may belong to a smaller but more widely travelled group.

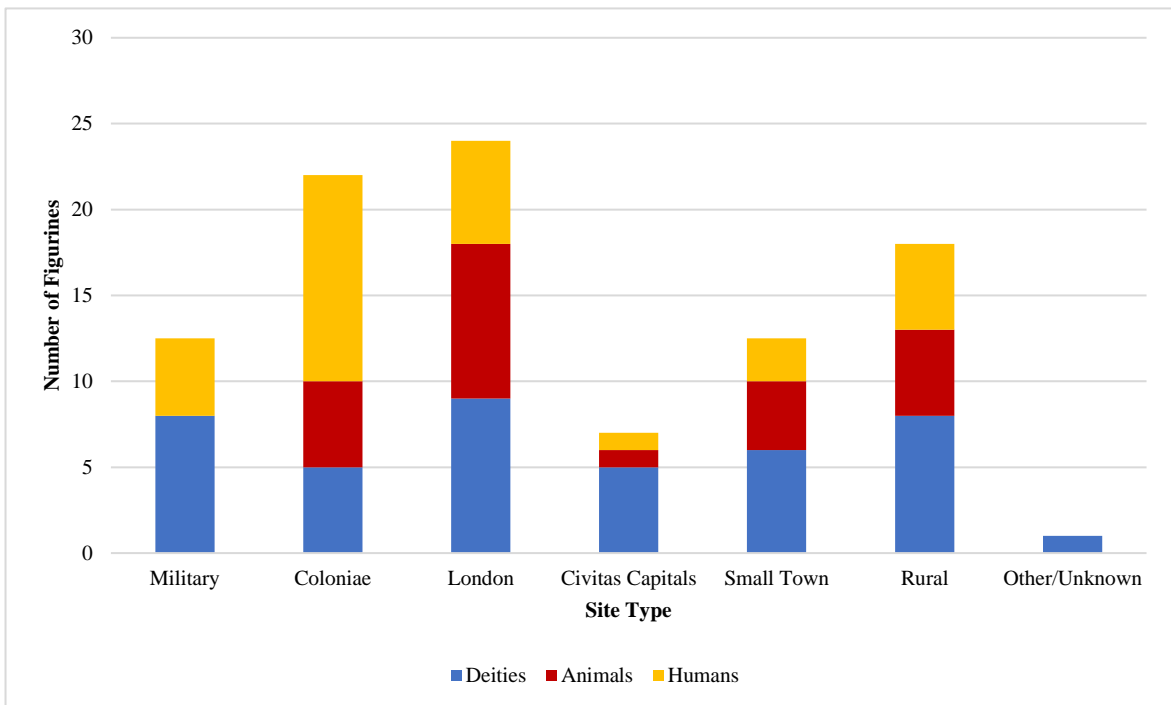
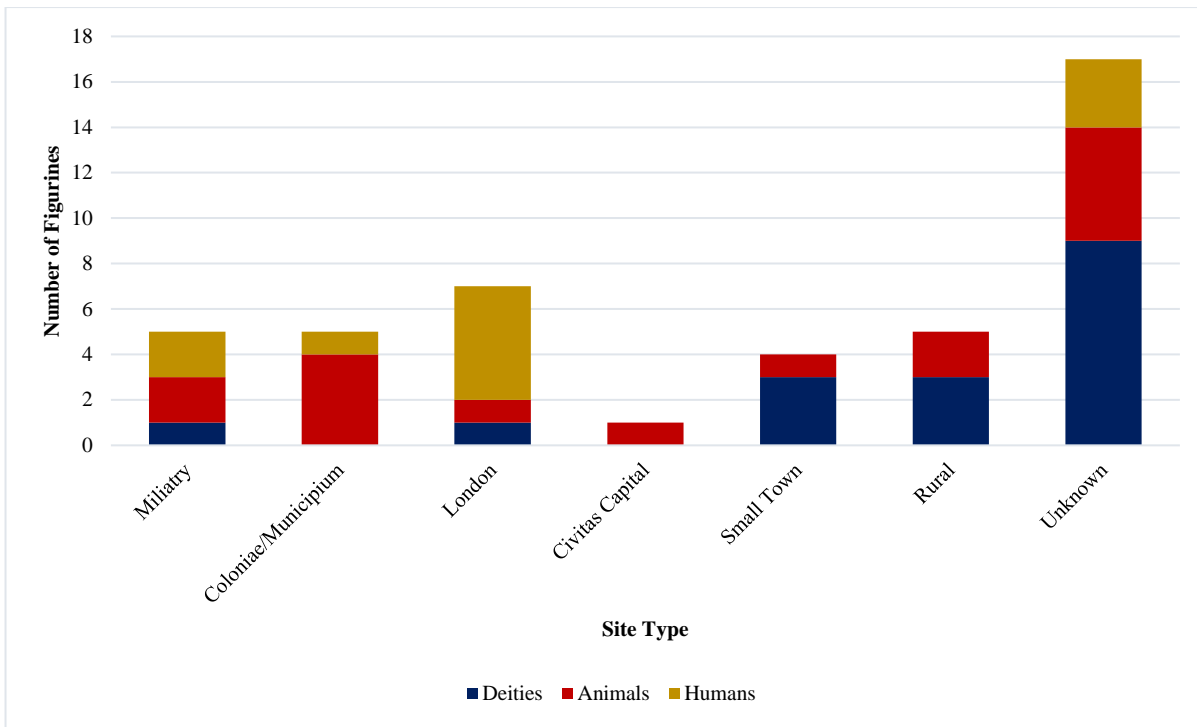
All in all, the higher number of metal than pipeclay cockerels and dogs on sites other than London may well reflect the higher status of the people that used them overall. Horses are slightly different as none has been found on *Coloniae* sites and the number in pipeclay and metal from *Civitas Capitals* are equal but these numbers are probably too small to be meaningful. The most interesting point of difference between the pipeclay and metal finds is revealed when taking a closer look at the contexts in which they are found. This shows that while most pipeclay figurines from rural areas are from settlements with just a handful from one or two burials, a greater proportion of metal animals are from deposits at temples. This pattern does not suggest that all people in the countryside were more likely to have used metal

instead of pipeclay figurines for such a purpose, but that a select group of wealthier people able to buy metal forms could afford to deposit them occasionally as ritual objects while the less wealthy owners of pipeclay animals generally did not.

Finally, if we assume that rare pipeclay figurines were not imported into Britain through trade but arrived as the personal possessions of foreigners who travelled to the province from Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region, then comparing the distribution of these to metal figurines may tell us something more about the status of the people that owned them. In Appendix 8 I have shown that rare Venus types come mainly from the same large urban centres that have also provided rarer metal Venus figurines (Fig. A.8.10) but that the greater number of metal Venuses from *Civitas Capitals* and pipeclay Venuses from rural sites suggests that the metal types are more closely linked with higher status people overall. But what about the other rare pipeclay types in Britain and their distributional relationship to metal figurines?

Figure 8.18 showing the social distribution of rare metal and pipeclay types in Britain not only highlights that although the number of rare pipeclay figurines (97) is higher than rare metal ones (44), they have a broadly similar pattern of distribution throughout the province. Overall the higher quantities of rare pipeclay figurines probably reflects their lower value but also a greater cultural diversity overall. In London, for example, there are more rare pipeclay figurines than metal figurines, including many of the rare Gaulish types and nearly all of the rare figurine types from the Rhine-Moselle region. This may well indicate that London was the provincial trading hub for pipeclay figurines in Britain and a settlement that contained a more culturally diverse mix of people who used them than a smaller group who used rare metal types.

As the several rare metal figurines from unknown site types could alter this picture and few in either material have enough contextual information to highlight if they were used in different ways, it is useful to see if any others come from the same sites (Fig. 8.19). The map



*Fig. 8. 18. Social distribution of rare metal (above; t=44) and pipeclay (below; t=97) figurines.*



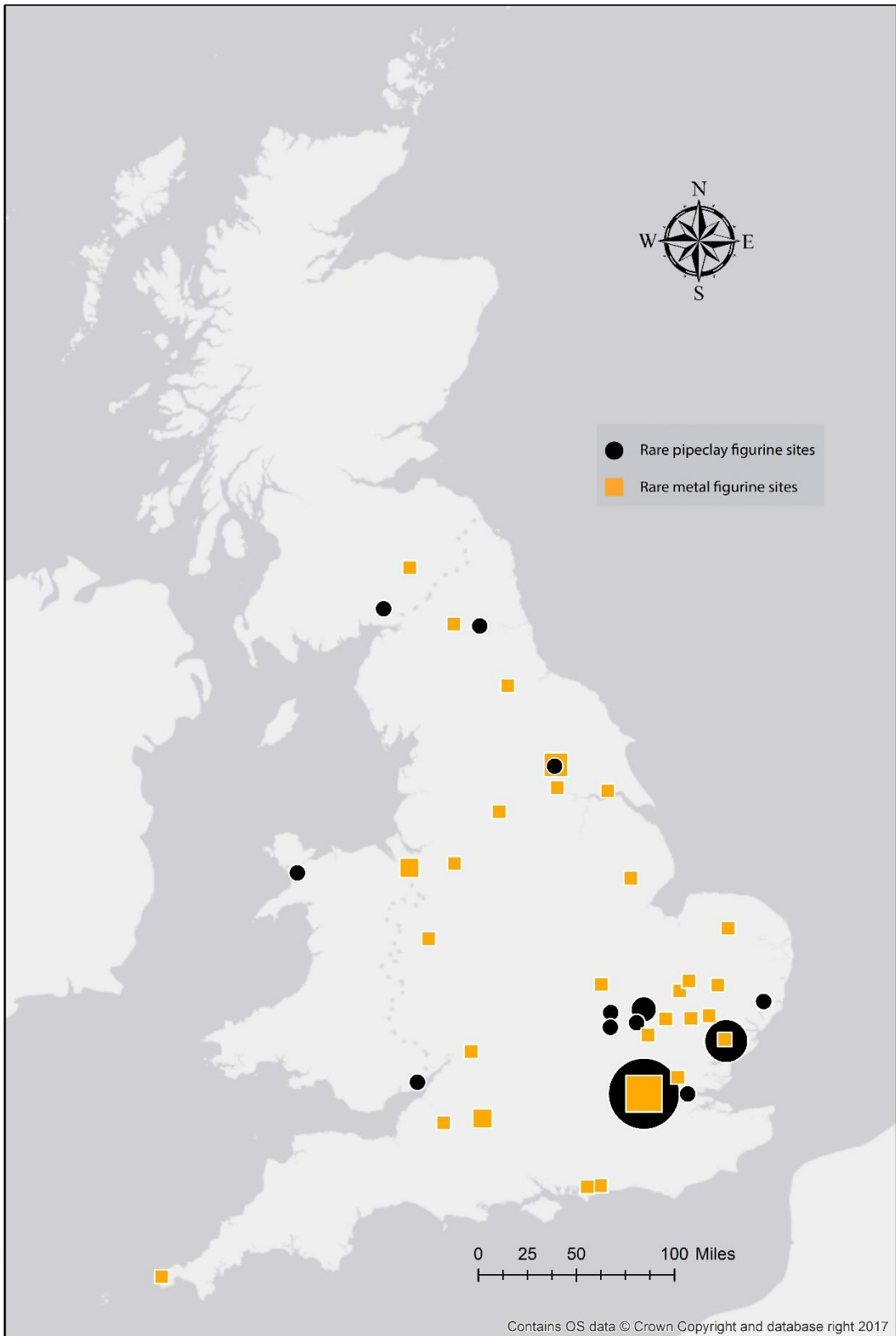


Fig. 8. 19. The spatial distributions of rare metal and pipeclay types in Britain.

shows that although a few rare metal and pipeclay types come from the same sites, such as London, most of the rare metal figurines, all of which depict particularly rare and exotic representations, none of which is represented in pipeclay, are in fact mainly found on different sites than the rarest pipeclay types across the province. In other words, rare pipeclay figurines mainly occur where there are metal figurines, though not always the rarest ones, but the rarest metal figurines come from sites without rare pipeclay types. This pattern suggests that these figurine owners were drawn from slightly different groups of people who were of different levels of higher social status, with rare pipeclay figurines probably lower status objects than the rarest metal figurines, but perhaps more in line with the more common metal figurine types.

At the same time, this distribution also tells us something about the identities of the different people that used rare metal and pipeclay types and where they lived. If we assume that the more diverse collection of exotic rare metal types are more closely associated with an elite group of people who identified with non-Gaulish and Rhine-Moselle region-based beliefs we can see that most of these people did not live in London where cultural links to Gaul and eastern ideologies were perhaps stronger. In contrast, most of the rare pipeclay figurines are from this large metropolitan city. Overall then, pipeclay objects – especially the rarest pipeclay figurine types - were akin to lamps and other imported objects in terms of indicating relatively high-status people but were never truly widespread in Roman Britain.

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, although pipeclay objects, such as figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks, are made of a less valuable material than the figurines made of metal, comparing their distributions reveals a more nuanced picture about how the two were used, as well as the status of the different groups of people that used them. The first part of this chapter considered

distributional differences between these materials. This showed that metal and pipeclay objects are both found across Britain with similar concentrations in the south-east but each have slightly different social distributions. Metal figurines have closer links with the military and people in *Coloniae* while the wider distribution of pipeclay objects on *Civitas Capitals* perhaps indicates that metal figurines were higher status objects, although both were probably used for the same domestic religious practices given their recovery from similar types of occupation deposits. This was also the case in London, where the higher proportions of metal and pipeclay objects generally relates to the size and diversity of the ancient population, but the more limited number of metal objects suggests their smaller-scale importation through trade or more often as personal possessions, and the fact that some metal figurines were made in Britain whereas pipeclay objects were imported into the city. Meanwhile, although the higher level of metal than pipeclay objects in small towns and rural areas is at first surprising, an examination of their specific contexts reveals that pipeclay finds are more typically associated with lower status rural settlements and metal figurines higher status villas. However, some pipeclay objects were used by some individuals for high-status child burials in London and the countryside who were probably foreigners from Gaul.

After highlighting that pipeclay figurines are probably provincial versions of classical depictions in metal associated with provincial Gaulish and occasionally Rhine-Moselle beliefs in Britain, the second part of this chapter differentiated further between the different social groups that might have used figurine types of each material. For example, comparing pipeclay Venus figurines with metal Mercury figurines not only highlighted the widespread religious appeal of each deity, particularly in the south, but also the more limited distribution of common metal gods than common pipeclay goddesses: a trend that is also reflected by comparing other metal and pipeclay deities such as Mother-Goddesses/Female Figures and Minerva. Conversely, although metal and pipeclay cockerels, dogs and horses are found in the same parts

of the country and reflect similar religious beliefs, these pipeclay animals, were used by a smaller, less wealthy group of people who were probably part of the same group that used more common pipeclay types.

## Chapter 9. The Ritual Use of Pipeclay Objects

Pipeclay objects, including figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels, and to some extent masks, have long been thought to have had symbolic, religious meaning in Roman Britain. For example, although the presence of pipeclay figurines in graves has meant that they have often been interpreted as children's toys, their main purpose as ritual objects should not be overlooked - something that is indicated by both their general iconography (deities, associated animals and human forms) as well as the contextual information regarding how they were used in Britain and Continental provinces. Despite there being little evidence about their domestic role in Britain, what we can see, however, is that the ritual use of such objects did vary greatly in temples and funerary contexts.

Venerating gods was an important part of religious life and practice during the Roman period (e.g. Alcock 1980; Henig 1984). Temples were, of course, the main arena for organised public worship but many people also did so privately, often using household shrines (*lararia*) containing small representations of gods and offerings (e.g. Boon 1983; Brain 2016). Shrines varied in size, coming in the form of elaborate clay, plaster and stone structures as well as small niches cut into the walls of rooms and cellars (Perring 1989). Various gods (*lares*) were revered in Roman Britain but, as Alcock (1986: 129) points out, any specific differences in and between the deities worshipped may have been less important here than in Rome.

Within the household perhaps the most important gods were the *Lar Familiaris* - who guarded the entire household and had links with the ancestors - and the concept of *Genius* - the personal spirit of each man that protected the head of the family (Boon 1983: 46-7; Henig 1984: 168-70; Alcock 1986: 113-6). The worship of *lares* also extended beyond the household setting, as evidenced by the shrines that are sometimes found in public areas of a town or city. In Rome,

for example, each district had its own local *gods* (*lares compitales*) that were venerated at shrines near the cross-roads where two districts met (Alcock 1986: 115). Such shrines are rare in Britain, but there is evidence that similar *lares* were revered in slightly different ways in some regions. The *Genius Loci*, for instance - a *lars* linked with Iron Age ideas regarding nature and the 'spirit of place' - is venerated in a number of inscriptions, reliefs and sculptures along the northern frontier of Britain, possibly by military personnel and foreigners who sought its protection (*ibid*: 116-29).

Very few *lararia* have actually been found in Britain - they are, in fact, rarely found in the provinces outside of Italy (Kaufmann-Heinimann 2002: 110; Fig. 9.1) - but some examples are known from Caerwent, Dorchester, Silchester and Verulamium (Boon 1983: 36-40). Fewer still have been found with their contents intact and so far, none of the *lararia* in Britain have contained pipeclay figurines or other objects, although there are some small shrines made of pipeclay from the province (see Appendix 1). However, evidence for the use of figurines, pipeclay or otherwise, in *lararia* can be found across Europe. For example, a *lararium* in the atrium of the 'Casa delle Parete Rosse', Pompeii contained six bronze figurines, two *lares* and a bronze lamp (*ibid*: 45), while house-like shrines, like those from the Rhine-Moselle region, have niches cut into the front where a figurine, or figurines, would have stood (*ibid*: 40). Perhaps the best example of this is from Rezé, near Nantes, France where an improvised *aedicula* made of *tegulae* decorated with lightly-marbled red stucco was found with five figurines inside: four in pipeclay (two deities, the bust of a woman and a dog) and a boar in a different material (Fig. 9.2). It is not clear what these figurines represent (perhaps they are ancestors), but they, along with the shrine, may have been part of a larger domestic arrangement before being carefully deposited in a deep pit (*ibid*: 40-5. pl. VII).

One of the other ways that objects were used for ritual purposes in Britain as well as across the western provinces was as gifts that were dedicated to the gods as votive offerings.

As Derks (1998: 218-231) explains, a *votum* in this context was regarded as a temporary contract between a person and a deity in a special reciprocal arrangement that was usually initiated and completed by a series of ritual acts by the individual making it (see also Derks 2014: 59-60). Initiating a *votum* would usually begin with the giving of a solemn vow (*nuncupatio*), either verbally or in writing, stating the nature of the request to a god or goddess and the offerings that would be made if they granted it; this would also usually include setting a time-period after which the vow(s)'s success would be judged. People need not have physically attended a sacred site or temple to make such vows; this could be a quick and entirely private practice made as when the need was felt – something that probably generally accounts for the overall lack of evidence associated with this first phase from the Roman world (inscriptions and graffiti at temples and shrines offer some evidence of this but are rare, though Derks (1998: 226) does argue that other perishable material, such as wooden wax tablets, might have been used to make a *nuncupatio* as well).

If the vow was judged by the person who made it to be fulfilled by the relevant deity, the offerings promised would be made (a *solutio*) on the terms of the *votum*, and this was often a much more public affair that often involved giving a physical offering of thanks to the gods at a temple or sanctuary in the form of inscriptions, objects or both. Refusal of the *solutio* could result if it was felt that the gods did not live up to their obligations but this could have had serious implications upon the fulfilment of any future requests, and emphasised the contractual nature of the arrangement between the mortals and the divine. Could it then be that some pipeclay objects such as figurines were physical representations of gods and goddesses that people made vows to in their homes or more occasionally gave as gifts during the *solutio* phase of a vow at shrines and temples in thanks to the divine providers for granting their requests, possibly along with other objects and perishables (see also Raja & Rüpke 2015 as well as



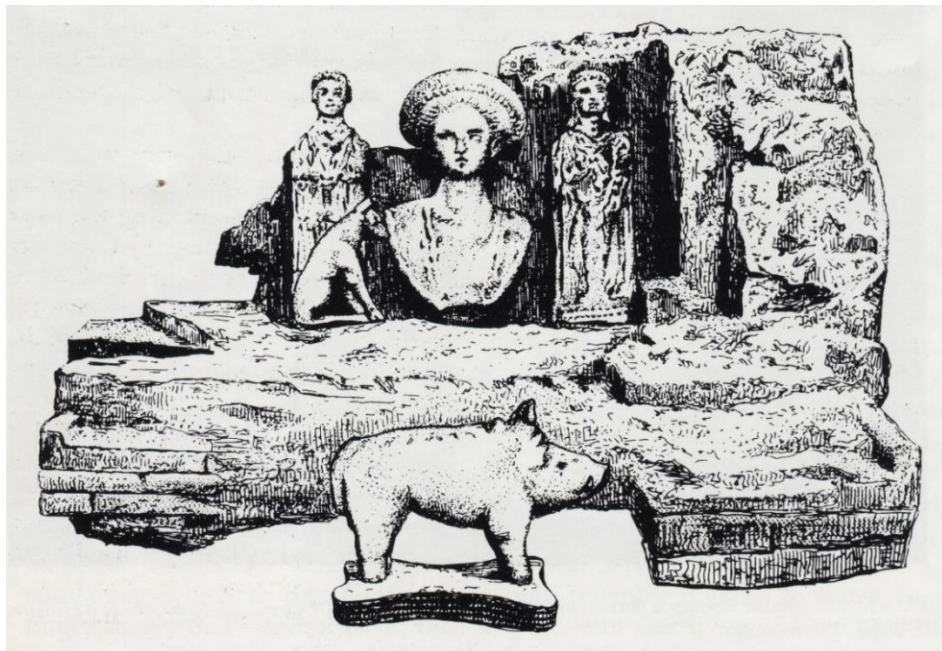
*Fig. 9. 1. Different shrine designs. Left - Shrine in the Porta di Stabia, Pompeii; Right - lararium from House of the Golden Cupids, Room F, Pompeii, VI.16.7. © Pompeii in Pictures.*

Rüpke 2016 for several discussions about the nature and character of such religious practices, as well as others, in Rome and its many provinces throughout the Roman period)?

Pipeclay figurines, busts and animal vessels, like their metal counterparts, were small portable objects that were easily transportable by their owners and this is probably one of the main reasons why they are not only found in more remote shrines and temples in Britain, but also frequently found in rubbish deposits. It is thus worth remembering that where an object was finally deposited does not necessarily relate to its original use or where it was made (Durham 2014: 213) and that the meaning of an object's iconography, as well as its context in relation to how it was used, may have changed through time and according to location and its owner (*ibid*; Aldhouse-Green 2004: 16-7). Thus, for instance, it is perfectly possible that a pipeclay figurine could have been used in the home before either being thrown away or taken to a temple and given in thanks to the gods. Nevertheless, by closely analysing all of the contextual data that is available we can get an important insight into some of the practices that pipeclay objects were used for (see Chapter 7) and, in this chapter, how they were ritually used.



That pipeclay figurines, busts and animal vessels were used during funerary rites has been acknowledged since the mid-nineteenth century (e.g. Neville 1848: 40-2, 231; Roach-Smith 1868: 56-8; Dowker 1887: 34-7). They are still considered as important religious objects in many interesting Romano-British burials (e.g. May 1930: 251-2; Alcock 1980: 50-3; Barber *et al.* 1990; Taylor 1993, 1997; Eckardt 1999; Burleigh *et al.* 2006), about which a number of suggestions about their meaning in such contexts have been put forward, from ideas about offerings that protected the dead in the afterlife and encouraged fertility and healthy offspring, to representations of the dead or their family and ancestors (e.g. Green 1986: 94-5; Crummy



*Fig. 9. 2. Pipeclay figurines in a shrine from Rezé, near Nantes, France, after Boon 1983: 42, pl.VII.*

2010: 65, 69; Fittock 2015: 123). At the same time, pipeclay objects, such as figurines in particular, were also being used as votive offerings at sanctuaries and temples. This was probably as fertility symbols but also possibly as part of ritual practices that were linked with healing and medical conditions (e.g. Evans 2000: 299-302; Ferris 2012: 61-4, 121; Fittock

2015: 128). One of the primary objectives of this chapter therefore is to explore these ideas further by examining all of the pipeclay related temple and burial evidence from Roman Britain.

The main aim of this chapter is to examine if there are any explicit associations between particular pipeclay forms and types and specific ritual contexts in Roman Britain and whether there are any differences between the forms and types used in ritual and non-ritual contexts (e.g. Stewart 2000; Eckardt 2002a: 117-36 for lamps). To do this I have taken a rather narrow definition of ritual use and will only consider the pipeclay objects from clearly ritual contexts, such as hoards, temples and burials, taking each of these in turn (the data on which the following discussion is based are listed in Appendix 6. I start by identifying the different forms, types and depictions of pipeclay objects found on these different types of site and assess whether their ritual use in hoards, sanctuaries and burials differed while also identifying any regional and chronological patterns. Comparisons with equivalent continental material will also be made where possible. Following a general discussion of the burial evidence, I finish this chapter by carrying out a detailed evaluation of grave structures and associated grave goods from pipeclay burials in order to assess the identities (age, gender, social status) of the people that were buried with these objects in Roman Britain.

## **Hoards**

Hoards are an interesting though a much-debated category of deposit (Aitchison 1988; Bland 2015). As a concept, hoarding applies to a wide range of material, such as food, glass, ceramics, stone, wood and, of course, precious metals in the form of coins and other objects - these arguably being the most contentious in terms of what classifies as 'treasure' (Johns 1994, 1996: 2; Millett 1994). Safekeeping (e.g. savings) and storage were likely key motivations behind many deposits - perhaps, for example, as a response to the end of Roman rule in Britain: Hobbs

(2006: 120-34), however, has questioned whether all precious metal hoards are necessarily the result of this process. Other hoards may represent accidental losses and abandoned belongings (Grierson 1975: 134-59). 'A significant number of hoards from the Roman period may have been buried for votive or ritual reasons' as well (Bland 2015: 17), by individuals and organised religious groups, like priests, at temples, sanctuaries and waterlogged sites (Johns 1996: 9-13).

Strictly speaking there are no pipeclay objects from hoard contexts in Britain. Only eight are from deposits that might be described as votive 'hoards'. The first three are from Piercebridge, Darlington, County Durham where figurines of Mercury (no. 851), Dea Nutrix (no. 852) and an un-identified quadruped (no. 949), probably a horse, have been found: the Dea Nutrix and Mercury figurines were found inside a ceramic amphora. The site - a small 5x5m<sup>2</sup> section of the River Tees in line with a Roman bridge near to a small settlement - has also provided in excess of 4,000 other Roman objects, including samian and grey pottery wares, military weapons and fittings, coins, personal items of adornment, (e.g. brooches, finger-rings, intaglios and gold jewellery), eating and drinking equipment, cosmetic and medical instruments, and a small group of other religious objects that includes as a miniature spear, curse tablets and pewter vessels (Cool & Mason 2008; Walton 2016; also see The Roman Finds Group 2014). It is possible that these objects were just disposed of as rubbish in the river but the large quantities of high value, mutilated and religious objects suggests a likely ritual purpose. However, whether all of these objects, which span the entire Roman period, including the three pipeclay figurines, constitute a votive deposit and were deposited at once or gradually over time individually or as smaller hoards has yet to be determined. The other five objects are from Ashwell, Hertfordshire, where figurines of Apollo (no. 728) and a possible Comic Figure (no. 729), in addition to three fragments (no. 727, 730, 732) were found inside an enclosure near to a possible temple site. Not all of these were found in the same deposit, but as a group they may have been part of a larger hoarded collection of objects here (see below).

The only other pipeclay objects that might be part of a hoard are the collection of Venus and Dea Nutrix fragments amongst a range of other objects from the site of a building at Nor-nour in the Isles of Scilly that Butcher (2000) argues may be such a deposit, and the group from Ruxox Farm, Flitwick, Bedfordshire where a large collection of fragments from depictions of Venus (78, 351-95, 397-408, 410-4, 416-20), Dea Nutrix (52, 421-7), Minerva (229, 428-32) and Bacchus (236) representing at least 72 individual figurines were found scattered in plough-soil in a field near the River Flit with a bronze wheel and four intaglios (Fadden 2010; James 2009). All of these items may well have been deposited as votive offerings by individuals in a river or stream that once ran through this area but the collection may alternatively represent a hoard of non-recovered votive objects possibly related to a temple that possibly occupied the site (Simco 1984: 56; Dawson 2004: 33; James 2009; Fadden 2010).

The lack of pipeclay objects from hoards in Britain is not necessarily surprising given the situation on the Continent where they are also absent from such contexts in Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. On the other hand, it is interesting that five metal figurine hoards are known from Britain (Durham 2012: Section 4.3, figure 14). All of these are located in the south of the province. The largest, from Southbroom near Devizes, Wiltshire, contained 17 metal figurines that included several classical depictions of Venus, Mars and Bacchus, as well as a number of 'provincial' representations of Mercury, Mars and Minerva (Durham 2014). The same site at Ashwell, Hertfordshire, mentioned above also provided a hoard in a deposit near to the pipeclay objects that included a metal figurine, two arm fragments, gold and silver jewellery and gold plaques, possibly dedicated to Senuna Minerva. Three smaller hoards with metal figurines are also known from Barkway, Hertfordshire, Felmingham Hall, Norfolk and Willingham Fen, Cambridgeshire (Durham 2012: Section 4.3).

Consequently, it is clear that pipeclay objects were not deposited in obvious hoards in Roman Britain but that there was some limited deposition of metal figurines in this way instead. These hoards thus probably reflect the greater value of metal figurines overall (see Chapter 8).

### **Temples and Sanctuaries**

This section considers the small number of pipeclay objects that have been found at classical Roman and Romano-British temples (e.g. Drury 1980) where their use was both rare and varied from the first to fourth centuries. Overall, 50 pipeclay objects have been found at 20 temple and sanctuary sites: 21 finds are from known temple sites and 29 are from possible temple sites (Tab. 9.1). In this case ‘temple sites’ are sites where ritual activity has been identified by strong structural and artefactual evidence, whereas ‘possible temple sites’ covers locations where ritual activity is only suggested by partial or limited artefactual and structural evidence.

On each site there are different degrees of contextual association between the pipeclay objects and the temple sites themselves, and to highlight this the objects have been put into groups according to where they were found (Tab. 9.2): finds inside temple or sanctuary structures (Group 1); finds from deposits outside temple or sanctuary structures but within their complexes (Group 2); those from burials near temples, sanctuaries and complexes (Group 3); and objects from other contexts close to temples, sanctuaries and complexes - e.g. roads, pits and buildings (Group 4). Finds in Groups 1 and 2 are the most likely to be associated with temple activity, while the two objects from the possible burial in Group 3 might be as well. On the other hand, the objects in Group 4 are much less likely to be linked with temple use. More information about the objects from each of these four groups is given in consecutive order as part of the contextual analysis that follows below.

<b>Temple Sites</b>	Ashwell, Harlow, Heybridge, Kelvedon, Nettleton, Lowbury Hill, Wimblington, Wroxeter, Springhead
<b>Possible Temple Sites</b>	Baldock, Catterick, Corbridge, Great Chesterford, Hawkedon, Nor'hour, London, Richborough, Roxton, Shenstone, Wall

*Tab. 9. 1. List of temple and possible temples sites with pipeclay objects in Roman Britain.*

Group	Figurine Nos.
1 (inside temple or sanctuary structures)	25, 39, 40, 46, 50, 51, 96, 116, 117, 128, 202, 203, 204, 205, 625, 805, 806, 807, 808
2 (deposits outside temple or sanctuary structures but inside their complexes)	162, 218, 274, 288, 291, 302, 573, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 741, 759, 760, 765, 766, 772, 962
3 (burials near temples, sanctuaries and complexes)	210, 211
4 (other contexts close to temples, sanctuaries and their complexes - e.g. roads, pits and buildings)	98, 462, 464, 492, 637, 780, 824, 845

*Tab. 9. 2. List of pipeclay objects according to contextual association on temple/possible temple sites.*

In general the relatively small number of pipeclay objects – that mainly consist of figurines - at temples and sanctuaries is rather surprising given their general religious imagery. However, a detailed analysis of the contextual data shows that fewer are actually found inside temple and sanctuary structures themselves than in ritual and votive contexts around them or nearby (i.e. Group 2). Analysing pipeclay types and their dated deposits also shows that the use of pipeclay objects on Romano-British temple and sanctuary sites was limited but varied somewhat over time, with significant differences between urban and rural locations. Further ideas about the possible ritual fragmentation of pipeclay figurines are explored in Chapter 10.

### ***Distribution***

The 20 temple and sanctuary sites that have pipeclay objects are predominantly located in southern Britain where there is a dense cluster in the Thames Valley up into southern Essex,

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, at London, Harlow, Roxton, Ashwell, Kelvedon and Heybridge (Fig. 9.3). Most of these (15) are in small towns and rural locations as opposed to larger urban centres that are far fewer in number (5). To the north, figurines have been found at temple sites in Wroxeter in Shropshire as well as Wimblington in Cambridgeshire, while finds from Wall (no. 780) and Shenstone (no. 741) in Staffordshire may be associated with temple activity as well. However, the most northerly figurine, a Venus (no. 637) from Corbridge, Northumberland, may not be directly related to the nearby temple. To the south, the small number of finds from temple sites includes Cockerels (nos. 302 and 573) from Lowbury Hill, Oxfordshire and Nettleton, Wiltshire, respectively, and a Venus figurine (no. 96) from a possible temple building at Richborough in Kent (Bushe-Fox 1932: 82, pl. 13, no. 43). Finally, the 13 pipeclay fragments found in a building at Nor'nour on the Isles of Scilly are the most westerly collection and are therefore interesting outliers, although it remains to be seen whether there was actually a temple at this potentially sacred site (Dudley 1967: Fulford 1989).

A number of these temple sites are closely associated with water in the form of springs and rivers. Located on a waterlogged site supplied by eight natural springs at the head of the Ebbsfleet River, Springhead was already an important religious centre during the Iron Age and remained so throughout the Roman period, during which time a large temple complex was constructed (Jarrett 2008: 9-16). The temple at Baldock, Hertfordshire, might also have been the site of an ancient spring, while other temples associated with rivers and water include Roxton (positioned near the junction of the River Ouse and River Ivel), and the site at Ruxox Farm, Bedfordshire, through which a river might once have flown.

The use of pipeclay objects - especially figurines and busts - at sacred spring sites is rare but known across the Continent where perhaps the best case is the relatively large group of Venus figurines from Vichy in Central Gaul (Green 1986: 95, 165). Many pipeclay figurines have also been found in the sacred temple precincts in the Rhine-Moselle region, such as at



*Fig. 9. 3. Spatial distribution of pipeclay objects from temples and sanctuaries.*



Trier, yet far fewer are known from areas such as the *Limes* (Boekel 1987: 870). As a result, the parallel use of pipeclay figurines at water-related sites in south-eastern Britain adds to the votive significance of these objects in the province and may be indicative of the cross-channel transfer of ritual ideologies from Gaul in particular.

In terms of their imagery the majority of pipeclay figurines from temples in Britain, as well as on the Continent, are associated with mother-goddess cults, with representations of Venus and Dea Nutrix very strongly linked with fertility, healing and protection (e.g. Green 1986: 88-9, 94-5). Another well celebrated deity is Epona – a fertility goddess also associated with cavalrymen (Green 1986: 171-5), represented by horses from Springhead, Wroxeter and Wimblington. The horsemen from Great Chesterford (no. 274) might also be associated with Epona but Jenkins (1977: 390), citing the work of Thevenot (1955: 133-4, footnote 1), suggests that this could also be a Gaulish cavalryman, or be related to Mars. Elsewhere, cockerels are often linked with Mercury (Durham 2010: 75), while although lions are not traditionally associated with a deity, other than occasionally Hercules, they were always considered as exotic and ferocious animals from Africa (Cooper & Randle 2008: 298).

As in the rest of Britain, deities are the most common figurine types from temples and sanctuaries. Venus figurines of Type 1 and Type 2 (18 examples) are again, unsurprisingly, the most numerous of these, followed by depictions of Dea Nutrix (10 figurines). The largest group of deities is from Nor'nour where there are six Venus figurines (nos. 116-7, 202-5) and seven Dea Nutrix (nos. 39-40, 46, 805-7) figurines. Another large group comes from Springhead where there are four depictions of Venus, including a Type 3 figurine (nos. 98, 128, 162, 962), as well as three of Dea Nutrix (nos. 25, 50, 51). The other deity in this group is the rare representation of Apollo with a lyre (no. 728) from a pit in an enclosure at a possible temple site in Ashwell, Hertfordshire.

In contrast, bird and animal figurines (six examples) are much rarer finds and include common types such as cockerels and horses (e.g. Horse no. 291 from Springhead) as well as rarer types like the Double-Horse (no. 292) from Newstead, Lincolnshire (Curle 1911: 137, 305, pl. 73B; Toynbee 1964: 423) and the lion fragment that is probably part of an animal vessel (no. 781) from Rearsby, Leicestershire (Cooper & Randle 2008: 288-9, fig. 5). Human figurines are even fewer in number with only two examples known from temple sites, both of which are rare types: the Comic Figure from a votive deposit at Ashwell (no. 729) and the figurine of a Riding Horsemen (no. 274) from Great Chesterford, Essex that is currently unique in Roman Britain. The other finds are five unidentifiable fragments (727, 730, 732, 780, 845) and two rare pipeclay masks (nos. 766, 824) from Baldock, Hertfordshire (Stead & Rigby 1986: 167-8, no. 687, fig. 73) and Harlow, Essex (Rankov *et al.* 1982: 371-2). Another mask (no. 772) is known from Catterick, North Yorkshire but its fabric suggests that this is a locally made product rather than an import from Gaul.

When pipeclay types and depictions cannot be identified the items found with them can indicate to what god a temple was dedicated. For example, at Wall, a pipeclay fragment (no. 780) was found with the lower half of a pony's leg (*Epona?*), two face-pots, two knob-horned bull head bucket-handle mounts, a lead torc and a lead figurine of a slave (Ross 1980: 7). At Harlow, Essex, other votive finds including worked and carved stone items and a limestone head of a helmeted deity, thought to be Minerva, were found (Bartlett 1988a, 1988b). At Heybridge, Essex where a Venus figurine (no. 731) comes from an unstratified deposit, other metal figurines such as a bronze goat, another cockerel figurine, and a boar of Celtic significance possibly related to Diana or Silvanus (Foster 1977) all indicate that veneration of Mercury also probably took place on the site nearby (Atkinson & Preston 2015: Section 2.4, bronzes 13-20). The nature of dedication is likewise quite unclear at Ashwell, not only by the pipeclay figurines of Apollo (no. 728) and the Comic Figure (no. 729), but also the silver

Minerva figurine and gold and silver plaques, also dedicated to Minerva, from a nearby hoard. This site, as Heybridge, indicates that pipeclay and metal figurines were only occasionally used on the same sites but are found in different deposits and were used to venerate different gods.

Chronologically, pipeclay figurines were used on temple sites throughout the Roman period in Britain. The earliest dated figurine is the Lion (no. 625) from a first century deposit at Kelvedon, Essex, followed by the figurines of Apollo (no. 728) the Comic Figure (no. 729) and the pipeclay fragments (nos. 727, 730, 732) from the first to second century enclosure at Ashwell. Interestingly, although limited, the early use of pipeclay figurines on temple sites appears to have focussed on animal and male depictions, and it is not until the late first to early second century (AD 90-120) that we see the first female deity - the Type 2 Venus figurine from Baldock (no. 765). From then on Venus figurines dominate use in the second and third centuries at sites such as Springhead, Heybride, Shenstone, Roxton and London, but it is worth noting that the use of animal figurines did continue into the third and fourth centuries, as shown by the horse (no. 291) from Springhead and the later cockerel (no. 573) from Nettleton. Imported in the first and second centuries the horse and cockerel figurines, as well as those depicting Venus, might have had extra significance as curated heirlooms, which may also be the case for the collection of finds from a 'later occupation' deposit at Nor'nour. The dating evidence also tentatively indicates that the use of pipeclay figurines on temple sites began on rural sites and spread into certain urban areas before declining during the fourth century, presumably as these objects became much rarer as production and importation from Central Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region declined.

### *Contextual Analysis*

Most (15) of the temple sites with pipeclay objects are in small towns and rural locations as opposed to larger urban centres (Fig. 9.4). However, only two figurines from small towns and

rural sites are directly associated with temple buildings (Group 1). The lion (no. 625) from Kelvedon, Essex, was found in a deposit of burnt structural daub under the natural gravel floor of a circular timber temple building that was free of domestic rubbish but contained Antonine samian, an enamelled bronze handle and a lozenge-shaped plate brooch with ornate enamelled 'eyes' (Rodwell 1988: 55; Jenkins 1988b: 79, fig. 62.12, pl. 7). The cockerel (no. 573) from the Shrine of Apollo complex at Nettleton is from a levelling close to Building 26 (an iron-smelting shop) rather than in the temple structure itself (Toynbee 1982: 138, no. 7, fig. 58, pl. 31b) and is probably part of a dumping deposit.

The remaining figurines in small towns and rural locations come from votive deposits in temple complexes rather than inside temple structures (Group 2). At Ashwell, for instance, five finds were discovered in pits and hollows inside the fenced polygonal enclosure with a chalk-pebble surface that contained a large metalwork hoard and the remains of a rather small building that is possibly a temple dedicated to Senuna Minerva (Jackson & Burleigh 2007). Here, the figurine of Apollo holding a lyre (no. 728) was found with Bronze Age objects, early Romano-British pottery, metalwork, coins and pig bones in a shallow 'votive' pit, whilst the head of a Comic Figure (no. 729) and three other pipeclay fragments (nos. 727, 730, 732) had been put in two other 'votive' pits with a range of other objects, from Iron Age and Roman coins and Bronze Age socketed spearheads, to Romano-British pottery, iron chain-mail armour and animal bone (Burnham 2006: 412). Most of the other pipeclay objects from Roxton, Shenstone, and Baldock also come from pits and ditches that might be ritual in nature. This includes the Venus figurine (no. 731) from Heybridge that was found in a pit to the right side of the temple entrance, with pottery, tile, bone, an iron knife and personal items such as a bone needle and a bone hairpin. A number of figural bronzes and other religious objects were also found nearby (Atkinson & Preston 2015: Section 3.7, no. 22, fig. 561, Group 409).



Meanwhile, the two Venus figurines from Glebe Farm in Hawkedon (nos. 210-11) are the only finds from burials that are possibly associated with a rural temple (Group 3). Both of these objects were found in the same deposit - a possible cremation burial - that consisted of a second century (Dressel 20) amphora, inside of which were the figurines and some iron nails. The neck, handle and basal spike of the vessel had broken off in antiquity but it had evidently been reused in this case as a cremation urn. Finally, two finds come from other deposits that were found close to temples in small towns and rural sites (Group 4). The first, a mask (no. 824), is from a pit/well shaft near to a Romano-Celtic hilltop temple at Harlow (Rankov *et al.* 1982: 371-2), while the second, a figurine (no. 780), was found near a bath-house close to a villa near Watling Street at Wall in Staffordshire.

The largest pipeclay figurine collections from small towns and rural sites are from Springhead and Nor'nour. Springhead perhaps provides the clearest evidence of widespread pipeclay figurine use on a temple site. Of the eight figurines from the site, five are directly associated with temples; four from the remains of a wooden building overlying Temple VII (three Dea Nutrix and one Venus) and one Type 3 Venus figurine from the *cella* floor of Temple I (Jarrett 2008: 71-2, tab. 1(1), 264-5, fig. 81, 71-2, fig. 29, tab. 1(8-10), 267). Three other figurines from temple ditch fills and a dark soil fill located close to a road and buildings (another possible temple) might also have ritual significance, though could equally be refuse deposits from the temple or the town's civilian population. The other collection of 13 pipeclay figurine fragments from Nor'nour – the largest from any (potential) temple site in Britain – all come from a poorly stratified occupation layer inside a small structure: this area also produced third to fourth century coins, pottery, beads and late brooch types. The site's purpose is still uncertain but the current evidence points to a possible ritual or sacred use, though some argue that the items are the remains of occupational activity on the site or a shipwreck (Dudley 1967; Fulford 1989; Butcher 2000).

As with metal figurines, most of the pipeclay objects from temples in small towns are common figurine types that perhaps reflect a conservative kind of votive worship by people in these location (Durham 2010: 296). However, the rare lion figurine (no. 625) from Kelvedon, as well as the Apollo figurine (no. 728) and Comic Figure (no. 729) from Ashwell, are suggestive of a more selective ritualistic use and deposition. It is also interesting that some of the temple sites that have pipeclay figurines were previously used for religious purposes prior to the construction of temple buildings during the Roman period. This was very much the case at Springhead but the recovery of pre-Roman finds also indicates a similar sequence of activity at sites like Baldock (i.e. cremations, pottery, coins, brooches) and Harlow (coins), and it is possible that the presence of pipeclay figurines could be linked to some continuing Iron Age rituals in the Roman period. Alternatively, perhaps they instead represent a replacement of Iron Age practices or an amalgamation of pre- and Roman religious traditions.

Pipeclay objects from temples at larger urban centres are far fewer in number (six) and are distributed in temple structures as well as other potentially associated deposits. Only two finds are actually from inside temples or temple complexes (Groups 1 and 2). The first, a horse (no. 288) from Wroxeter, is associated with the settlement's temple complex but no details about the nature of the deposit are given (Bushe-Fox 1916: 34, pl. 32, fig. 2). The second, a Venus figurine (no. 96) from Richborough, was found inside of a fort building on Site 4 that may well have been used as a sanctuary and is the only figurine from a temple on a 'military' site in Britain (Bushe-Fox 1932: 82, pl. 13, no. 43), although such sites were often a cultural milieu of both military personnel and civilians (e.g. Mason 1987: 143; Franzen 2006).

The remaining four pipeclay objects are from other types of deposit in the vicinity of temples at London and Corbridge (Group 4). In London, a Venus figurine (no. 492) from Bucklersbury House is from a rubbish pit over a timber drain near the south-west corner of the city's Mithraeum (Wardle 1998: 111, 178). This deposit is not stratigraphically related to the

temple but its late third- to early fourth-century date does correspond with the temple's use from A.D. 240 and, although unlikely, it may have been a votive deposit (Perring 1991: 104-5; Shepherd 1998: 221-2; Fittock 2015: 122). Two other shrine fragments (nos. 462, 464) from a landfill pit/dump at Courage Brewery, Southwark are technically from a drainage ditch in OA 83 - a habitation area - but could have been used at a public shrine or a private one in a domestic or industrial setting at some point (Hammer 2003: 89; Wardle 2003: 173; Fittock 2015: 122). Finally, a Venus figurine (no.637) at Corbridge was found within a fort compound located next to Temple 3. This compound was next to the temple so the find is probably related to activity nearby rather than ritual use inside the temple (Allason-Jones 1988: 214, no. 24).

There is very little additional evidence of ritual practice amongst the 50 pipeclay objects from temple sites. Only the two burnt Venus figurines from Hawkedon (nos. 210-11) show any signs of further activity, both being burnt and scorched. This burning only covers part of the figurines and it could just be chance that they burnt this way when they were put on a pyre. Alternatively, they might have been deliberately scorched before being put inside the dolium with the nails and the non-surviving bones (Pamela Greenwood, pers. comm.). Other than the re-use of the dolium, this find is interesting as it is the only possible burial deposit from a (possible) temple site in Roman Britain (see below for a discussion about pipeclay burials).

The only other site where pipeclay figurines might be directly associated with a temple is at the rural site of Ruxox Farm, Bedfordshire where 89 fragments of Venus, Dea Nutrix and Bacchus figurines were found in the 1950s and 60s along with four intaglios, the handle of a clasp handle knife and a dolphin-shaped furniture fitting (Fadden 2010 – another three finds are from the nearby settlement). At present this collection of figurine fragments - the largest from a rural site in Britain - has been excluded from the total number of temple finds due to the fact that the existence of a temple has never been confirmed and the structural remains that have been identified may well be from a villa, bridge or dedicatory platform instead (James 2009).



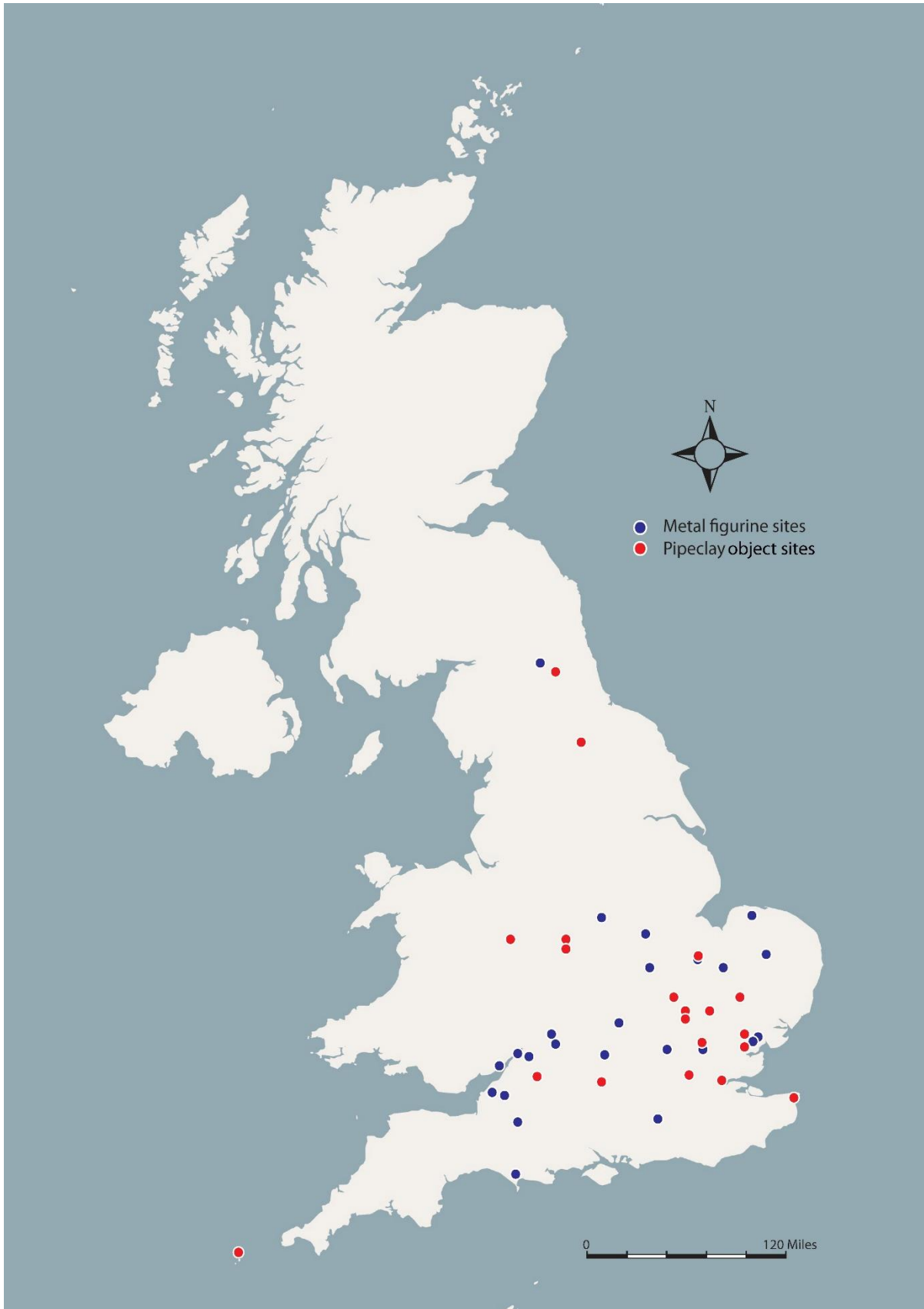
Even though this collection, and the other associated items, all of which have religious imagery, have long been used to claim that Ruxox Farm was a sacred site (Simco 1984: 56; Dawson 2004: 33; James 2009), it is possible that there was never a temple here at all (*ibid*; see also above, and Chapter 7).

In his discussion of infant votives from Gaul and Germany, Derks (2014: 61) suggests that infant votives, specifically those depicting Dea Nutrix and Risus in pipeclay, but possibly also other figurines of children made of stone, metal and wood, may have been made by several people with interests in a child or children, including parents, grandparents, wet-nurses, slaves, wider family, or even ‘social-parents’ with an intimate social relationship with the infant, who possibly fulfilled religious roles on their behalf, possibly in the absence of ‘true’ parents. Such votives might have been made regarding fertility; a successful conception or uncomplicated pregnancies; a successful childbirth; a happy and healthy child; the birth of a child of a particular sex; recovery from an illness, accident or any other misfortune that affected the new-born; the survival of a perinatal period; and/or preservation of the new-born’s good health and well-being in its first days and weeks. Derks additionally suggests (2014: 62) based on the emphasis that some of these points put on the mother rather than the child that some pipeclay figurines and busts might be related to a rite of passage that took place shortly after birth when the infant was liberated from its swaddling bands (a method used to reduce disfigurement in limbs as a child developed after birth). In this sense it is interesting that few pipeclay figurines or busts of children have been found in votive contexts in Britain, where most are the ten Dea Nutrix figurines from shrines and temples from just the two sites of Springhead and Nor’Nour. Indeed, most of the pipeclay figurines from votive contexts are of Venus (21), suggesting that the quite limited votive use of such pipeclay objects was maybe more orientated towards this goddess and her associations with fertility and protection rather than child-birth and rearing.

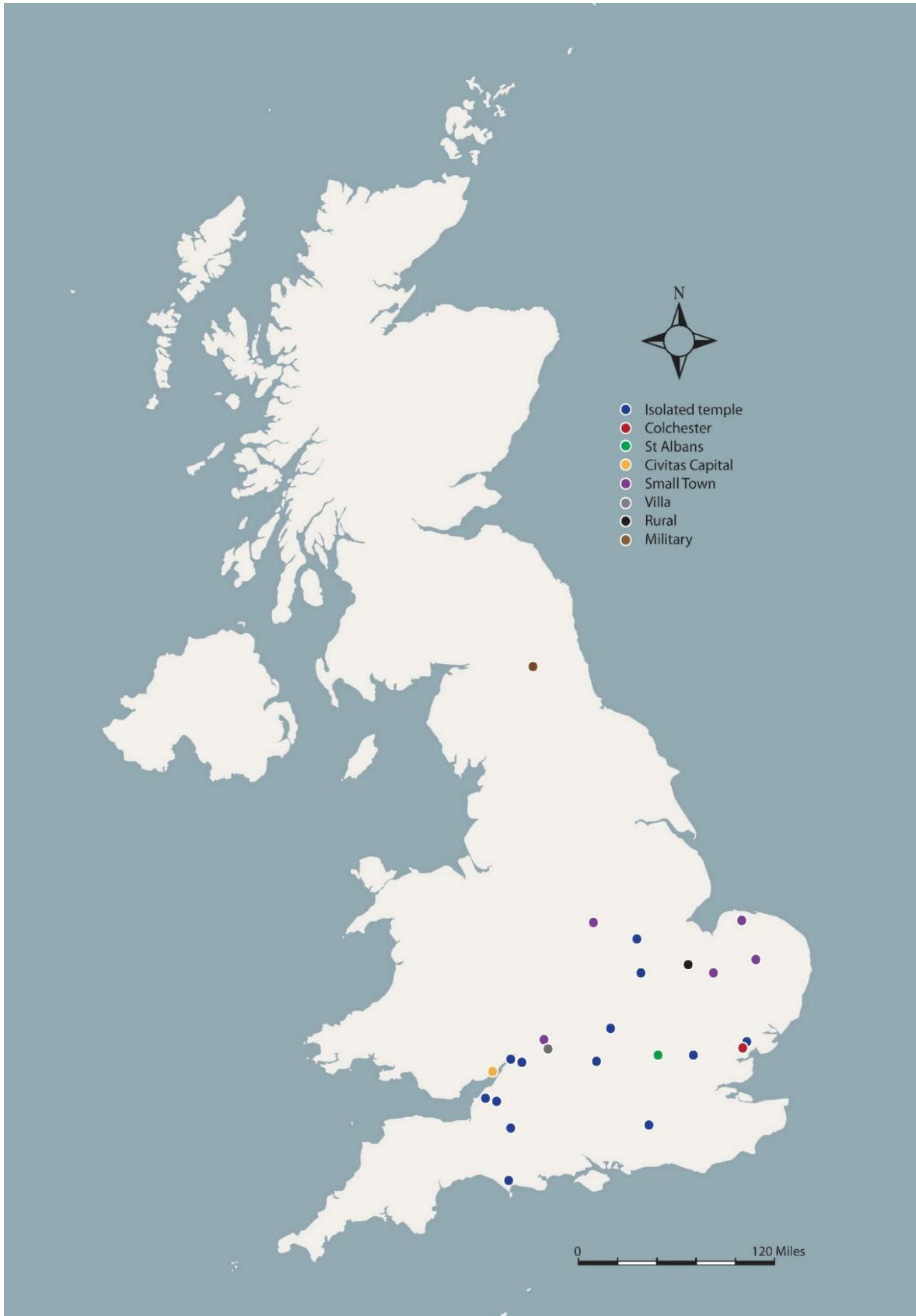
### *Comparing Pipeclay and Metal Figurine Use at Temples*

Pipeclay objects appear to have been used somewhat differently to metal figurines in temples and sanctuaries in Roman Britain (Durham 2010: 290-304; 2012: Section 4.3; Figs. 9.5-6). Like pipeclay objects, the 103 metal figurines from temple sites are mainly found at rural sites (64) or in small settlements, and rarely from *Coloniae* and military sites. But here the similarities end. The first indication of differential use is the distribution of these sites whereby temple sites with metal figurines are distributed much more broadly across the south of Britain while those with pipeclay objects are concentrated in the Thames Valley, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex. This could indicate some form of regionalised pipeclay practice in this area.

As well as distributional variances there are also differences in useage patterns. For example, not only is there a much higher number of metal (103) as opposed to pipeclay (49) objects from Roman Britain, but the proportions of metal and pipeclay depictions on temple sites also differs significantly. In this case, although deities are again the most common metal figurine type with animals and humans rarer, there is a far greater range of metal deity and animal types from temple sites in Britain (Tab. 9.3), and these come from a greater number of sites (Fig. 9.7). The exception is that female goddesses in pipeclay are recovered on slightly more sites than the metal goddesses. The greater number and range of metal deity figurines is also particularly interesting in that it includes Mercury - the commonest god depicted in metal but rarely in pipeclay, and only one Venus figurine (Durham 2010: 296, fig. 110). Furthermore, whereas the metal assemblage mainly consists of male deities (61.9%) with few female goddesses (15.9%), the opposite is in fact true in the pipeclay assemblage that has just one male god (2.1%) but 30 goddesses (62.5%). As shown in Chapters 5 and 8, this may relate to specific use by men and women respectively, but the often-varied quality and range of the contextual material usually found with such finds makes it hard to know for certain.



*Fig. 9. 5. Plot of temple sites with pipeclay and metal figurines in Roman Britain. Metal figurines after Durham 2010: 293, fig. 109.*

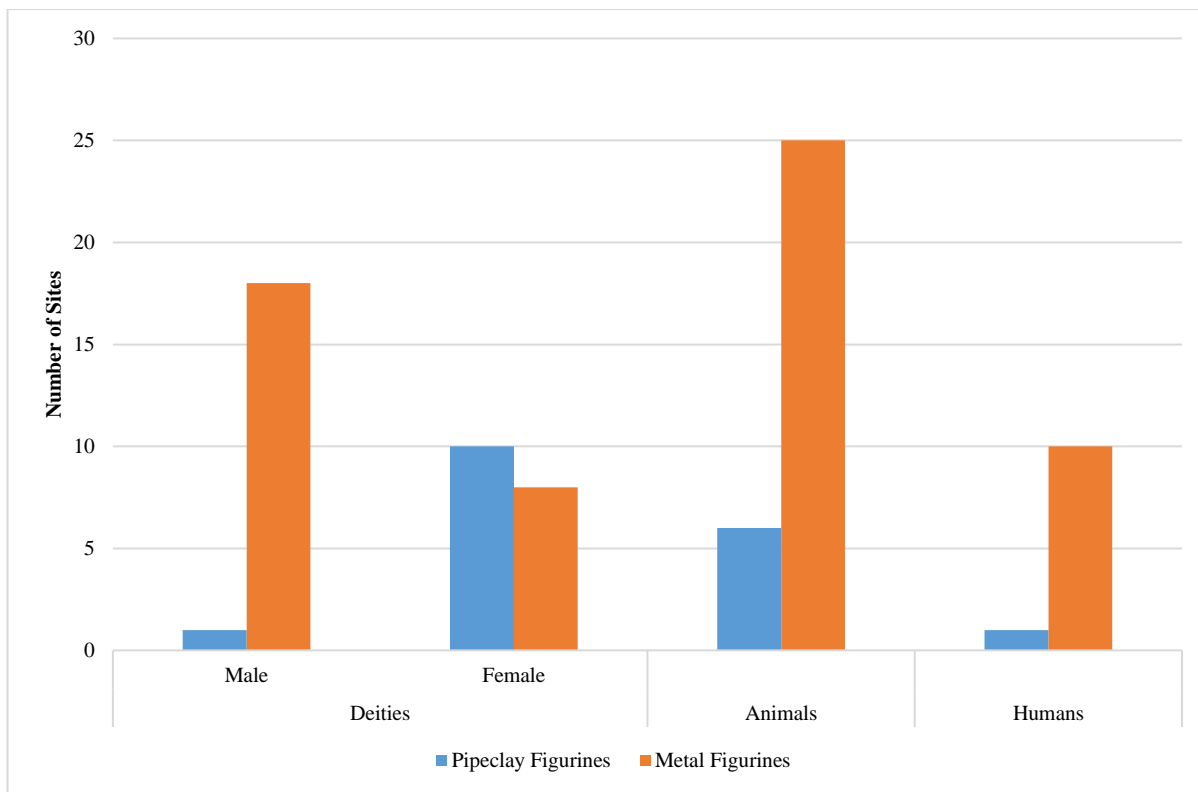


*Fig. 9. 6. Social distribution of metal figurines from temples in Britain, after Durham 2010: 293, fig. 109.*

DEPICTION	PIPECLAY	METAL
<b>MALE GODS</b>	None	Apollo Attis Genius Hercules Horse and Rider Jupiter Lar Mars Mercury
<b>FEMALE GODDESSES</b>	Venus Dea Nutrix	Fortuna Isis Minerva Mother Goddess Venus Victory
<b>ANIMALS</b>	Cockerel Horse Lion	Bull Dog Goat Hare Horse Snake Stag Turtle Wolf God Cockerel Eagle Bird
<b>HUMANS</b>	Comic Figure	Priest Foot/leg Hand/arm

*Tab. 9. 3. List of pipeclay and metal depictions from temples in Roman Britain. Metal list after Durham 2010: 296, fig. 110.*

Based on their distribution, Durham (2010: 294) suggests that metal figurines may have been dedicated by people who wished to offer token objects that were more unique than widely available jewellery, plaques and model objects yet less expensive than stone dedications or statuary. The distribution of pipeclay objects – mainly figurines - on ritual sites suggests that they were being used for a similar type of worship, but their presence, mainly in the south-east, points to a slightly different, more regionalised type of practice. Indeed, if pipeclay figurines were being used for exactly the same purpose as metal figurines, perhaps as cheaper alternatives by a ‘lower class’ of the population, we might expect to see more pipeclay and metal figurines from the same sites. We would also expect to see similar metal and pipeclay



*Fig. 9. 7. Number of temple sites with pipeclay and metal depictions in Roman Britain. Metal numbers after Durham 2010: 296, fig. 110.*

types from the same temples (e.g. metal and pipeclay Venus figurines), but this is not the case. As it happens only three temple sites have provided pipeclay objects and metal figurines (from Durham 2010, 2012): Ashwell (Senuna Minerva no. 753 as well as Arms nos. 807, 808), Harlow (Lar no. 624) and Springhead (Arm no. 463, Hand no. 463, Dog no. 659 and Fortuna nos. 1166, 1167). These metal figurine types are very different to the pipeclay types that have been found on the same sites; Venus (nos. 98, 128, 162, 962) and Dea Nutrix (nos. 25, 50, 51) figurines at Springhead, Apollo (no. 728) and the Comic Figure (no. 729) at Ashwell and the mask (no. 824) at Harlow, and in the majority of cases these two different object classes do not appear to be contextually related.

There are only three instances where pipeclay and metal figurines were found together indicating that they were used in the same way. The first case comes from Springhead where a

bronze figurine of a dog was found in Temple VII (Penn 1967: lix; Jarrett 2008: 268: FIGU 11) near one pipeclay figurine of Venus (no. 962) and three of Dea Nutrix (nos. 25, 50, 51), but there are no records of the metal find's stratigraphic relationship to the temple or pipeclay figurines, nor any illustrations of the object (Jarrett 2008: 268). The second case comes from Ashwell. Here, a silver figurine of Minerva was found inside the same enclosure as five pipeclay figurines: the Apollo (no. 728), Comic Figure (no. 729) and three fragments (nos. 727, 730, 732). However, whereas the pipeclay figurines were from shallow 'votive' pits with Bronze and Iron Age objects, Romano-British pottery, metalwork and animal bones, the silver figurine is from a more elaborate hoard that contained a collection of seven gold and 13 silver leaf plaques, some of which are decorated with reliefs of Minerva (Jackson & Burleigh 2007). This hoard of precious metals (possible temple treasure) probably reflect the practices of much wealthier members of society than those who deposited the pipeclay figurines in the enclosure. Then again, these deposits could equally reflect two different ritual practices carried out by the same individual or group but done so at slightly different times with different reasons in mind.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, pipeclay objects – mainly figurines - were used in temples and sanctuaries but in a much more limited way than might be expected for objects with such strong religious imagery. There are clear regional, distributional and chronological trends, with a concentration in use in small towns and isolated temple sites in south-east Britain during the first to fourth centuries, and a particular focus on the use of Venus figurines at temple sites in the second and third centuries. The imagery and the other objects often deposited with pipeclay figurines in pits – mainly personal items of adornment – both highlights their votive capacity in these contexts. Comparing the distribution and use of pipeclay objects with metal figurines from temple sites also shows that both were used in similar ways but to worship slightly different

gods, reflecting different beliefs, and that pipeclay objects were probably used by a less wealthy group of the Romano-British population with closer cultural links with Gaul.

### **Burials with Pipeclay Objects**

Much like temples and sanctuaries, pipeclay objects such as figurines, busts and animal vessels, are only rarely found in burials but their use spans the entire Roman period from the first to fourth centuries. Their use in such contexts was also varied, with discoveries including both single finds from burials in cemeteries (e.g. Snodland) to much larger collections in cemeteries and isolated graves, like those at Colchester and Arrington. The first part of this section examines the general distribution of burials with pipeclay objects in Britain before analysing the different pipeclay forms and types that were used in this way, and if there are any chronological trends associated with this. The second part then attempts to put pipeclay burials in their wider context. To do this I examine the structure of pipeclay burials and their associated burial goods to better understand their social character and, importantly, examine the changing character of the pipeclay-related burial practice by paying particularly close attention to the change from cremation to inhumation burial rites from the second to fourth centuries AD.

A total of 62 pipeclay objects have been found in Romano-British burials (51 figurines and busts, 10 animal vessels and one pipeclay fragment). Just over half of these (36) are from cremation burials whereas 15 come from inhumation burials. The remaining eleven finds are from unspecified types of burial and/or disturbed deposits (10), or are from possible burial deposits in cemeteries (one). The actual number of pipeclay objects from burial contexts is probably slightly higher than shown here, especially in places such as London where a number of the poorly recorded antiquarian finds may well have come from graves. As is shown in Appendix 6, there are also several pipeclay objects without context information from cemetery



sites across the province that might have been initially deposited in graves before they were disturbed and redeposited at some point.

### ***Distribution***

Burials with pipeclay objects are mainly found in south-eastern England in Essex, Hertfordshire and the Thames Valley (Figs. 9.8-9). Many of these are from cemeteries but others come from single graves located close to Roman roads near to settlements. The single most important burial to date is in Colchester where 13 pipeclay figurines and busts and 10 rare animal vessels come from a child cremation burial in the settlement's western cemetery (Eckardt 1999). This group is followed by the ten pipeclay figurines and busts (nos. 708-17) from the inhumation burial of a child at Arrington found near Roman Ermine Street (Taylor 1993; Green 1993), and a group of eight finds from several burial deposits in London. This London group includes one figurine from the city's northern cemetery (no. 259) and seven figurines from its eastern cemetery (nos. 441-3, 480, 518, 662-3 - Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9). Pipeclay figurines from burials slightly further afield include two Dea Nutrix figurines (nos. 1, 818) from cemeteries in Canterbury and two busts of women (nos. 243, 248) from a cremation burial found at Preston Road on the Springfield Road Villa site in Brighton, Sussex (Kelly & Dudley 1981: 83, pls. 1A-B, fig. 9).

Overall, cremations with pipeclay objects are much more widespread than inhumations. While cremation burials are the most southerly of the wider burial groups at Canterbury and Brighton, as well as the most northerly at Godmanchester in Cambridgeshire (nos. 736-7), inhumation burials are only found in a small band from London to Arrington via Baldock in Hertfordshire (no. 718). With dates spanning the second to fourth centuries, inhumation burials with pipeclay objects are not only very rare but their limited distribution could well represent a special kind of localised burial rite in this particular part of south-eastern Britain. On the other

hand, inhumations are generally later (i.e. the third to fourth century) than the period when figurines were imported into Britain so it is not surprising there are not more from inhumations.

Beyond the south-east there are three burials that form a small group of notable outliers, all of which are antiquarian finds with no contextual details or dating evidence. The first is a Venus figurine found near a Roman road from a possible cemetery at the small Roman town of Kenchester, Herefordshire (no. 90), the second is a Venus figurine (no. 81) from a Roman cemetery at Carlisle in Cumbria, and the third is a Venus figurine (no. 950) from Catterick, North Yorkshire. Although none of these finds is dated contextually it is worth noting that they are all earlier Venus types that were imported into Britain during the late first and early second centuries. Like most Venus figurines in Britain, the finds from Catterick, Kenchester and Carlisle probably had a domestic function but they could also reflect isolated individuals or a small group with different religious beliefs in northern Britain. There is also a small chance that they are associated with the Roman army and their families as they progressed further north during the first and second centuries.

The pipeclay objects from Romano-British burials include a small but diverse range of types and depictions. As shown in Fig. 9.10, of the 62 pipeclay objects from burials, 20 (32.3% of the burial assemblage) are deities, 19 (30.6%) are animals and 21 (33.9%) are of humans. The only other discoveries (3.2%) are the small burnt unidentified fragment (no. 663) found residually in burial B159 in London's eastern cemetery (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 263) and the possible Venus figurine (no. 950) in Catterick. Figure 9.11 shows that the deity group, as well as the burial assemblage as a whole, is dominated by Venus figurines, while the rest of the deity group includes Dea Nutrix figurines followed by rarer types like Juno (no. 518), Hercules





*Fig. 9. 9. Spatial distribution of cremation and inhumation burials with pipeclay objects.*

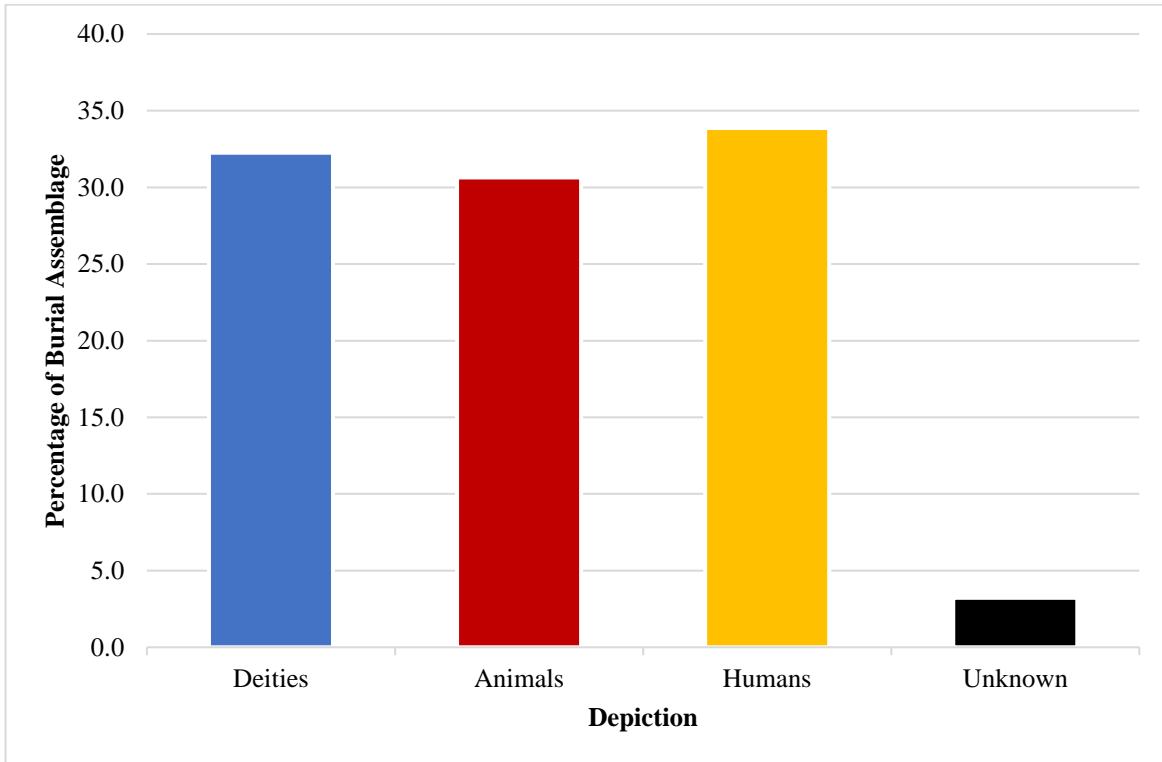


Fig. 9. 10. Proportion of pipeclay depictions from burials in Roman Britain (total=62).

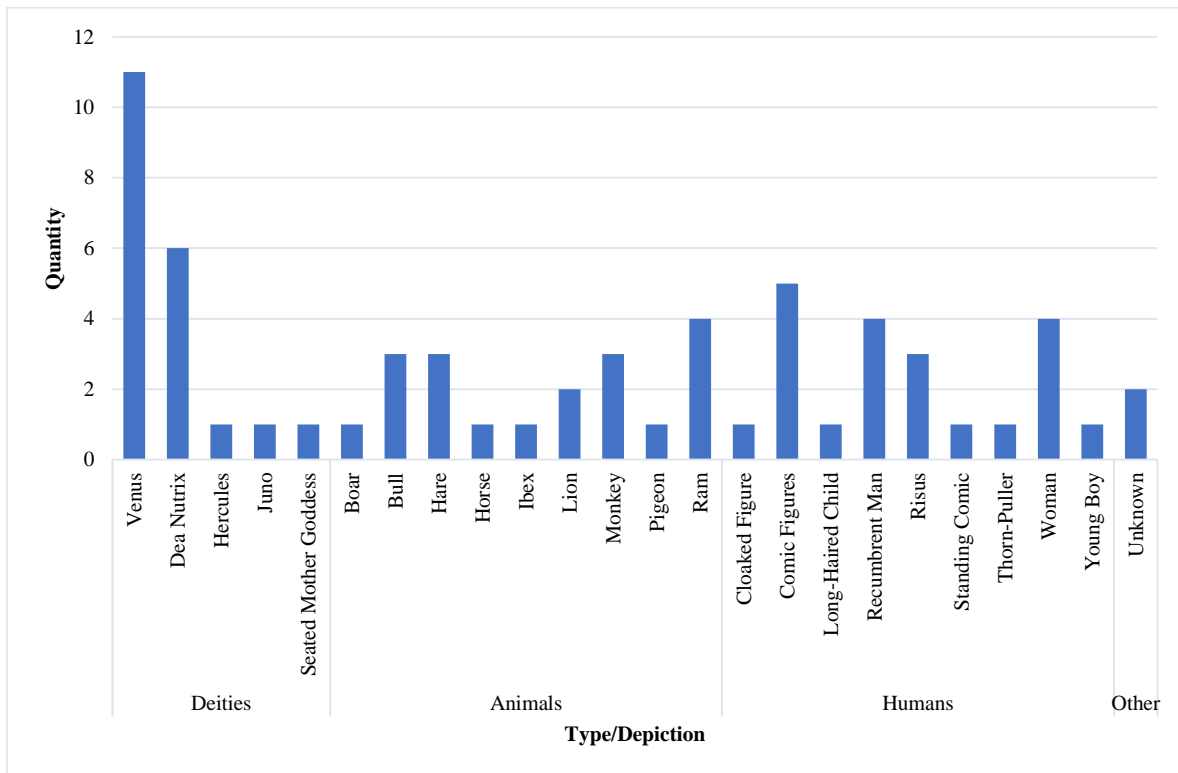


Fig. 9. 11. Number of pipeclay types from burials in Roman Britain.

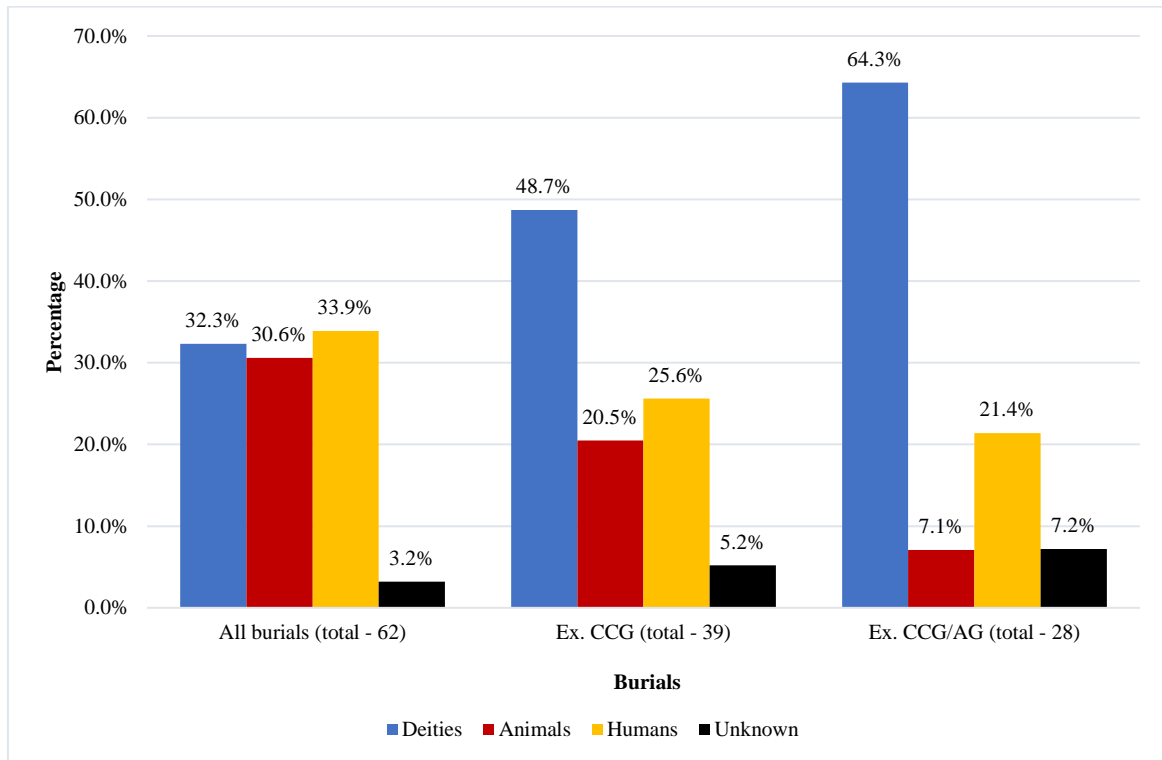


Fig. 9. 12. Proportion of the pipeclay depictions from burials with and without the Colchester Child's Grave and the Arrington grave.

(no. 237) and the Matrona figurine (no. 708). In contrast the animal assemblage is more diverse, featuring common types such as bulls (nos. 286, 717, 736), a horse (no. 737) and a pigeon (no. 308), but outweighed by the rare form of animal vessels of hares (nos. 312-4), lions (nos. 315-6), monkeys (nos. 317-9), rams (nos. 713-6), a boar (no. 321) and an ibex (no. 320). The same can also be said of the human assemblage. Here, common human types such as *Risus* busts and busts of women are present but there is also a range of much rarer human types that include a Cloaked Figure (no. 712), a Long-Haired child (no. 710) and a Thorn-Puller (no. 711), as well as the group of Comic Figures (nos. 276-80), the Standing Comic (no. 275) and four Recumbent Figures (nos. 281-4). However, most of the animal and human assemblage are from the exceptionally early (Neronian) burial at Colchester (Eckardt 1999: 60-6). Interestingly, the collection of figurines, busts and rare animal vessels from the Colchester Child's Grave suggest that someone from Gaul deposited them. Meanwhile, the Juno figurine from London (no. 518)

originated from the Rhine-Moselle region, while the pipeclay figurines and busts from the Arrington burial includes a mix of Gaulish (e.g. the Thorn-Puller (no. 711) and the Rhine-Moselle types (e.g. the Matrona figurine (no. 708) and the Cloaked Figure (no. 712)), suggesting an individual or group who was better-travelled with cultural connections to both areas.

On initial inspection, the proportion of pipeclay depictions from burials is evenly spread between deities, animals and humans and differs considerably from the 66% of deities, 10% of animals and 6% of human depictions from Britain overall (Chapter 5). Although the total number of forms and types from burials is have been counted, the proportion of animal and human forms and types, and their general usage levels, are mis-represented by the two large collections: the 10 objects from Arrington (Taylor 1993) and the 13 figurines and busts and 10 animal vessels in the Colchester Child's Grave (Eckardt 1999). Figure 9.12 shows the proportion of all the pipeclay figurine depictions from burials in Britain as well as the depictions from the burial assemblage without the finds from the Colchester Child's Grave (Ex. CCG), and the Colchester Child's Grave and Arrington (Ex. CCG/AG). Excluding the finds from Colchester as well as Arrington, the proportion of figurine depictions from pipeclay burials is broadly similar to the overall pattern of use in Britain, with deities more common than animals and humans.

Interestingly there is still a slight preference for humans - mainly busts - over animal figurines in burials compared with general Romano-British consumption. This pattern is maybe not that surprising given that placing figurines and portrait busts in tombs, as well as private household shrines, was an important way of commemorating family members and ancestors (Alcock 1980: 53; Henig 1984: 170). Such a practice is also widely reflected in other forms, including reliefs and statuary, and was central to ideas relating to state and personal identity (Mazzeri 2014). For example, statues like that of Togatus Barberini in Rome often show

statesmen holding smaller busts of notable public figures (*ibid*: 8; Fig. 9.13). Busts are also often seen on tombstones. An example from York, for instance, shows the upper shoulders and head of a male - possibly the deceased – in between baskets of fruit and a wreath that symbolise fertility and the underworld (Alcock 1980: 53). As a result, even though the figurines and busts from the Arrington and Colchester graves obscure the general pattern of pipeclay object use in burials, this exercise specifically highlights their special character.

### ***Depictions in Cremations and Inhumations***

Figures 9.14-15 illustrate the number of pipeclay depictions from cremation and inhumation burials in Roman Britain. At first glance this shows that both of these types of burial feature a combination of deities, animals and humans but that the numbers of each depiction varies in type of burial deposit. For example, while there are a similar number of deities in each group, the number of animals and humans is higher in cremation than inhumation burials. It is also interesting that animals and humans are more common than deities in cremation burials whereas there are only slightly more deities than animals and humans in inhumation burials; a pattern that broadly matches the general pattern of high deity and lower levels of animals and humans in Roman Britain overall. Furthermore, human are the most common depiction from cremations but the least common depiction from inhumations. Much of this is accounted for by the fact that most of the objects from cremations are early types, particularly the Comic Figures, Recumbent Figures and animal vessels from Colchester.

Looking at the different types of deity, animal and human objects initially appears to show that slightly different forms and types were used for cremation and inhumation burials. In terms of deities, although we see the common types of Venus and Dea Nutrix in both types of burial, there are fewer Venus (two) and more Dea Nutrix (four) figurines in cremations than





*Figure 9. 13. Statue of Togatus Barberini in Rome, after Mazzeri 2014: 8, fig. 1.*

inhumations (four Venus and one Dea Nutrix), while there are also different rare figurine types from these different burial types as well: Hercules (no. 237) from the Colchester Child's Grave and the Matrona figurine (no. 708) from Arrington. There are also clear differences in the use of animal figurines and human figurines busts, with a much wider range of animal and human types found in cremations than inhumations.

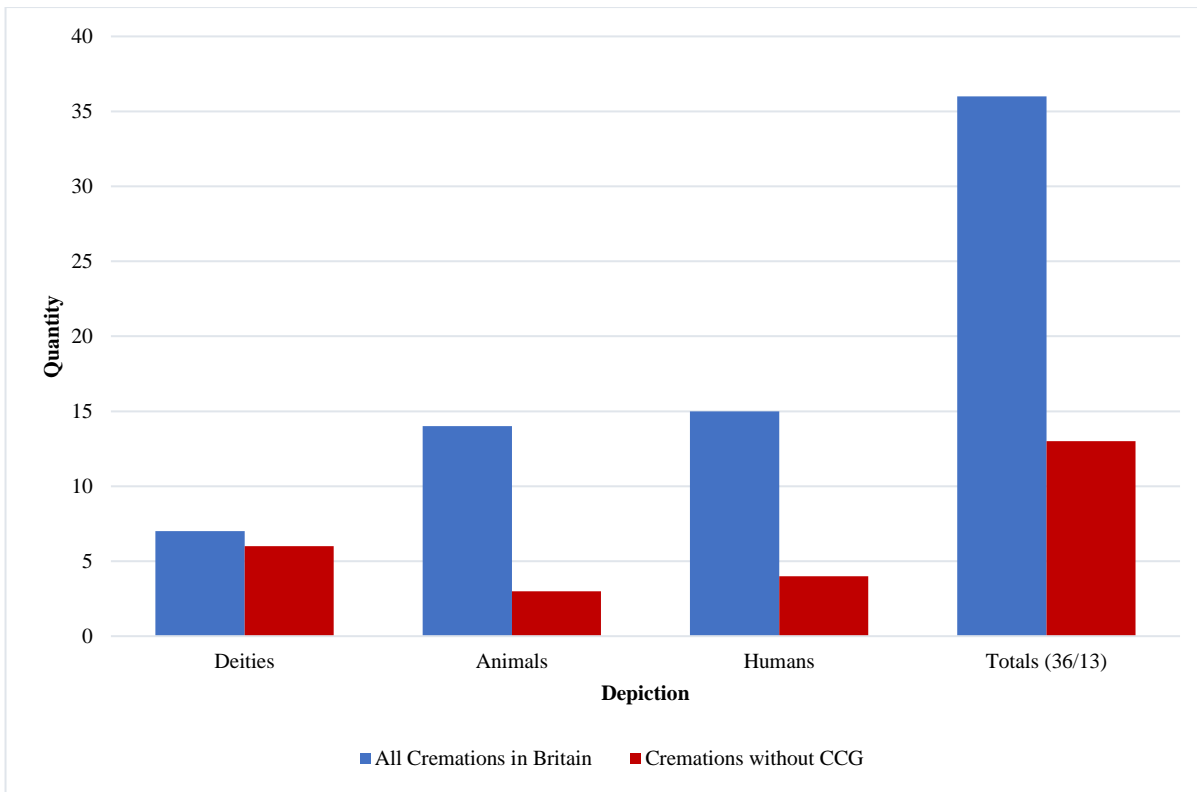
However if, as above, the Colchester Child's Grave and Arrington burial are considered separately we start to see a slightly different impression of figurine use in burials (Figs. 9.14-15). This time, deity figurines are the most common type in each burial group, within which Venus figurines are still more common from cremations than inhumations, while the opposite

is still true for Dea Nutrix figurines. In cremations, deities are followed by slightly fewer animal than human figurines, but for inhumations, excluding the objects from Arrington has removed all of the animal and human types from this group. The only other interesting patterns here are the slight prevalence for women busts and the small selection of common animal figurines, such as bulls, horses and pigeons from cremations. This, as well as the fact that they contain nearly all of the rare figurine types in the burial assemblage, once again goes to show the unique character of the two graves from Arrington and Colchester.

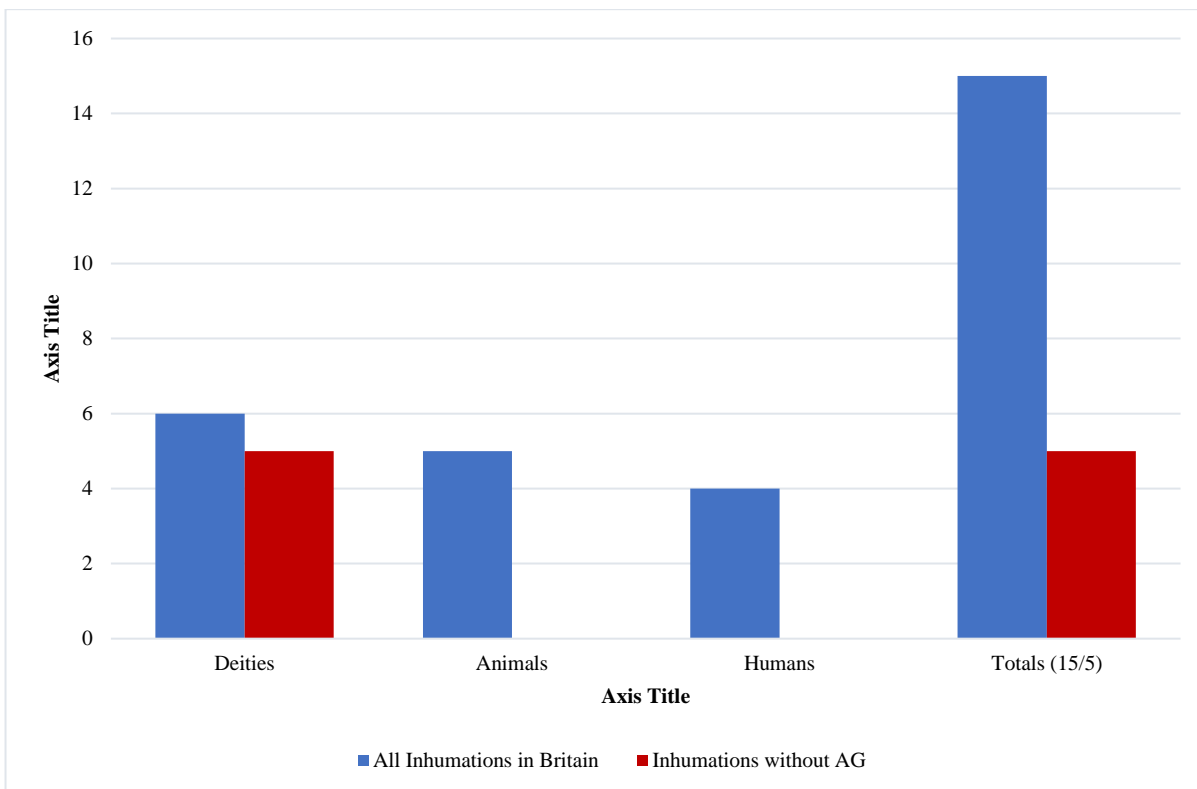
### ***Graveside Rituals (Burning)***

Graveside rituals are very difficult to identify from archaeological evidence but seven of the pipelay objects from burials show signs of such activity in the form of burning and sooting. It is possible that some of this sooting might be from mis-firing in kilns when they were made but there are no obvious examples of this from any non-funerary contexts in Britain. Of these, three objects are seemingly burnt all over (nos. 247, 480, 816). Cool (2004: 400-1) has suggested that a Venus figurine (no. 816) from a late third to early fourth century pit/cremation at Brougham, Cumbria, that is discoloured with pink and grey patches and was found with a range of other burnt objects 'has all the hallmarks of being redeposited pyre debris', while the flaked damage on a bust (no. 247) from an Antonine cremation at Skeleton Green, Puckeridge might also have been the result of placing the it on or near a pyre. The same could also be said of a Venus figurine (no. 480) from Tower Hamlets in London's eastern cemetery - a residual find from the fill of a truncated double-inhumation burial (B156) dated 250-400 AD (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 263).

Two sooted figurines from Hawkedon (nos. 210-11) potentially reflect a different kind of graveside ritual. It is very hard to determine what caused this scorching and whether it



*Fig. 9. 14. Number of pipeclay depictions from cremation burials in Roman Britain.*



*Fig. 9. 15. Number of pipeclay depictions from inhumation burials in Roman Britain.*

reflects a funerary ritual or regular or one-off exposure to soot and smoke, but the soot's distribution across the surface rather than the fractured edges of these figurines shows that accumulation occurred before each object broke, making it unlikely that they were placed on or near to pyres in a broken state like other completely burnt fragments. This sooting could have been caused by putting these figurines in close proximity to other heat sources, like lamps, in domestic shrines when they were complete before they were deposited as grave goods, or by deliberately scorching them during a funerary ritual (e.g. Fittock 2015: 123).

Burnt pipeclay objects found in cemeteries but not associated with a burial group might have been used in similar rituals. The only two examples of this are from Roman London's eastern cemetery. The figurine of Juno (Fig. 9. 16, no. 518), which is sooted on the back, is a residual find from an unstratified deposit at Mansell Street, while the horse from the same area (no. 533), which is burnt all over, is from a possible rubbish dump on Haydon Street. Although these are residual finds from undated contexts, their cemetery location indicates that both of them could have been discarded as ritual objects that were not subsequently used in burials or



*Fig. 9. 16. Sooted figurines.  
Left: Venus no. 210 from Hawkedon, Suffolk. Right: Juno no. 518 from London.*

ritual grave goods that have been disturbed and redeposited by later grave cutting and cemetery activity (Wardle *et al.* 2000, 253, 263; Fittock 2015: 123).

Putting burnt, broken pipeclay figurines in burials was not a common practice in Roman Britain. In the early 1980s Jenkins (1981: 143-9) suggested that the burnt fragments from Skeleton Green, Puckeridge (no. 247), like the Dea Nutrix figurine from Canterbury (no. 1), were probably broken before they were put in burials. However, initial work on pipeclay figurine fragmentation patterns in Roman London (Fittock 2015: 125-9), as well as what follows in Chapter 10, suggests that whole figurines were almost exclusively used in graves. Cool (2004: 401) has also noted that the fragmented nature of both the Canterbury and Skeleton Green figurines - especially the badly flaked surface degradation on the latter - could have been caused by putting them whole on or near a pyre. This indicates that broken figurines were maybe not deliberately burnt and used in burials but that they were probably broken accidentally or by burning them on a pyre.

### ***Chronology***

Pipeclay objects were used in burials from the first to fourth centuries AD and the 46 finds from 11 dated graves (plus one from a possible burial deposit (no. 816) and two residual finds from burial fills (nos. 480, 662)) show some interesting chronological and typological trends (Tab. 9.4). The use of pipeclay objects in burials was rare in the first century and is almost solely represented by the substantial collection of objects (mainly human figurines and animal vessels) from the late-Claudian to early-Neronian child cremation at Colchester. The burial is dated to this period by the pottery assemblage that features a samian plate (Dragendorff 18) by the South-Gaulish potter Nestor (AD 50-65), a bronze patera with parallels from Nijmegen and 'The Lunt', and thirty-six coins, all *aes* of the emperors Gaius and Claudius.

The Hercules figurine (no. 237) from this grave is the only deity figurine from a first century burial context, while the pigeon (no. 308), also from Colchester, is from a different cremation deposit in the settlement and is dated to the slightly later period of AD 80-120. As a late Claudian to early Neronian burial, the Colchester Child's Grave belongs to a period of transition in Colchester when the fortress (c. AD 44-49) was developed into a colony (c. AD 49-60) and thus could be associated with either the military or civilian phase (Crummy 1984: 3-9). The overall composition of the grave seems to reflect civilian activity (see below for a more detailed discussion about the identity of the individual).

It is during the second century that we see a more widespread use of pipeclay objects – particularly figurines and busts - and the pipeclay burial practice is arguably at its peak (Figs. 9. 17-18). As well as the ongoing use of a range of human and animal types at sites like Arrington, Puckeridge, Godmanchester and Brighton - including the women busts from Antonine contexts (nos. 243, 248) - this period also sees the first use of deity figurines in burials. Potentially the earliest of these is the Type 2 Venus figurine (no. 94) from a Hadrianic-Antonine cremation burial at St Albans, followed by a Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 9) from Snodland, and a Type 1 Dea Nutrix figurine from a slightly later cremation burial at Arkesden dated AD 190-200. Interestingly, the rare Matrona figurine from Arrington (no. 708) made in the Rhine-Moselle region also broadly falls in this group, indicating that pipeclay burial rites in Britain were being influenced by Rhineland culture as early as the second century.

During the third and fourth centuries the use of pipeclay pipeclay objects in burials appears to decline, as does the number of different figurine types used. Here, only seven figurines from five burial deposits are known, three of which (nos. 441, 442, 443) are from the same mid-third to mid-fourth century inhumation burial in London's eastern cemetery. Two others from the same cemetery (nos. 480, 662) are residual finds loosely associated with other inhumation burials, while another figurine (no. 718) comes from a similarly dated inhumation

ID	Form	Depiction	Type	Site	Context	Context Date
<b>C1st</b>						
237	Figurine	Deity	Hercules	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
256	Bust	Human	Partially Draped Boy	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
275	Figurine	Human	Standing Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
276	Figurine	Human	Seated Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
277	Figurine	Human	Seated Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
278	Figurine	Human	Seated Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
279	Figurine	Human	Seated Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
280	Figurine	Human	Seated Comic	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
281	Figurine	Human	Recumbent Man	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
282	Figurine	Human	Recumbent Man	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
283	Figurine	Human	Recumbent Man	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
284	Figurine	Human	Recumbent Man	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
286	Figurine	Animal	Bull	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
312	Vessel	Animal	Crouching Hare	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
313	Vessel	Animal	Crouching Hare	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
314	Vessel	Animal	Crouching Hare	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
315	Vessel	Animal	Crouching Lion	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
316	Vessel	Animal	Crouching Lion	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
317	Vessel	Animal	Monkey	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
318	Vessel	Animal	Monkey	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
319	Vessel	Animal	Monkey	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
320	Vessel	Animal	Ibex	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
321	Vessel	Animal	Boar	Colchester	Cremation	Late Claudian-early Neronian
308	Figurine	Bird	Pigeon	Colchester	Cremation	80-120 AD
<b>C2nd</b>						
708	Figurine	Deity	Matrona	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
709	Bust	Human	Risus	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
710	Bust	Human	Long-haired Child	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
711	Figurine	Human	Thorn-puller	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
712	Figurine	Human	Cloaked Figure	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd

713	Figurine	Animal	Ram	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
714	Figurine	Animal	Ram	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
715	Figurine	Animal	Ram	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
716	Figurine	Animal	Ram	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
717	Figurine	Animal	Bull	Arrington	Inhumation	C2nd
94	Figurine	Deity	Venus	St Albans	Cremation	Hadrianic-Antonine
247	Bust	Human	Woman	Puckeridge	Cremation	Antonine
9	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Snodland	Cremation	Mid-Antonine
736	Figurine	Animal	Bull	Godmanchester	Cremation	Mid C2nd
737	Figurine	Animal	Horse	Godmanchester	Cremation	Mid C2nd
243	Bust	Human	Woman	Brighton	Cremation	150/165-200 AD
248	Bust	Human	Woman	Brighton	Cremation	150/65-200 AD
10	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Arkesden	Cremation	c. 190-200 AD?
<b>C3rd-4th</b>						
441	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	Inhumation	250-350 AD
442	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	Inhumation	250-350 AD
443	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	Inhumation	250-350 AD
480	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	Inhumation (residual)	250-400 AD
662	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	Inhumation backfill (residual)	250-400 AD
816	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Brougham	Oval pit	280/85 to 300/310 AD
718	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Baldock	Inhumation	Early C4th
<b>Finds dated by style</b>						
257	Bust	Human	Risus	York	Disturbed burial?	C1st-2nd
818	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Canterbury	Cremation	C1st-2nd
1	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Canterbury	Cremation	C1st-2nd
81	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Carlisle	Burial	C1st-2nd
90	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Kenchester	Unknown burial	C1st-2nd
518	Figurine	Deity	Juno	London	Burial? (unstratified)	Late C2nd-early C3rd

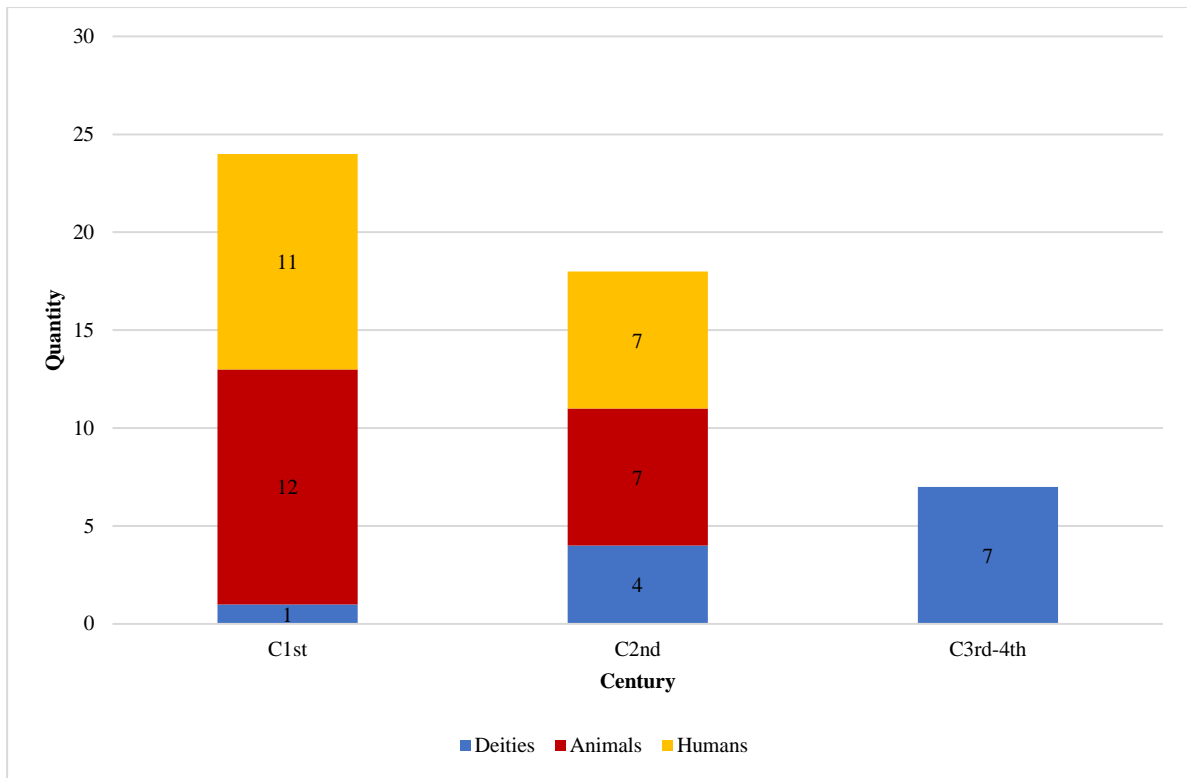
*Tab. 9. 4. Pipeclay objects from burials by date.*



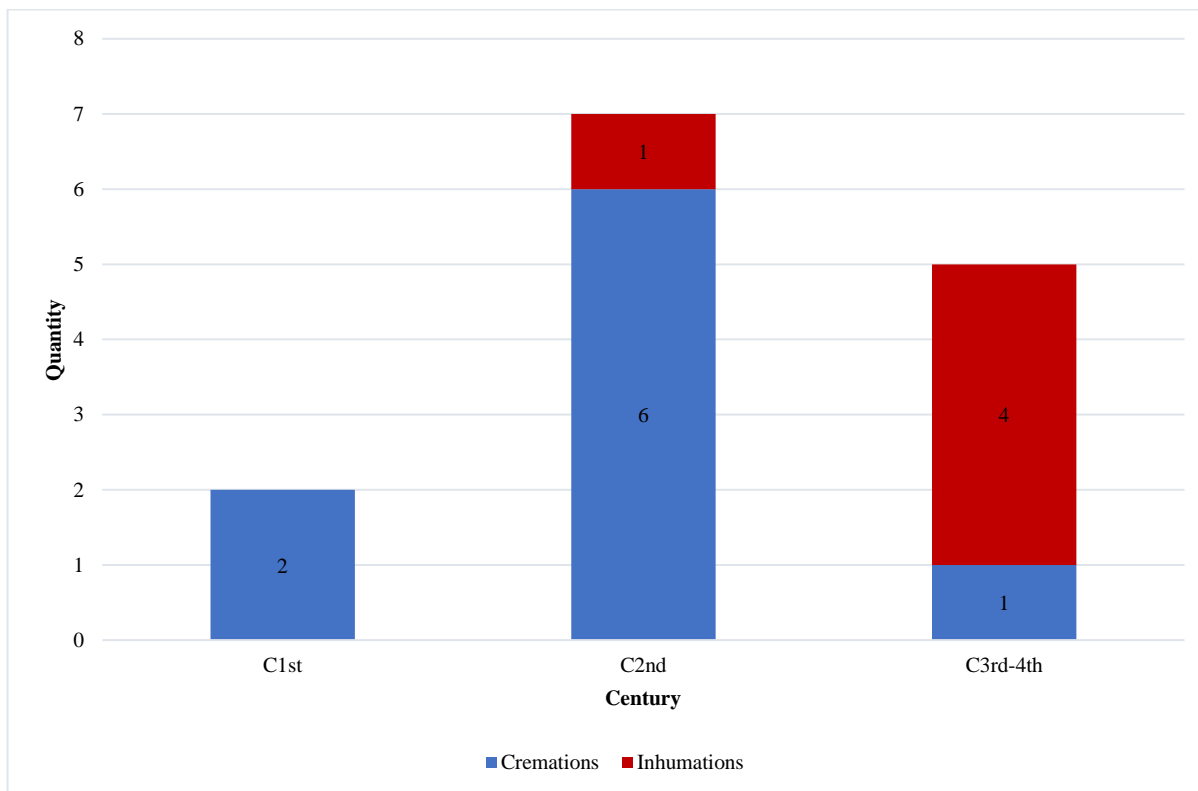
burial at Baldock. On the other hand, the late third to early fourth century pit that contained the Venus figurine from Brougham (no. 816), although found in a disturbed area, may have been part of a redeposited cremation burial (Cool 2004: 122). The Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 818) from a mid-first to late-third century cemetery deposit in Canterbury could also belong to this group. By this point, deities, mainly of Venus (Types 1 and 2), and to a lesser extent Dea Nutrix, were preferred for burial rites, suggesting an emphasis now on funerary related beliefs and practices regarding fertility and protection.

Where contextual dating is not possible stylistic dating can point to the most likely period that a pipeclay object was used in a burial, but in doing so it must be remembered some objects were retained and used at a much later date. For example, Dea Nutrix figurines like those from Canterbury (nos. 1, 818) date to the second century, as do *Risus* busts like the one from York (no. 257), while the Venus figurines from Carlisle (no. 81) and Kenchester (no.90) are late first or early second century designs. The Juno figurine (no. 518) from a residual deposit in London's eastern cemetery is a later design that dates from the mid-second century.

Finally, it is worth making some initial remarks about the chronological use of pipeclay objects specifically in relation to Romano-British cremation and inhumation burials (Fig. 9.18). On the current evidence it is clear that the use of pipeclay objects changed markedly in respect of these two burial traditions. The burials from Arkesden, Brighton, Colchester, Godmanchester, St. Albans, Puckeridge and Snodland show that pipeclay objects such as animal and human depictions were first incorporated into cremation burial rites in Britain during the first century and into the second centuries, in much the same way that they are more closely associated with cremations in Gaul overall (Barber & Bowsher 2000: 319). Although the Colchester grave indicates that this practice was at first rare and carried out by individuals or small groups, this tradition grew in the second and up until the third century and transcended the transition in burial practices in Britain to inhumations, by which time mainly common deity



*Fig. 9. 17. The chronological use of pipeclay depictions in burials in Roman Britain.*



*Fig. 9. 18. The chronological use of cremation and inhumation burials in Roman Britain.*

types were being used. This practice continued until the end of the fourth century, as evidenced by the graves at Arrington, Baldock, Brougham and London.

A much more detailed discussion about what such changes in use and practice can tell us about the identities and status of the people and societies who practised these burial rites in Roman Britain is provided below. For now, however, the use of different pipeclay forms and types in cremation and inhumation burials could symbolise the various shifting cultural values of Romano-British people over time: a factor that could also account for the general shift from cremation to inhumation burial rites in Britain overall from the second century (Philpott 1991: 8, 53). Pearce (2013: 145-54), stressing the importance of contextual analysis on local and regional levels, has argued that this transition from one burial tradition to another was much more complex and dynamic than previously thought, and to some extent the evidence offered by pipeclay objects in such contexts reflects this as well.

### ***The Meaning of Pipeclay Objects in Burials***

The relatively few pipeclay objects from burials means that they were not often used as grave goods but in these contexts, we can assess the iconography and imagery of these objects to interpret what they might mean. For example, generally speaking, depictions of Venus and Dea Nutrix are usually associated with concepts such as fertility, healing and protection that were evidently important in life as well as death (e.g. Green 1987: 94-5; 1989: 38-9; Crummy 2010: 69), as were human busts of women and children that might depict various stages of growth in life and death, or may have acted as protective guardians or images of ancestors (e.g. *ibid*, Alcock 1980: 53; Henig 1984: 170). Yet here we can also refer back to Derks' (2014: 61) discussion about infant votives from Gaul and Germany and how this might relate to some of these burials. Using this idea then, it is possible that some of the pipeclay figurines depicting

children from burials – especially Dea Nutrix figurines and *Risus* busts – may again be related to the vows that parents or relatives might have made on behalf of a child or practices associated with a child’s rites of passage in life, but it is also possible that these same figurines may have been used in burials as a way to protect and represent the stage in life that a child had reached in death as well (see, for instance, the *Risus* busts from Arrington (no. 709), London (no. 259) and York (no. 257), and Dea Nurix figurines from burials in Canterbury (no. 1), Snodland (no. 9), Arkesden (no. 10), Welwyn (no. 15), Baldock (no. 718) and Canterbury (no. 818)). This kind of funerary rite, however, appears to have been a rare practice in Britain overall and thus may well reflect the beliefs and practices of just a small number of families.

In most circumstances only one or two figurines or busts are found in Romano-British burials but there are some graves – such as the ones at Colchester, Arrington and London – that contained multiple pipeclay objects that might tell us more about the function of these grave goods either individually or as a collective group, and I shall briefly consider some of these now. One of the graves with multiple pipeclay objects is the Colchester Child’s Grave that contained the ten animal vessels of hares (nos. 312-4), lions (nos. 315-6), monkeys (nos. 317-9), an ibex (no. 320) and a boar (no. 321). These vessels were probably designed to hold oils, ointments and perfumes at baths but were also used for religious purposes at temples and sanctuaries on the Continent, as well as in graves (e.g. Boekel 1987: 776-7; Eckardt 1999: 66-7). What is more is that many of these animal motifs may well have been chosen for their symbolic links with particular gods and goddesses just as much as their contents (Eckardt 1999: 67). Like many other animals, the monkeys, ibex and hares could have been seen as reflections of fertility and regeneration in life and death. The meaning behind the combination of other figurines from the grave depicting seated and standing Comic Figures (nos. 275-80), four Recumbent Figures (nos. 281-4), the child bust (no. 256), the Hercules figurine (no. 237) and

the triple horned bull (no. 286) is perhaps harder to assess (Fig. 9.19), but may become clearer if we first consider the groups of figurines from the Arrington burial.

The second century inhumation burial from Arrington contained a collection of ten figurines and fragments including the Matrona figurine (no. 708), a *Risus* bust (no. 709), the Long-Haired child (no. 710), a Thorn-Puller (no. 711), the Cloaked Figure (no. 712), a bull (no. 717) and up to four rams or sheep (nos. 713-6). In terms of interpretation, Green (1993: 194-201) and Crummy (2010: 65) argue that this group of male, female and animal figurines symbolises burial rites associated with parental protection and familial prosperity. In this sense, the Matrona figurine and the Cloaked Figure may well be substitute parents accompanying and protecting the child in death, whereas the *Risus* bust, Long-Haired Child and Thorn-Puller figurines may characterise the child's stages of growth in the afterlife. The group of animal figurines at the same time might relate to animal sacrifices or be a symbolic herd of animals that were dedicated by a farming family with the aim of securing their future prosperity. It is possible that the collection of pipeclay figurines and animal vessels from the Colchester Child's Grave may represent something similar, with the selection of alternative types reflecting slightly different beliefs. Thus, the *Risus* bust may represent the dead child, the Hercules figurine a parent, and the Comics and recumbent men the wider, or ancestral, family.

There are several cases from the Continent that evidence the practice of putting pipeclay figurines in graves for fertility and protection purposes in both life and death, particularly in relation to newborns (Carroll 2018: 114-16). One such site is Argenton in France where there are three good examples. The first, Grave 74, a cremation dating to the second half of the second century, contained the remains of the newborn in a terra sigillata bowl around which in the earth were arranged six pipeclay figurines; three of Venus, a woman suckling twins (*Dea Nutrix*), and two horses (Allain *et al.* 1992: 52-3, 170, figs. 36, 64). The second, Grave 85,



Fig. 9. 19. Drawing of the Colchester 'Child's Grave' by J. Parish, after Roach-Smith 1868, pl. XLVI, in Eckardt 1999: 59, fig. 2.

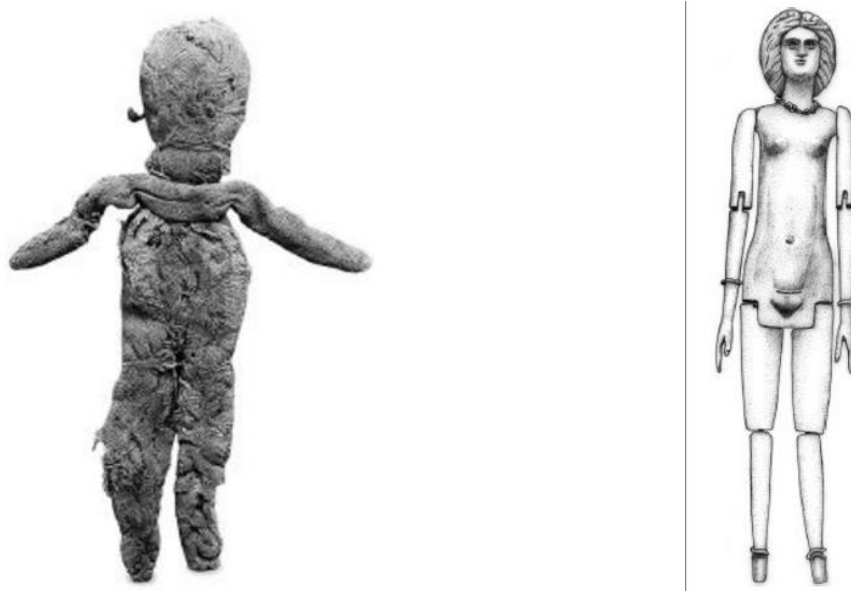
another newborn grave dating to the second century, contained Venus figurines placed either side of the newborn's head (Allain *et al.* 1992: 95, fig. 27). Another grave, Grave 47, also contained a female bust, as well as an iron ring that may have held together swaddling bands (Allain *et al.* 1992: 92-3). These Continental graves share many similarities with several of the graves containing pipeclay figurines and busts in Britain in terms of both the structure of the graves and how the figurines and busts within them were arranged, suggesting that this practice may be related to a group of Gaulish immigrant families who brought their beliefs and funerary rites with them to Britain and buried their dead children in the south-east where they lived. One idea about the Colchester Child's Grave in particular is that laughter may have been used as a form of protection and that pipeclay figurines contributed towards this. Humour - whether visual, verbal or both - was a key part of Roman and Romano-British social life and studying it can give us interesting insights into people's attitudes and beliefs about everyday life as well as death and burial (e.g. Clarke 2007). The Comic Figures and Recumbent Figures are particularly significant in this sense as they appear to be associated with this aspect of Roman culture. Many

commentators have pointed out that they may well be caricatures of the longstanding Classical and Hellenistic tradition of the 'old fool' that can be seen in early provincial artwork (Himmelmann 1994: 89-122; Eckardt 1999: 61 and fn. 28 for further references), while others have suggested that they are satirical philosophers or mimes (Boekel 1987: 606-7). It is possible that the other figurines of Hercules and *Risus* figurines from this grave were also put there for the same comical reasons but as we have seen, the collection of animal vessels probably had a slightly different purpose. On the other hand, if laughter was not a factor, it is possible that some, if not all of them, may have been toys.

It is difficult to tell if the pipeclay figurines and busts found in graves were childhood toys of the deceased (e.g. Carroll 2018: 117) but, if some of them were, then they could have been dolls that belonged to them. None of the British finds from burials have been firmly identified as such but a few Continental figurines, including animals such as horses, have moving parts that usually include wheels, while other that are filled with small stones that might have been rattles (e.g. Boekel 1987: 239-40). Figurines of Dea Nutrix, for example, are generally hollow enough for rattle pellets, but none of the finds from Britain, or indeed many from the Continent, contain any pellets and are probably not dolls or rattles. Indeed, as far as dolls go it has been shown that there were far more 'child-friendly' materials available that were utilised for such purposes. In her recent study Harlow (2013: 330, fig. 16.3; see Fig 9.20 below; but also see Rouvier-Jeanlin 1995, Dolansky 2012, Caldwell 2015: 100-4 and my discussion in Chapter 5 about the possible use of figurines as dolls), for instance, describes that most surviving Roman dolls are made of cloth, wood, terracotta, bone or ivory and date mainly to the mid-second to early fourth century. Most dolls do indeed portray young or mature women with small breasts, wide hips, protruding bellies and buttocks and pubic triangles like many pipeclay figurines of goddesses, for instance (*ibid*: 330), but few pipeclay figurines are firmly identified as such, as they do not have articulated movable limbs like other dolls, and most are

not hollow enough to be rattles. The toy dolls that Harlow describes are usually found in female-related funerary contexts and thus probably belonged to girls or young women who may have used them to learn about motherhood (*ibid*: 332; see also Dasen 2011, 2012). Thus, although some human and animal pipeclay figurines, including busts (*ibid*: 325), from graves in Britain and on the Continent might have been used as dolls – mainly in the first century where there are slightly more of them from such contexts – overall there are a notable lack of them, and of pipeclay goddesses, from funerary contexts in Britain. Later graves do feature more female deities but even here, the use of Venus figurines, like all pipeclay objects, is quite limited. Furthermore, even Continental finds that may be rattles are mainly from temple sites rather than burials where a ritual use is more likely.

At the same time, it is possible that some pipeclay figurines found in adult graves could be childhood belongings buried with them. However, few of the finds from burials in Britain can be firmly associated with adults and, as we have seen, several burials in Britain are of



*Fig. 9. 20. Roman period dolls. Left - rag doll from Roman Egypt made of linen and stuffed with rags and papyrus (from Harlow 2013 fig. 16.6). Right - ivory doll from Via Valeria, Tivoli, 2nd century (drawing by J. Willmott, from Harlow 2013 330-1, figs. 16.6-7).*



children, though more adult burials are known on the Continent (e.g. Gonzenbach 1995: 420). Regardless of whether they are found with adults or children, it is hard to know if these objects belonged to the deceased or were chosen by commemorators to represent the dead, or if they instead served a purpose during funerary rites or in the afterlife (Harlow 2013: 324).

The other interesting multiple figurine burial is from London's eastern cemetery where three Type 2 Venus figurines (nos. 441-3) were found in an *in situ* mid-third to mid-fourth century child inhumation burial (Barber *et al.* 1990; Wardle *et al.* 2000, 186-9, nos. 9-11). As I have previously noted (Fittock 2015: 123), the Venus figurines from this burial may well be associated with notions of protection and fertility and may have been used to accompany the dead child in the afterlife, and/or encourage the conception and good health of the parent's future offspring. This burial context and the figurines in it are also particularly significant as it is one of the only graves securely dated between the third and fourth centuries in Britain with complete, relatively unworn figurines, indicating that these may well have been curated – possibly as heirlooms – which could have added to their significance as grave goods.

### ***Pipeclay Burials in Context – Identity and Social Status***

Having discussed the different pipeclay forms and types found in, the distribution and chronology of, and the potential meaning of pipeclay objects in, Romano-British burials, the rest of this chapter will consider their social context and significance in more detail. Philpott (1991) and Pearce (2013) have both shown how burial evidence can be considered to assess aspects like the age, gender, identities and social status of the deceased, and this can equally be applied to pipeclay burials in Britain. This section will therefore not only compare the use of pipeclay objects in burials in Britain to the Continent but will also examine osteological evidence, burial

structures and grave goods to evaluate the identities of the people who used and were buried with them. Details about contexts and grave goods from these burials are given in Table 9.5.

The current evidence shows that pipeclay burials are rare in Roman Britain and that several pipeclay objects come from the graves of children. This initially appears to contrast with the situation on the Continent where pipeclay objects from burials have been found with both adults and children in cemeteries and tombs (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 32; Allain *et al.* 1992: 170-2; Burleigh *et al.* 2006: 286). However, as we shall see, some of the burials in Britain could be of adults as well (see discussion below). Most of the children from Romano-British burials with pipeclay objects have been identified through osteological evidence. For example, as well as the skeletal remains in the burials at Arrington and London, osteological remains have identified several other children amongst the burial group at the sites of Puckeridge – an Antonine period cremation burial containing a child as well as a probable adult along with a Type 1 bust of a woman (no. 247 - Jenkins 1977: 373, no. 6), Godmanchester – a mid-second century cremation burial of a three to seven or eight year old with bull (no. 736) and horse (no. 737) figurines (Taylor 1997: 391), and Baldock – a fourth century inhumation burial of a roughly one year old containing a Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 7.18- Burleigh *et al.* 2006: 278-9).

The available osteological evidence from the Arrington and London burials additionally indicate that there may be a closer relationship between pipeclay objects – particularly figurines and busts of other-goddesses, animals and humans – with sick children in Roman Britain. At Arrington, the enlarged skull and thinned bones of the infant from this cremation clearly shows that the child suffered from a case of hydrocephalus, or water on the brain (Taylor 1993: 201-2). Elsewhere, in London, the stunted skeletal growth of the child in burial B392 has been compared to the advanced dental development of this six year old to show that they were suffering from a case of rickets as a result of considerable nutritional and environmental stress (Conheaney 2000: 286). Unfortunately the skeletal remains from other such burials are too

poorly preserved for this kind of detailed pathological analysis but this evidence suggests that some pipeclay objects were closely related to the healing and protection of sick children in parts of south-east Britain (Fittock 2015: 123-4).

A more detailed study of Continental child burials is required to identify if this was also the case there but there are some examples that might reflect a similar association between pipeclay objects, burials, children, and rituals about fertility and healing. In France, for instance, Planson's (1982: 176, 178) study of a cult centre linked with healing cults in a sanctuary (possibly dedicated to Mars Segomo or Venus) in the settlement at Les Bolards with votive offerings, plaques and female figurines has been directly linked with a nearby cemetery containing over 100 burials of what have been interpreted as a large group of very young children that were buried in the presence of the gods by parents who had asked them for divine help but had lost the child anyway. Carroll (2018: 76-7), however, has recently not only pointed out that the total number of infants buried over the century that the cemetery was used not only amounts to a small number of infant burials per year but also that the equal numbers of accompanying adult graves means that this was not a distinctive child burial ground at all. In doing so she additionally points out that the choice of parents to bury a child within the protection of gods who had not healed their child is at odds with how a *votum* actually worked in the Roman world and that the current interpretation at Les Bolards is more like one based on an understanding of medieval Christian burial rites rather than Roman ones. Indeed, as Carroll explains, as the gods had not upheld their part of the agreement, the parents of these children were not obliged to pay a *votum* in thanks, while it also seems unlikely that they would then have put the child under the eternal protection of a deity that had already failed them.

Where osteological remains are absent, poorly recorded or not surviving, analyses of grave good assemblages have been used to determine the age, and occasionally the gender, of the deceased. For example, in the Colchester Child's Grave, the other grave goods found

alongside the pipeclay figurines, busts and animal vessels included a clay picture lamp, glass vessels and many fragments of carved bone and iron from a prestigious funerary couch that was decorated with bone carvings affixed to a wooden body and legs (Eckardt 1999: 68-78). Several ideas have been put forward regarding the status of this burial through analysing these grave goods in the absence of skeletal remains. Eckardt (1999: 78-9), for example, highlights the presence of a feeding bottle (300 examples of these are now known from Gaul, mainly from burial contexts dating from the first to the third centuries; see Rouquet & Loridant 2000), that may suggest that this is the burial of a child. Additionally, some of this grave's other burial goods could point towards it having links with military personnel, such as an ex-legionary soldier (Richmond 1946: 60), or their family group at least. For instance, the clay picture lamp, the likes of which have been found in Britain as well as Switzerland, are often connected to the presence of the Roman army in the pre-Flavian period. The pieces of bone veneer from the funerary couch, meanwhile, are paralleled by others with a strong distribution in Britain that suggests a strong association with military activity and intrusive cultural customs (Philpott 1991: 191). Other links with the military are also suggested by the group of Comic Figures themselves, of which one of the few possible parallels from Britain is from the Roman military site at Usk, Monmouthshire (no. 285 - Green & Jenkins 1995: 54, no. 1, fig. 19.1). Alternatively, it has been speculated that these Comic Figures may instead have belonged to a travelling actor who was buried with the objects of his profession (e.g. Boekel 1986: 71; Gonzenbach 1995: 393). Overall, however, in light of the other pipeclay-related evidence from Britain, the burial of a child is probably more likely.

Elsewhere, the second century cremation burial at Arkesden, Essex, with a Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 10) can be attributed to a child based on the inclusion of a miniature platter, but the grave also included many other objects that are more likely to be associated with adults

Site	Type	Age/Gender (evidence type)	Grave Goods	Inside Coffin/ Outside Coffin
Colchester	Cremation	Child?/Unknown (grave goods)	13 pipeclay figurines/busts, 10 animal vessels, 1 samian plate, 1 Central Gaulish lead-glazed cup, 3 flagons and 1 'feeding bottle', 1 Lyon ware cup, 2 coarse ware cups and 1 flagon, 1 clay lamp, 2/3 glass vessels, 1 bronze patera, 600 bone fragments of a funerary couch and 36 coins	N/A
St Albans	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Venus figurine, 1 square green glass bottle containing the ashes, 1 samian dish, 1 tall glass bottle and 1 white glass bottle	N/A
Puckeridge	Cremation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	1 woman's bust, 1 pottery urn and 1 glass bowl	N/A
Godmanchester	Cremation	Child/Female (osteological)	1 samian jar containing 2 pipeclay animals, 1 copper-alloy snake head bangle, 1 iron wire bangle, 3 pots, 1 copper-alloy fitting and 1 gold rivert (wooden box decoration?)	N/A
Brighton	Cremation	Unknown/Female? (grave goods)	2 pipeclay busts; 1 small flagon, 5 wheel-made saucers, 1 black burnished ware jar, samian pottery, 1 glass flask and 1 container, 1 wooden disc, bronze box fittings, 1 bronze brooch, pieces of bronze wire, 1 iron hanging oil-lamp holder, 1 iron ring handle, 1 iron hook, iron nails, 1 iron spike, 1 iron angle, pieces of iron and 1 pot	N/A
Arksden	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 2 samian pateras, 1 complete samian bowl, 1 small flagon, 1 miniature platter, a large embossed samian bowl, 1 tall waisted Castor beaker	N/A
Brougham	Cremation	Teen-adult/Female (grave goods)	1 Venus figurine, 1 copper-alloy bucket, iron nails and fragments, 1 bone vaneer, 1 worked bone object, 1 glass bead, fragments of samian (burnt), 1 gold chain, 2 glass beads	N/A
Catterick	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 deity figurine, bone vaneers	N/A
Hawkedon	Cremation?	Unknown/Unknown	2 Venus figurines, 1 amphora/dolium from Spain, nails	N/A
Snodland	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 2 samina cups, 2 samian dishes, 1 large pot, 1 incomplete narrow-necked vase, 1 beaker, 1 plain curved bronze handle, 1 mirror fragment, fragments of a calcined bone	N/A
Welwyn	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 woman's bust, 1 cinerary urn, 1 beaker, a bronze ring, 1 small dragon-shape bronze fibula around the figurine's neck. Fragments of an iron lamp holder, 4 glass vessels, 1 pot and 1 palette nearby	N/A
Arrington	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	10 pipeclay figurines/busts, 1 decorated lead coffin, 1 wooden box, fabrics and incense residue	Outside lead coffin/inside wooden exterior?
London	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	3 Venus figurines, 1 decorated lead coffin, 1 glass dish, 1 miniature glass bowl, 2 glass bottles, 1 pair of gold earrings, 1 gold coin, 1 bone pyxis and 1 ivory figurine	Outside lead coffin/inside wooden exterior
Baldock	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 3 small wooden caskets, hobnails and 1 pair of leather shoes	Inside Coffin
Carlisle	Unknown	Unknown/Unknown	1 Venus figurine, 2 small earthenware vessels, 1 containing burnt bone	N/A
Welwyn, The Grange	Unknown	Unknown/Unknown	1 samian bowl, 1 coarseware jug, 1 greyware beaker with stump foot, 1 flagon with red slip handle	N/A

*Tab. 9. 5. Context and grave good details of pipeclay burials in Roman Britain. Blue = cremation burials; Pink = inhumation burials; Grey = unknown burial type.*

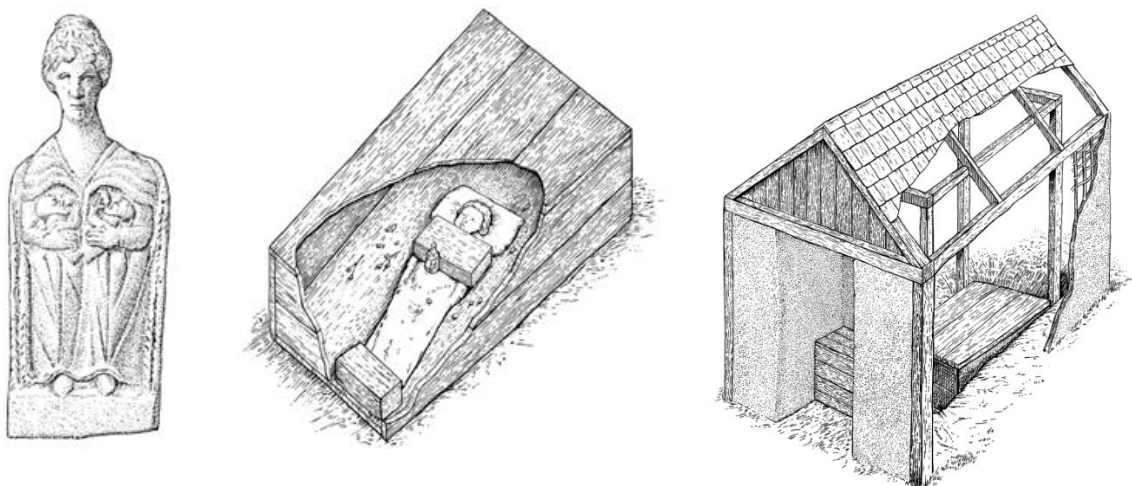
(Jenkins 1977: 286-7). Burial goods have likewise been used to attribute the cremation in Brighton to an older female. Here, the two female pipeclay busts (nos. 243, 248) were found

inside a wooden casket with a small flagon, five ceramic saucers, a small black burnished ware jar, a flagon, samian pottery, a glass container and flask, a wooden disc, a bronze brooch, bronze wire, a large hanging iron oil-lamp holder, iron hooks and a handle, and iron nails (Kelly & Dudley 1981, 83-8). Additionally, the possible cremation burial at Brougham has been attributed to a teenager or adult – also possibly a female - based on the grave goods. These included a glass bead, a bone veneer, worked bone objects, a copper-alloy bucket, iron nails and fragments and pottery, plus a gold chain and two glass beads (Cool 2004: 122-4). The burial goods assemblage from Godmanchester has also be attributed to a young female child based on the two small bangles (one small copper-alloy snake head bangle terminal and one small twisted iron wire bangle) found along with the two horse and bull figurines (nos. 736-7).

A close look at the burial structures of and burial goods from burials with pipeclay objects in Britain can also give a useful insight into the social status of the deceased and the people that conducted these funerary practices. Overall there is some indication from these features that pipeclay burials were higher-status practices. Taking burial structures first, the second century child inhumation burial from a cemetery in Baldock, Cambridgeshire, provides a useful starting point (Burleigh *et al.* 2006). Here, the decayed bones of a one-year old child were found inside the remains of a small tapered wooden coffin roughly one metre long alongside a number of nails that held the sides of the coffin together. Inside the grave were three small caskets. The first, on the child's chest, contained a decayed organic material - possibly clothing or a wooden item. Soil stains indicate that the second casket stood by the child's feet, and a group of nails in the eastern corner of the coffin showed the third casket's position. A single intact Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 718) was found lying close to the first casket and seems to have been placed on the upper chest and neck of the infant. Densely-packed groups of nails and wooden remains to the east and south-east of the coffin are probably part of a larger superstructure (Fig. 9.21). The large size and unusual layout of this grave indicates that it was

a high-status burial. In their analysis, Burleigh *et al.* (2006: 282-3) suggest that the grave's large superstructure, as well as the elaborate position of the pipeclay figurine, could mean that this burial was left open for a period of public viewing before it was closed, drawing attention to the theatrical nature of some burial practices in Roman Britain. The likelihood that this is a high-status burial – and the figurine an important part of it - is further suggested by the fact that this grave was the only one out of 1,800 burials from the Roman cemetery at Baldock with this kind of structure and contained a pipeclay figurine. The figurine itself was also intact (Burleigh *et al.* 2006: 278).

The lead coffins in the burials at Arrington and London also reflect a consistent high-status burial practice. Even though the London coffin is larger (1.67m) than the one from Arrington (1.02m), each was constructed in a similar way and featured an exterior wooden lining. At Arrington, the coffin was made from a single piece of lead decorated with a pattern of chords and double bars around the lid, and around one long and both short sides, with the lid loosely placed on top (Taylor 1993: 193). The coffin in London was made from two lead sheets with impressed bead-and-reel decoration on the lid – the lid again not fixed but



*Fig. 9. 21. Dea Nutrix figurine (left), child inside wooden coffin (middle) and burial superstructure (right) in Grave 3960 from the Roman cemetery at Baldock, Hertfordshire, from Burleigh et al. 2006: figs. 7-9.*

hammered down - with two cross-strips dividing the top panel into three sections, with a decorated surface on the inside (Wardle *et al.* 2000:186). Taylor's (1993: 209-12) update of Toller's (1977) survey of Roman lead coffins in Britain notes that of the 266 known examples, over half are from urban centres, and far fewer are from villas, temples and forts. Like the graves at Arrington and London, one in three of these coffins contained infants or children and most included grave goods of a substantial quality (Taylor 1993: 209). The two burials from Arrington and London therefore fit with the general pattern of this second to fourth century high-status burial practice. However, that these are the only two coffins with pipeclay figurines makes them even more unusual.

As well as grave structures, grave goods can give a useful impression of the social status of pipeclay burials. In general, pipeclay objects occur in burials with a wide range and quality of other objects, from pottery and glass vessels, to metal objects and coins, and most burials contain broadly similar assemblages, many of which are indicative of wealth (such as at Arkesden, Arrington, Colchester, Godmanchester, Hawkedon, London, St Albans and Welwyn). Additionally, certain burials contain unusual and exotic objects that are not only high status but might also symbolise cultural origins and beliefs. Along with the large collection of pipeclay figurines and busts from the grave at Arrington, for example, this burial also contained dyed textile fragments and rare and luxurious aromatic resin that is not only rare for Roman Britain but was also probably imported at great expense to the owner (Taylor 1993: 208).

Other notable 'high-status' burial goods from pipeclay burials include the fragments of bone from a funerary couch at Colchester (Eckardt 1999: 77), similar pieces of bone veneer found with an unknown deity figurine (no. 950) from Catterick, Yorkshire (David Griffiths, pers. comm.) and Brougham (Cool 2004: 122-4), the glass vessels and miniature glass bowl, gold earrings and coin, and un-paralleled bone *pyxis* from burial B392 in London (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9), the coloured glass vessels from St Albans (Jenkins 1977: 329, no. 4; Alcock



1980: 50), the large assemblage of pottery wares and metal objects, including an iron hanging lamp holder, similar to the one from the Colchester Child's Grave, at Brighton (Kelly & Dudley 1981: 83-8), and gold objects from Godmanchester – (e.g. a gold rivet - Taylor 1997: 387) and Brougham (a gold chain, as well as two glass beads – Cool 2004: 122-4).

There are of course burials with smaller, poorer quality, grave good assemblages that could be considered as less opulent and thus lower in status but these are far fewer in number. These burials include the burial in a cemetery at Carlisle that contained a Venus figurine (no. 81) that was found with two small earthenware vessels, one containing burnt bone, and at Baldock, where the Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 718) was found with a small assemblage that included only hobnails, a pair of shoes and three small wooden caskets (Burleigh et al. 2006: 279-81). However, as discussed, this burial's superstructure suggests that it was a high-status deposit, and was probably part of changing pipeclay burial rites in Britain (discussed further below).

Another burial with a less affluent grave good assemblage is the Antonine period child cremation at Puckeridge, Hertfordshire (Jenkins 1977: 373, no. 6) which contained the Type 1 bust of a woman (no. 247) as well as a pottery urn and glass bowl, inside of which were calcined bones. Yet this deposit is perhaps more high-status than it first appears and I say this for three reasons. Firstly, it is possible that there were expensive organic offerings inside of the bowl, but residue analysis has not been conducted on the inside of it. Secondly, complete glass bowls are relatively rare finds in Roman Britain and most vessels are usually represented by fragments (Philpott 1991: 115; e.g. Cool & Price 1995: 234-5). Overall, the presence of glass became increasingly common in cremation burials from the first century but its use was not widespread. Cemeteries at Colchester and Lankhills in Winchester, for example (Cool & Price 1995: 234), contained little glass over the whole Roman period but in general the assemblage was evenly distributed between drinking vessels and those used for serving and storing liquids. As part of

this, Cool and Price (*ibid*) conclude that it is ‘normal’ to find one glass vessel in a burial and that more than one vessel could potentially indicate a higher-status grave. Consequently, and thirdly, another glass bowl has been found from another high-status burial – burial B392 in London (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9). Interestingly, this glass bowl was also found with two glass bottles, while elsewhere multiple glass vessels were found in the Colchester Child’s Grave. As such, this could suggest that the Puckeridge burial was therefore also a high-status one but perhaps was slightly less-so given the single vessel and smaller assemblage overall.

With that said, six pipeclay burials (roughly a third of the burials) contain glass, these spanning the first to fourth centuries. Three of these graves contained a single vessel: a square green bottle from St. Albans, a glass flask from Brighton and the bowl at Puckeridge. The other three graves, however, contained more than one glass object, with the Child’s Grave at Colchester having two complete glass flasks and the 10 glass fragments, and four glass vessels coming from the cremation at Welwyn. The largest collection though is from London, where a glass dish and two glass bottles were found with the miniature glass bowl in burial B392 (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9). This relatively high proportion of pipeclay burials containing glass seems to suggest that many of these deposits were high-status graves, with those with multiple vessels possibly belonging to a slightly wealthier group still than the others.

There are, of course, some burials on the Continent that mirror this association between pipeclay figurines and burial rites of children, some of which may be higher-status individuals (see, for instance, Coulon 2004: 108-9 for an example of a child grave with pipeclay figurines in France, and Grünwald 1990 for a comparable burial with pipeclay objects from Worms). Another good example comes from Rottweil in Germany, where nine pipeclay figurines of cockerels, doves, dogs and a goddess tentatively identified as Hebe were found in a late first century cremation of a child aged between ten and fourteen (Grave 384 in Fecher & Burger-Heinrich 2010: 53, fig. 45, pls. 153-4). Another example that reflects well the social status and

identity of the individual buried and the group that buried them is from Bingen am Rhein in the Rhineland-Palatinate area of Germany, where a pipeclay figurine of Fortuna was this time found in the grave of an adult who may well have been physician based on the rich collection of medical instruments found with them (Boekel 1987: 240). Much more work is required on the finds from the Continent before we can be sure about the nature and geographic extent of pipeclay-related burial rites and the status and identities of the people and groups involved across the western provinces, let alone if there are any potential differences in this practice between Britain and the Continent, but I am of the opinion that it is well worth pursuing.

### ***Changes in Pipeclay Burial Practices in Britain***

The grave goods and dating of pipeclay burials demonstrates how this practice changed over time (Tab. 9.6) but due to the small number of only eight dated burials it is probably unwise to describe these as ‘trends’. For the purpose of this analysis the eight securely dated burials from Arrington, Baldock, Brighton, Colchester, Godmanchester, London, Puckeridge and St. Albans have been used. Combined, these provide 49 out of the 62 finds from burial contexts and most likely provide the best impression of how this particular burial rite changed over time.

It could be argued that the possible cremation burial from Brougham should be included in this analysis but I am not convinced and have excluded it for two reasons. Firstly, although it may be an exception to the rule, the deposit dates from AD 280/85 to 300/310 and thus does not align with the general pattern of pipeclay burial activity as outlined below. Secondly, it comes from a disturbed area of unstratified fill that contained a lot of other cremation material and is probably redeposited pyre debris (Cool 2004: 121-4) that does not reflect a single burial.

Table 9.6 shows the context details of all the pipeclay burials with grave goods that are dated. The first point to note is that up to six burials are of children and that these span the first

to fourth centuries, with five identified by osteological evidence and one suggested by the character of the grave good assemblage. Secondly, cremations with relatively high-status grave good assemblages began in the mid-first century and continued until the mid to late second century. The cremation burial with grave goods from Arkesden tentatively dated AD 190-200 also seems to belong to this group. From the mid-second century inhumation burials with pipeclay figurines and exotic and luxurious high status grave goods start to emerge, with these all being placed outside of primary coffin structures – a practice that lasted at least until the mid-second century based on the evidence from B392 in London. Whereas these child inhumations continued into the fourth century, this period also did see a slight change in how burial goods were used, with the Baldock grave maybe suggesting not only a switch to less luxurious items during an otherwise high-status burial rite, but also alternatively placing grave goods inside of the coffin's structure itself. Additional evidence is, of course, necessary to determine if Baldock really reflects a significant change in pipeclay burial rites in Britain, but it might.

Although these chronological 'trends' are tentative they do share some features with the wider general pattern of changing burial rites that occurred in Britain from the second to fourth centuries (Alcock 1981; Philpott 1991: 8, 53–7; Pearce 2013: 147–50). For instance, cremation was the typical burial rite in the first century and it was only in the second century that inhumation burials became more prevalent. Many cremations, like those with pipeclay objects at Colchester and Brighton, were furnished with pottery vessels, such as flagons, bottles, cups, beakers, bowls, platters, lamps and *tazze*. Non-ceramics also feature but much less frequently than ceramics, with personal ornaments (brooches, bracelets and pins) as well as shoes, lamps and coins often included (see Philpott 1991: 8). The development of inhumation burial rites during the second century was a complex one, but may account for

Site	Type	Age/Gender (evidence type)	Grave Goods	Inside Grave/ Outside Grave	Date
Colchester	Cremation	Child/Unknown (grave goods)	13 pipeclay figurines/busts, 10 animal vessels, 1 samian plate, 1 Central Gaulish lead-glazed cup, 3 flagons and 1 'feeding bottle', 1 Lyon ware cup, 2 coarse ware cups and 1 flagon, 1 clay lamp, 2/3 glass vessels, 1 bronze patera, 600 bone fragments of a funerary couch and 36 coins	N/A	Claudian-Neronian
St Albans	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Venus figurine, 1 square green glass bottle containing the ashes, 1 samian dish, 1 tall glass bottle and 1 white glass bottle	N/A	Hadrian-Antonine
Puckeridge	Cremation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	1 woman's bust, 1 pottery urn and 1 glass bowl	N/A	Antonine
Godmanchester	Cremation	Child/Female (osteological)	1 samian jar containing 2 pipeclay animals, 1 copper-alloy snake head bangle, 1 iron wire bangle, 3 pots, 1 copper-alloy fitting and 1 gold rivert (wooden box decoration?)	N/A	Mid C2nd
Brighton	Cremation	Unknown/Female? (grave goods)	2 pipeclay busts; 1 small flagon, 5 wheel-made saucers, 1 black burnished ware jar, samian pottery, 1 glass flask and 1 container, 1 wooden disc, bronze box fittings, 1 bronze brooch, pieces of bronze wire, 1 iron hanging oil-lamp holder, 1 iron ring handle, 1 iron hook, iron nails, 1 iron spike, 1 iron angle, pieces of iron and 1 pot	N/A	AD 150/65-200
Arksden	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 2 samian pateras, 1 complete samian bowl, 1 small flagon, 1 miniature platter, a large embossed samian bowl, 1 tall waisted Castor beaker	N/A	Unknown
Brougham	Cremation	Teen-adult/Female (grave goods)	1 Venus figurine, 1 copper-alloy bucket, iron nails and fragments, 1 bone vaneer, 1 worked bone object, 1 glass bead, fragments of samian (burnt), 1 gold chain, 2 glass beads	N/A	Unknown
Catterick	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 deity figurine, bone vaneers	N/A	Unknown
Hawkedon	Cremation?	Unknown/Unknown	2 Venus figurines, 1 amphora/dolium from Spain, nails	N/A	Unknown
Snodland	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 2 samina cups, 2 samian dishes, 1 large pot, 1 incomplete narrow-necked vase, 1 beaker, 1 plain curved bronze handle, 1 mirror fragment, fragments of a calcined bone	N/A	Unknown
Welwyn	Cremation	Unknown/Unknown	1 woman's bust, 1 cinerary urn, 1 beaker, a bronze ring, 1 small dragon-shape bronze fibula around the figurine's neck. Fragments of an iron lamp holder, 4 glass vessels, 1 pot and 1 palette nearby.	N/A	Unknown
Arrington	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	10 pipeclay figurines/busts, 1 decorated lead coffin, 1 wooden box, fabrics and incense residue	Outside lead coffin/inside wooden exterior?	Mid C2nd
London	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	3 Venus figurines, 1 decorated lead coffin, 1 glass dish, 1 miniature glass bowl, 2 glass bottles, 1 pair of gold earrings, 1 gold coin, 1 bone pyxis and 1 ivory figurine	Outside lead coffin/inside wooden exterior	AD 250-350
Baldock	Inhumation	Child/Unknown (osteological)	1 Dea Nutrix figurine, 3 small wooden caskets, hobnails and 1 pair of leather shoes	Inside	Early C4th
Carlisle	Unknown	Unknown/Unknown	1 Venus figurine, 2 small earthenware vessels, 1 containing burnt bone	N/A	Unknown
Welwyn, The Grange	Unknown	Unknown/Unknown	1 samian bowl, 1 coarseware jug, 1 greyware beaker with stump foot, 1 flagon with red slip handle	N/A	Unknown

Tab. 9. 6. Context and grave good details of dated pipeclay burials in Roman Britain. Blue = cremation burials; Pink = inhumation burials; Grey = unknown burial type.

some of the changes we see in pipeclay burial practices. Philpott (1991: 55-7), for example, notes that early inhumation graves, like the one in Arrington - where the pipeclay objects were possibly put in a wooden box and placed on top of the lead coffin (Taylor 1993: 194), London – where the grave goods in burial B392 were mainly placed around the head-end of the grave (Wardle *et al.* 2000: 188-9), and Baldock where the Dea Nutrix figurine (no. 718) was carefully placed on top of the child's chest (Burleigh *et al.* 2006: 281, fig.7), were often carefully arranged with more valuable grave goods, including textiles (see Arrington – Taylor 1993: 194, 203), particularly in the south-east. However, by the third and fourth centuries cremations were rarely furnished (Philpott 1991: 55-7), more like the pipeclay burial at Baldock, but where the grave superstructure and figurine itself adds to the status of the burial. These differences in burial practice were, on the other hand, by no means absolute, as, for example, shows by the pipeclay cremations at St. Albans and Puckeridge dated to the Antonine period that are arguably less ornately furnished than others of the same period. Such differences, as Philpott (1991: 57) implies, may highlight slighter differences in social attitudes, beliefs, and the wealth and social status of the dead and the groups that buried them in Britain.

Even though pipeclay graves are just a small part of these changing burial rites in Roman Britain, they might reflect the funerary practices of a particular cultural group or groups, although this is hard to justify because they do not appear in obvious clusters. This is suggested by the fact that most pipeclay objects from burials are different forms and types to those that were produced only in Gaul and the Rhine-Moselle region. However, it is more difficult to explain why pipeclay objects started to appear in Romano-British burials, why there is some variety between them, and why this practice changed over time. One idea is that such variations indicate the arrival and continued presence of newcomers in the province from the Continent. This would certainly account for the rare pipeclay objects we see in the province, mainly from Gaul, but also the Matrona and Cloaked Figure produced in the Rhine-Moselle region that were

found with exotic incense from Arrington that may have belonged to incomers who lived nearby or were just passing through the area (Taylor 1993: 208). Taylor (*ibid*) also points out that this burial is exotic for Cambridgeshire and that the movement of people along Ermine Street - a highway connecting London and York, each of which have similar lead coffins – is a likely reason why this unusual burial was placed in this part of the county. The cremation at Godmanchester – also on Ermine Street - could also be considered as ‘foreign’ due to its unusual location outside of the town walls and dissimilarity to other cremations that have been found in the area, and was perhaps left by another travelling family that stayed for a period in the settlement (Taylor 1997: 393). As such, while many other grave goods from pipeclay burials might not explicitly suggest the presence of foreigners or a recognised Romano-British sub-culture, it is the pipeclay objects themselves that indicate such groups from different areas of the Continent.

### ***Pipeclay and Metal Figurine Burial Practices in Britain***

Despite similar numbers of metal figurines (c. 1000) and pipeclay objects (t=946) having been found in Britain, far fewer metal figurines come from graves. In fact, Durham’s (2010) work has shown that only five come from such contexts. These are from a range of site types. A ‘Male Deity’ (no. 671) comes from Grave 543 at the *Civitas capital* of Poundbury dated to the fourth century, and a Mouse (no. 875) is from an undated grave from the *Colonia* at York (*ibid*: 89, table 6; Fig. 9.22). The three other figurines, a Cupid (no. 68), a boar (no. 98) and a base (no. 1151), are from the much earlier high status Lexden tumulus that is dated c.15-10 B. C (Foster 1986; Durham 2010: 138, 241). Other metal figurines are known from cemeteries but are from non-burial related features, such as ditches that, like pipeclay objects from similar contexts, may or may not have been used for funerary activities. All of this implies that metal

figurines were not part of normal burial rites and practices in Roman Britain (Durham 2010: 102).

Even though the number of metal figurines from burials is too few to draw any firm conclusions about their use (excluding Lexden there are only three metal figurines from graves) it is worth briefly commenting on a couple of the differences between them and the group of pipeclay figurines from burials. Firstly, the lower proportion of metal (0.5% of the total metal assemblage) compared to pipeclay (6.5% of the pipeclay assemblage) finds from burials suggests that the latter were more widely used for funerary practices. Secondly, the metal figurines and pipeclay objects used in burials appear to be slightly different. For example, while the pipeclay objects from burials are mainly common figurine types depicting deities (female goddesses), followed by animal and human depictions, metal figurines appear to be a small selection of slightly rarer types – although these are by no means the rarest male deity and animal types in metal (Durham 2010: 42, table 2 and 68, table 4) from the assemblage. It is



*Fig. 9. 22. Metal figurines from graves. Left - Male deity 671 from Poundbury, Dorset, in Davies 1987, fig. 70.6. Right - Mouse 875 from York, from Durham 2010 pls. 171 and 293.*



likely that these metal objects were deposited by individual or small groups, and do not represent the general practices of users.

As shown in Chapters 5 and 8, the evidence from Britain indicates that pipeclay objects were more mass-produced objects that were probably cheaper than metal figurines but that they were not necessarily used as alternatives to metal figurines. This is true in occupation contexts where they may have been used similarly, but also in religious contexts, such as at temples and here, in burials, where use is different. The numbers of metal figurines in burials are low and it could be that most people chose not to use more valuable metal figurines for this purpose, but it is hard to know if this is a trend. One of the most revealing differences, however, is the greater use of metal figurines in hoards, which probably indicates their greater value overall. Overall then, pipeclay objects and metal figurines from burial contexts probably are associated with the different religious beliefs and funerary practices of different social groups.

### ***Summary***

Overall, pipeclay objects were used in Romano-British burials almost exclusively in the south-east where they are rare but found in cemeteries in large urban centres and near smaller towns. Their use began in cremations in the mid-first century and peaked in the second century when inhumations with them are more common, before this trend declined in the third to fourth centuries. Most of the burials are cremations, all of which are earlier in date, while two of the three inhumation burials are later third to fourth century deposits. Most burials include common forms (i.e. figurine or busts), types of deities (i.e. Venus and Dea Nutrix), animals (bulls and horses) and humans (busts of women and children). However, the burials from Arrington and Colchester both stand out for their large collections and range of rare and exotic types. Some burnt figurines may evidence graveside rituals. There also appears to be a close relationship

between pipeclay objects in burials and children - especially those that were sick - while grave structures and goods suggest that pipeclay burials were a higher-status funerary rite in Britain that were probably carried out by a small group of foreigners who were mainly from Gaul.

## **Conclusion**

The religious symbolism of pipeclay objects in Britain is suggested by their iconography but this chapter has considered the evidence for their ritual use in Roman Britain by looking at the finds from the explicitly ritual contexts of hoards, sanctuaries and burials.

Pipeclay objects are not found in hoards but do occur in small numbers at temples and in smaller numbers in burials in the south-east of Roman Britain. In general, the use of pipeclay objects in temples and burials reflects general consumption patterns in Britain with an emphasis on Venus figurines from the second to fourth centuries, but with differences in their distributions: temples were located in small towns or isolated rural locations and burials are usually found in the countryside, small towns as well as some larger urban settlements. In both cases there are unusual collections of forms and types that reflect possible variations in beliefs and ritual practice between individuals and groups, such as at the 'temple' site at Ashwell and the burials at Arrington and Colchester. Most of the pipeclay objects from temples and burials are closely associated with healing, fertility and protection, with a particularly close association between pipeclay figurines and busts with child burials that seems to be concentrated in south-eastern Britain, while there is little evidence of graveside rituals (i.e. burning). Finally, comparing the types and distributions of pipeclay objects and metal figurines from temples and burials suggests that these two object types were not used in the same way in these contexts, or by the same people, with pipeclay objects probably used by a different group of people who

may well have been less wealthy than the very few people who seemed to have used a small number of metal figurines for funerary practices.

## Chapter 10. Broken Gods

From just a quick glance at the collection of pipeclay figurines from Britain it is immediately clear that most of the finds are fragments, and that there are only a small number of complete figurines – nearly all of which are from burials. An assumption is usually made, in Roman archaeology especially, that broken or fragmented finds can tell us little about the way in which objects, like figurines, were used in the past, or the practices they were associated with. This is because objects are usually broken in areas that are considered to be ‘natural’ areas of weakness that are typically taken to be accidental damage, but here I wish to argue that not all breakage patterns are necessarily because of these kinds of processes, and that by making use of experimental methods it is possible to cast more light on the practices associated with broken ceramic Roman figurines than previously thought.

To set the scene, the first part of this chapter briefly outlines how fragmentation studies have developed within prehistoric archaeology and highlights how this approach has been successfully applied to the study of ceramic figurines, before summarising its limited application in terms of Roman ceramic figurines. The main part of the chapter goes on to identify different patterns of fragmentation amongst the large assemblage of Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines, and discusses the theoretical and contextual problems that makes interpreting them difficult. Given this, a series of experiments breaking replica Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines is then carried out to differentiate between ‘natural’ breaks more likely to be the result of accidental actions and breaks more likely to have been caused deliberately. This is followed by a discussion about the ritual practices that may be associated with individual ceramic heads and a comparison with metal statue heads and metal figurines that highlights whether there are

any differences in practice, wealth and status between the different social groups that used figurines.

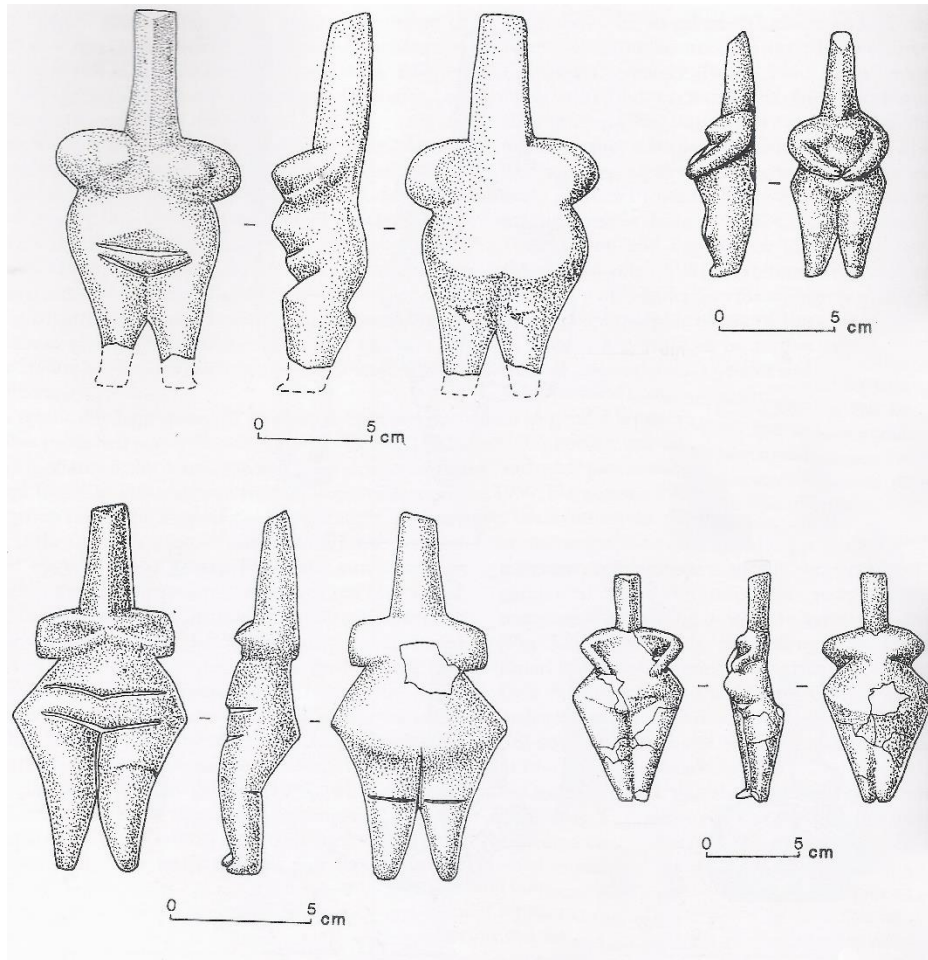
### **Fragmentation in Prehistory**

Over the past twenty years, fragmentation studies examining how and why objects that were used by people in the past are broken have become increasingly popular amongst archaeologists. The aim of these studies has been to gain a better understanding of how people interacted with the objects they used and the practices they conducted through deliberate acts of breakage (see Brittain & Harris 2010 for a general overview of the approach and the theoretical implications). Most of this kind of research has been developed within the field of prehistory, where a pioneer of the technique, John Chapman, has produced the most influential studies examining the fragmented prehistoric (Mesolithic to Copper-Age) material culture of the Balkans (2000, 2007, 2008, 2012). As well as recognising meaningful and deliberate fragmentation patterns amongst the archaeological record, much of Chapman's work is based on how relatively mundane objects, such as pottery and items of personal adornment, were deliberately broken and deposited by prehistoric societies as part of practices that constituted part of their social and cultural identities. Chapman's research also shows that deliberately breaking such objects and depositing them in different ways through different practices formed and entrenched important social relationships between individuals and different social groups as part of complex processes linked to expressions of identity and personhood.

In Britain, the deliberate fragmentation of objects is often seen as a symbolic act linked with creating economic and social relationships. For example, Bradley and Edmonds (1993), and others (Oswald *et al.* 2001; Ray 2015: 170), have observed that only the fragments of certain axe types are usually found at 'trading-sites' and that these may have been broken deliberately to form and entrench strong and lasting trading relationships between different

communities. Bradley (1985) has also noted that fragmented Bronze Age artefacts and their distributions may too reflect long-distance trade and exchange relationships between different societies in Britain and beyond. One of the most best examples of this is the case of two joining fragments of a Bronze Age sword that were recovered from two separate hilltops three kilometres apart either side of the River Trent in Staffordshire (Bradley & Ford 2004). One of the two sword pieces is more worn than the other, suggesting different histories of use, but the deposition of both pieces in similar contexts on inter-visible hilltops either side of the same river suggests a lasting social relationship between the people who buried them and their awareness that the pieces are from the same object (Brück & Fontijn 2013: 205).

Prior to Chapman's seminal work on the subject in 2000, few scholars had identified that broken prehistoric terracotta figurines may have had important roles to play in how these societies created, maintained and perceived their identities and social relationships, but Chapman's analysis of *Hamangia* figurines (2000: 75-9), further developed in Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 57-70 – see Fig. 10.1), highlighted what a methodical fragmentation-contextual approach can reveal about the social significance of such objects. Focussing on *Hamangia* figurines from Baltic Neolithic settlements such as Durankulak, Chapman and Gaydarska have shown that the number of heads, torsos and lower body part fragments from habitation contexts within the settlement are far higher than the more-complete and whole figurines from funerary contexts. The authors argue that the greater number of incomplete figurines from habitation contexts symbolise a range of engendered forms (from males/female to hermaphrodites), showing that gender was an important and complex aspect of life for this Neolithic society, and that different pieces may have circulated between people and communities to entrench social relationships and/or as part of an ancient ancestor cult. This



*Fig. 10. 1. Androgynous Hamangia figurines, from Chapman & Gaydarska 2007: 60, fig 3.2.*

contrasts to the less fragmented, more complete, figurines from burial contexts that, either taken out of their normal ‘habitational life-cycle’ before they were broken or as reserved grave goods, symbolise the gender-neutral, or androgynous, status that people attained upon death.

Since Chapman, fragmentation has become a prominent aspect within prehistoric figurine research, leading to several other studies on the topic. It has been argued in Neolithic Greece, for instance, that the different anthropomorphic body parts of terracotta figurines found in different parts of this region over time may symbolise complex social practices and the subtly different ethnic identities of the people that lived in each area (Nanoglou 2005). Nakamura and Meskell (2009) have similarly demonstrated that some of the clay and stone anthropomorphic

figurines from Çatalhöyük that prominently depict certain body parts specifically materialized the human body in a way that reflected the identities, embodied experience and complex social practices and attitudes of the people that used them. In this case the authors argue that figurines with prominent breasts, stomachs and buttocks may have been broken to further emphasise these features, and that this might be related to engendered meanings associated with sexual maturity, fertility and protection during childbirth. These ‘idealised forms’ of the human body in turn are linked with the wider complex attitudes and beliefs of prehistoric people and the practices they conducted that ensured the prosperity of their society and culture.

### **Fragmentation in Roman Material Culture Studies**

In contrast, fragmentation studies have so far made only a little impact on our understanding of Roman material culture, where the few studies that have taken place concentrate more on monumental statuary rather than the practices associated with smaller portable figurines. The potential of the approach was realised as early as the 1970s when Merrifield commented that figurines (including those of ceramic, metal and stone) may well have been deliberately broken for ritual or magical purposes in settlements such as London (1977; 1987: 96-106). A subsequent paper by Croxford (2003) took a closer look at this idea. Analysing the various degrees of fragmentation amongst monumental statuary at temples sites such as Uley, Caerleon, Colchester and London - which included an abundance of heads – Croxford concluded that the heads may have been deliberately broken as part of pagan, ritual or magical practices rather than during iconoclastic attacks by Christians in the fifth and sixth centuries.

Croxford’s subsequent PhD (2008; see also a short paper on a gilt-bronze arm from London (Bayley *et al.* 2009)) extends this discussion to other Roman sculpture in Britain within the context of their ‘life-cycles’. He points out that ‘describing sculpture as fragmentary does



little to describe the condition or explain the various ways in which this may come about' and that it is important to consider all the possibilities and processes related to why and how such objects might have been broken, both initially and subsequently – from depositional fragmentation, to the deliberate removal of statue heads or metal figurine body-parts because of religious beliefs and motivations (2008: 306-8) in the Roman period or later. However, Croxford does not explore whether or why figurines (both in metal and pipeclay) were also broken in this way and whether these were part of similar religious or ritual practices.

More recent studies have attempted to rectify the situation with many discussions about the dedication of anatomical votives in Gaul and Italy emerging (see, for example, Draycott & Graham 2017 for several papers about the topic; Derks 2014 and Hughes 2017 for such material from Gaul; and Scopacasa 2015 for such material from Italy; see also Ferris (2012: 61-4) for a cursory look at some of the anatomical votives from Britain and Europe, including pipeclay figurines of Venus). Most of these studies analyse anatomical objects like heads and individual limbs that were deposited in 'special' places in votive contexts. Interestingly, some of these anatomical finds, like much of the material from Italy, were crafted as individual objects and were not broken off from larger compositions like much of the material from Gaul (including the pipeclay figurines I consider below) that was, and this might reflect variations of a similar kind of practice. Yet much of this material has been interpreted in a broadly similar way; as religious dedications deposited in shrines and temples that reflect parts of the body that were healed. Two often-cited examples of this kind of activity come from the healing sanctuary at the Ponte di Nona near Rome in Italy (Potter & Wells 1985) and another sanctuary at the source of the Seine, France (Deytes 1966) where several bronze, stone and ceramic anatomical body-parts were found in what have been interpreted as votive contexts. These, it is argued, may well have been specially made and selected objects that people chose to dedicate either in hope or thanks that the specific body-part in question had been or would be healed by the gods.

If metal, stone and other terracotta figurines were deliberately broken for ritual practices it is possible that some pipeclay figurines from Britain and the Continent were as well. While this possibility has been raised about broken Venus figurines before (Fig. 10.2; Ferris 2009; 2012: 121), my recent work on the Venus figurines from London has investigated this further (Fittock 2015: 125-9). This study pointed out that, unlike other anatomical votives from Italy for instance, the surviving fragments of Venus from Britain and France were not individually crafted body-parts but body-parts broken off from complete figurines. This potentially suggests some kind of customisation by the people that owned and used them for this purpose. In doing so the same study additionally identified two patterns; firstly, a high proportion of mid-to-lower body parts, and secondly, few heads, and further suggested that they may have been intentionally broken. I will explore the significance of this further below once I have analysed the full dataset of pipeclay figurines – especially of Venus - from Roman Britain.

### **The Fragmentation of Venus Figurines in Roman Britain**

The larger collection of pipeclay figurines from Britain presented in this thesis can now be analysed in the same way to see if there are any similar patterns amongst the material and obtain a more representative idea about the significance of broken figurines in the province. Only the large assemblage of deity figurines is likely to show any clear fragmentation patterns, and within this group, only the largest group of Venus figurines will provide clear patterns. The other pipeclay forms and types, such as the relatively small number of animal and human figurines and vessels, are just too few in number to analyse in the same way as Venus, although one or two observations can be made about them. Busts tend to break from their base or shatter into smaller pieces, and for animal figurine and vessels, there is no clear-cut pattern (i.e. it is not always the head that is missing). The fragmentation analysis that follows therefore focusses on the 359 (out of the 400) Venus figurines recorded from Roman Britain that have information

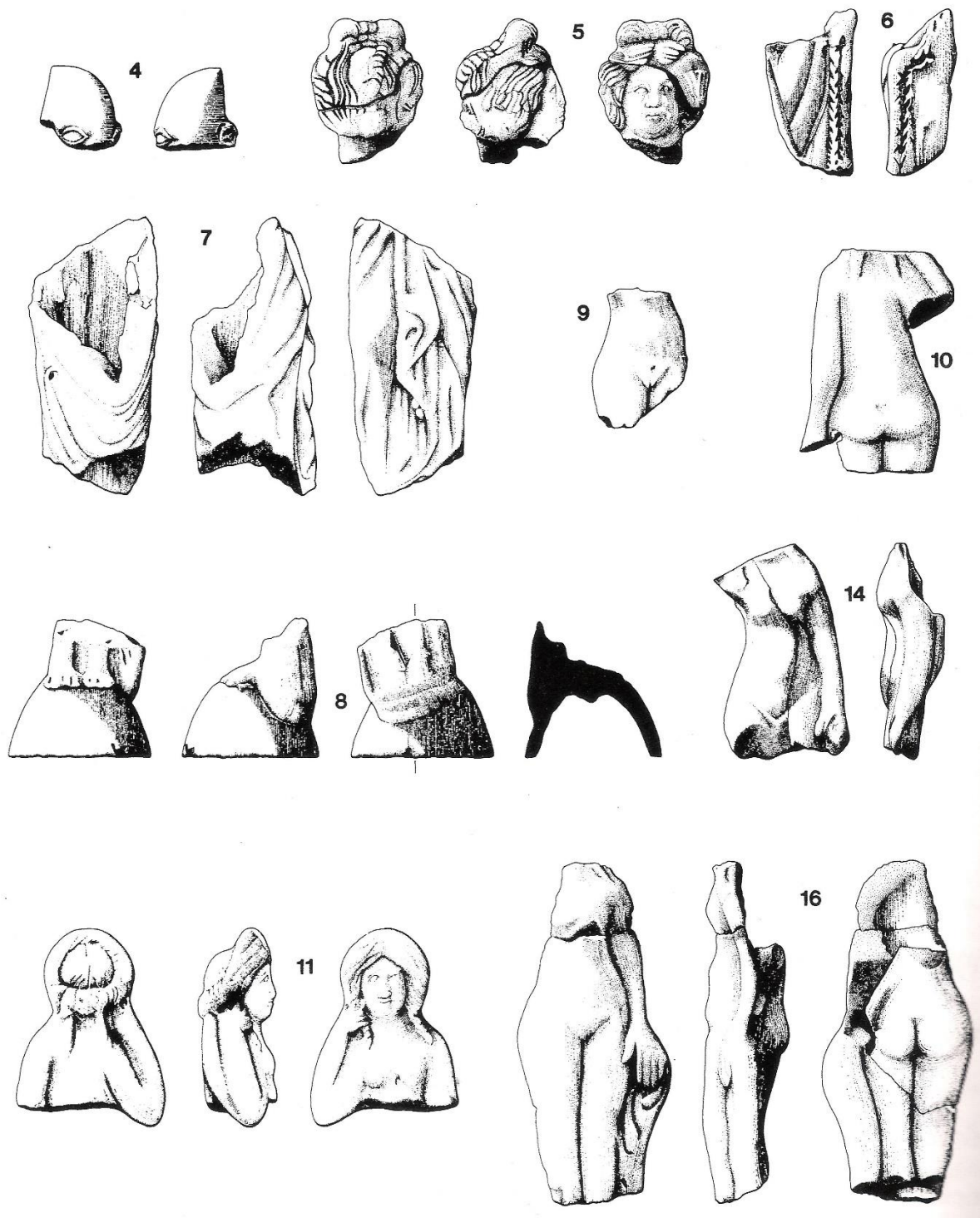


Fig. 10. 2. It has been suggested by Ferris that some of the pipeclay figurines from Caerleon's Canabae may have been broken deliberately (from Evans 2000: 300, fig. 72).

recorded about their surviving body parts but also highlights any other notable patterns amongst the other figurine groups that may be significant.

Fragmentation patterns of Venus figurines can be identified by distinguishing between the different body-parts that survive (e.g. Chapman & Gaydarska 2007: 62–4; Fittock 2015: 125-6). Categorising these into five areas (Fig. 10.3) that can be combined into a maximum of eight configurations and counting them shows that 22 of the Venus fragments are heads; 14 preserve the head, torso and body; 59 the torso and body; 21 the torso, body and legs; 30 the legs; 106 the feet and base, four the torso, body, legs, feet and base; and six the head, torso, body and legs. The remaining seven Venus figurines are whole specimens with no indication that they have been broken at any stage. Presenting these data in graph form (Fig. 10.4) shows that middle to lower body-parts, or figurines missing the head, torso, feet and base to leave fragments emphasising the female pubic area, are the most common surviving type of fragment associated with Venus figurines, while upper body parts like heads, upper to mid body-parts like torsos, and lower body-parts like legs, feet and bases are uncommon. It is also clear that whole Venus figurines are rare occurrences.

Although not systematically assessed in the same way, briefly looking at the other deity figurine types reveals that the absence of heads is a common pattern. This is most obvious amongst the Dea Nutrix figurines where 20 are missing their heads, including 11 of what would otherwise be complete figurines. There are also 14 Dea Nutrix heads. All the depictions of Minerva are headless as well, including the two near complete finds from London that are missing just this part of the body, as are two of the six Mercury figurines (nos. 239, 971). There is also one Mercury head (no. 851). This theme continues throughout the rest of the deities from Britain, with a Mars missing the head (no. 240), while fragments of Bacchus (no. 236), Luna (no. 221) and Juno (no. 518) preserve only the head (Fig. 10.5).

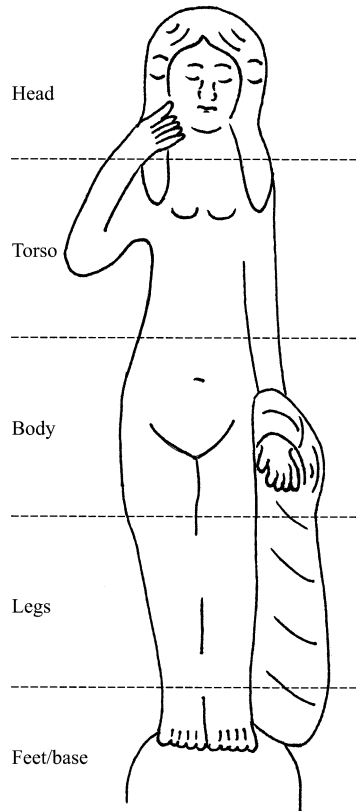


Fig. 10. 3. Venus figurine fragmentation types.

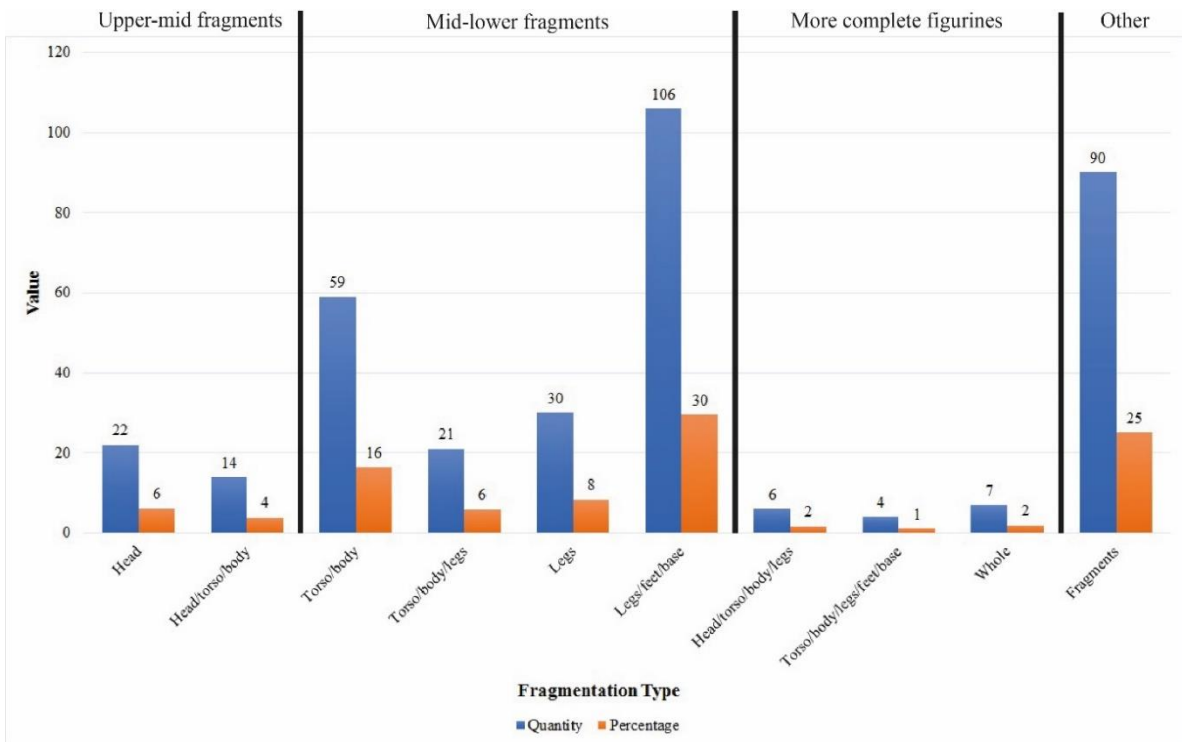


Fig. 10. 4. Venus figurine fragmentation graph (t=359).

Interestingly, the absence of deity figurine heads is in stark contrast to the composition of human figurines and busts from the province, several of which are unbroken and do have heads and are found in burial contexts such as the child graves at Colchester (Eckardt 1999) and Arrington (Taylor 1993). There is also the group of 10 animal vessels from the Colchester Child's Grave that are largely complete (nos. 312-21). There are some exceptions. For example, amongst the group of Thorn-Puller figurines, three out of the four are headless (nos. 270, 271, 711). Consequently, it is possible that most human figurines and busts were not used for fragmentation-related practices in the way that many of the deity figurines might have been and instead were often placed into burials intact.

The Venus fragments are hard to interpret, with several factors that make it difficult to tell if they are meaningful or not. The first problem is that as a relatively fragile material, figurines made of clay would have been particularly susceptible to accidental breaking by being dropped or knocked out of a household shrine onto a floor. They are also more likely to have been broken during the deposition process than figurines made of more robust material like metal and stone. In this respect it is perhaps not surprising that most Venus figurines are broken at the neck, waist and lower legs - areas that are their thinnest and therefore weakest anatomical parts, or, in other words, areas of 'natural' breakage. Gheorghiu (2006) suggests that certain prehistoric figurines may have been designed in such a manner so that they could be easily broken on purpose, but I do not think that this was the case for Venus figurines.

The second problem is that it is hard to know which of the Venus fragments were important and which were not. For instance, although mid-to-lower body parts, the saving of which may have been associated with fertility practices associated with Venus, could be deemed the most important parts because they are found more often (Fittock 2015: 128), it is perfectly possible that they were just the insignificant parts that were thrown away. In that case, rarer fragments such as heads that are generally underrepresented in the assemblage, may be



*Fig. 10. 5. Headless, and single heads of, deities. From top-left to bottom right: Venus Type 2 (no. 101), Venus Type 6 (no. 127), Dea Nutrix (no. 6), Mars (no. 240), Mercury (no. 239), Cybele (no. 860), Bacchus (no. 236), Luna (no. 221) and Juno (no. 518).*

the important parts. It is possible that these rare Venus fragments are associated with some sort of ritual practice. The absence of rare parts, such as heads, might imply that they stayed in circulation or were deposited elsewhere in archaeologically invisible ways. However, there is currently no strong evidence that highlights what people did with them or whether this was linked to any kind of ritual practice or practices.

In terms of context, almost all of the most common upper- and lower-body fragments of Venus come from occupation deposits that appear to be associated with refuse disposal. The development of methods to potentially identify whether a figurine fragment might have been significant in such deposits is a hotly contested field of study in fragmentation research. The general consensus is that it is not possible to do this (see Bailey 2001, 2005: 179; Milisauskas 2002). Chapman and Gaydarska (2007: 3) argue otherwise and propose that the presence of a single figurine fragment found alongside multiple other broken objects in a closed deposit might signify a deliberate act. This approach, which effectively aims to identify structured deposits (Garrow 2012; see also Richards & Thomas 1984), is particularly difficult to apply to Roman material when so little is known about what constitutes 'normal' rubbish (Eckardt 2006: 133), but has been explored several times looking at assemblages from sites such as Newstead, Scotland (Clark & Jones 1994: 119), Castleford, Yorkshire (Cool & Philo 1998: 362; Ferris 2012: 52), Orton's Pasture, Staffordshire (Ferris *et al.* 2000) and Great Holts Farm, Essex (Murphy *et al.* 2000). At several of these sites, single fragments of metal and terracotta objects, usually items of personal adornment, found in large refuse deposits have been interpreted as potentially having some kind of ritual significance, with some of the larger, more ornate, objects deposited as votive offerings. Hill (1995) has suggested that this kind of structured deposition was possibly a provincial-wide practice, although Garrow (2012: 114) is wary not to attribute all such deposits to ritual activity, and stresses that a better understanding of both everyday and 'structured deposits' is first needed to truly understand how significant they are.



As most of the Roman period Venus figurines in Britain were found as single fragments in apparent refuse deposits in urban and rural areas, it is possible, adopting the argument above, that they might reflect some kind of ritual activity. One possibility is that this was some kind of domestic ritual practice whereby the lower body fragments of the goddess were deposited to encourage the future fertility and protection of the household (Fittock 2015: 128). It is hard to know if Venus figurines were specifically selected and deliberately broken for this purpose, or indeed whether this was an actual ritual practice at all, since the vast majority of finds are broken in areas typically thought to be associated with ‘natural’ breakage. On the other hand, another possibility is that these Venus fragments were only used for such a purpose after being accidentally broken in the home, but overall their surviving form and contexts more strongly point towards them being broken pieces that were just thrown away rather than anything more meaningful. This is emphasised by the fact that the most ritually meaningful objects appear to be the complete finds from burial contexts.

Finally, it is also important to note that the way in which Venus, and other, pipeclay figurines are broken is quite different to how other stone and metal statuary from the province are. While pipeclay fragments tend to incorporate multiple bodily features into a single piece, such as the arms being attached to the torso, or both legs joined together, fragments of metal statuary found in Britain are either single body parts, such as individual heads, arms, legs or feet (M. Fulford pers. comm.). In contrast to ceramic figurines, most of the small metal figurines from Britain recorded by Durham (2012) are complete (Fig. 10.6). Durham also only records one single head from a metal figurine that might depict *Sucellus* (no. 644)? – while it has also been observed that small individual metal figurine body parts are very rare (Croxford 2003: 89).

There are several possible explanations for these patterns between metal and ceramic figurines. Modern factors such as the preference for complete artefacts is one, while ancient



*Fig. 10. 6. Complete metal Venus figurines from Britain (Durham 2012, nos. 137 & 132).*

factors are related to the ability to melt down and re-use broken metal objects and how much harder it is to break a metal figurine. Another idea is that the differences between metal and ceramic figurines might reflect different types of ritual practices as well as the different social status of the people and groups that used figurines of different relative value (i.e. cheaper ceramic and more valuable metal (see Chapter 8)). Furthermore, it is also possible that such a difference might reflect something about cultural differences between the users of metal and ceramic objects, with Gaulish pipeclay figurines used in one way, and locally produced metal figurines and statuary used in another.

### **Breakage Experiments**

Given the uncertainty about how Venus figurine fragments were broken and which ones, if any, were perhaps deliberately broken as part of a more significant ritual practice, it is worth considering whether there are any other techniques that might help highlight this more clearly.

To this end I have conducted a series of experiments in which replica ceramic figurines of Venus and Dea Nutrix were broken in several different ways and the resulting breakage patterns compared to the ancient figurines and fragments. Experimental breakage studies like this have proved useful in highlighting how prehistoric clay figurines were less susceptible to accidental damage than previously thought (e.g. Chapman & Gaydarska 2007: 7) but this is the first study of its kind to be conducted on Roman ceramic figurines. The work that follows will not only help better understand how pipeclay figurines of Venus and Dea Nutrix – and possibly others - were broken and the practices they may have been used for in Roman Britain, but also showcases how experimental methods can help us better understand the importance of broken Roman objects across the Western Provinces.

This new study has three main aims: firstly, to identify natural points of weakness and variations in how our ceramic figurines break; secondly, to see whether it is possible to identify and distinguish between deliberate and accidental breakage patterns; and thirdly, to identify which body parts might have been broken deliberately and might have been ritually significant.

As the two most common figurine types in Britain, these experiments focus on Type 1 and 2 Venus figurines and depictions of Dea Nutrix. To conduct an accurate and reliable test, replica ceramic figurines similar in form and composition to the ancient pipeclay ones were sourced from the reputable experimental potter Graham Webster – a specialist in ancient ceramic production and firing techniques (<http://www.pottedhistory.co.uk/>) - who provided six Venus and three Dea Nutrix figurines (Fig.10.7). Overall these replica figurines share many characteristics with the ancient finds in terms of their style, method of mould production and firing that make them particularly suitable for this kind of experiment. As well as the ancient and modern clays being kaolin based, the modern replicas are broadly similar in terms of size (height and width) and proportions, with the thinnest parts being the neck, waist and lower legs.



*Fig. 10. 7. Replica Venus (left and right) and Dea Nutrix (centre) figurines.*

There are some important differences that could affect the interpretation of the experiment's results. For example, although similar, the precise composition of the clay used to make the modern and ancient figurines is undoubtedly different having been sourced from different locations; the clay for the ancient pipeclay figurines comes from Central France while the clay for the replicas was obtained from Britain. Unlike their ancient predecessors the replica Venus figurines are also almost solid rather than hollow. In particular, much more clay has been used to make the modern Venus and Dea Nutrix replicas that gives them a much thicker profile than the ancient examples, making them harder to break. The Dea Nutrix replicas are also, on average, a little larger and heavier than the ancient pipeclay originals, which had the same effect. All of these aspects are concerning as they limit how representative the profiling of the broken modern figurines are to the Gallic pipeclay figurines, but the inability to experiment on

genuine finds and the unavailability of original source material means that these replicas are the most suitable alternative for this type of study.

To address the aims outlined above the replica figurines of Venus and Dea Nutrix were subjected to a number of different tests. The first experiment attempted to replicate accidental breakage patterns whereby a replica of each figurine type was dropped in two different ways onto two different types of surface/flooring (earthen and brick/tile). This was repeated four times on each surface from different heights, at 50cm intervals up to two metres, or until the figurine broke. To start with, a figurine was dropped when held flat, face-up and horizontal to the ground as if it were dropped when being carried. Another figurine was then toppled from a ledge when stood upright and facing-forward as if it were being knocked off of a shelf or shrine.

A second set of experiments was then carried out to replicate deliberate breakage patterns. Attempts were first made to break each figurine type by hand at their weakest points (i.e. the neck, waist and lower legs of Venus, and the neck of Dea Nutrix) before other replicas were broken at vulnerable points by striking them on the edge of a hard brick/tile surface with increasing intensity until they broke. As there were only a limited number of Venus figurines available, this experiment concentrated on breaking the replica figurines at weak-points that had not broken during the accidental phase, such as the neck of Venus. Dea Nutrix figurines were also broken at the neck for comparison with the 'accidental' results.

The result of each experiment was recorded in the form of written descriptions and digital photographs detailing the nature and extent of any damage sustained after each drop and/or breakage, and are documented in the 'Catalogue of Experiments' in Appendix 7.

### ***Results of Breakage Experiments and Discussion***

The results of these experiments help distinguish between accidental and deliberate breakage patterns. In terms of accidental actions or ‘natural’ breakage, experiment nos. 1 to 4 show that Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines did not break at all when dropped or toppled from height onto an earthen surface and that parts considered to be their weakest points, such as the legs, waist and neck of Venus, can withstand this sort of impact. The most surprising result was that even the very thin necks of the Dea Nutrix figurines remained intact despite some striking the surface head first on multiple occasions. These experiments highlight the durability of both of these ceramic figurine types when they are dropped on to this type of surface multiple times.

By contrast, and not surprisingly, experiment nos. 5, 6, 7 and 9 reveal that ceramic Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines break much more easily when dropped or toppled onto harder brick/tile surfaces, and do so from a relatively low height of 50 centimetres. The breakage patterns identified were broadly similar to those common on pipeclay figurines. Venus figurines toppled from a ledge hit the surface base first, breaking cleanly at the legs, while those dropped flat and horizontal to the ground broke into three pieces at the waist and legs after hitting the surface back-side first. Considering that the majority of the ancient figurines are missing their heads, the most interesting aspect was that all Venus figurine heads remained intact. It is therefore not true that Venus figurines ‘naturally’ break at the neck when dropped on a hard surface. On the other hand, all of the replica Dea Nutrix figurines broke cleanly at the neck when dropped flat or when toppled from a standing position, removing the head.

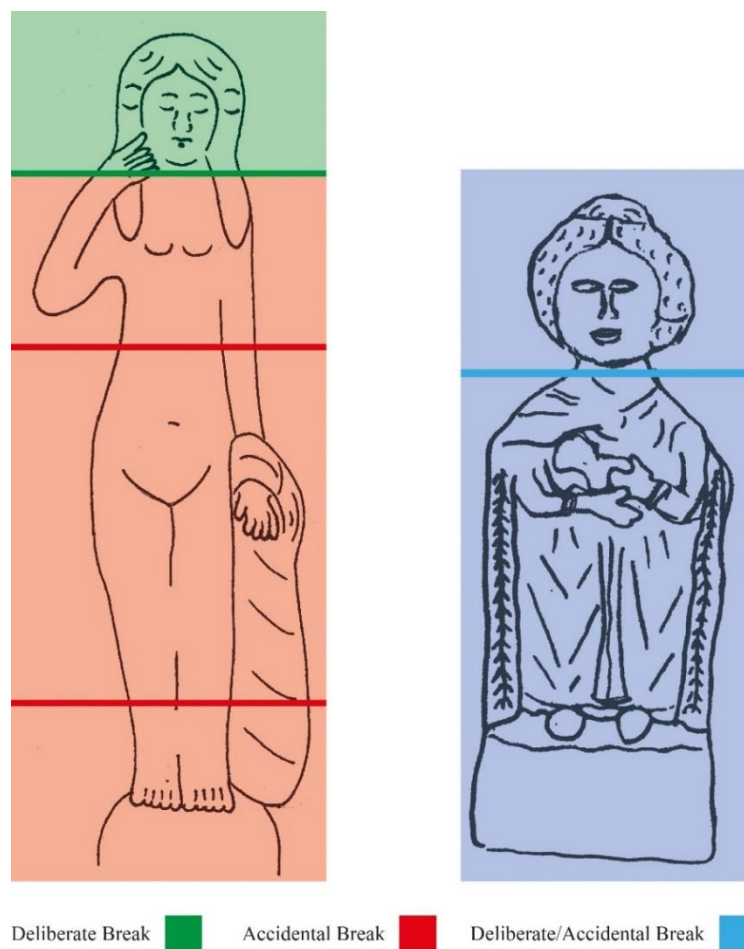
As for deliberate actions, it was not possible to break any of the replica Venus or Dea Nutrix figurines by hand, even at their weakest points, with all attempts to snap the neck, waist and legs of Venus, and the neck of the Dea Nutrix, figurines unsuccessful. Yet it was possible to selectively break off particular body parts of these figurines by striking them accurately against the edge of a hard surface. For example, having identified that they are probably not

associated with accidental breakage, experiment no. 8 successfully showed that a Venus head could be removed rather easily by striking it against the edge of a hard brick/tile surface to remove it cleanly across the neck with no additional chipping or scuff damage. It is worth noting here that other weak points of Venus figurines could also be easily broken in this way but that these would be difficult to distinguish from accidental damage. For now though it seems clear that the heads of ancient pipeclay Venus figurines were most likely removed on purpose as well. Furthermore, experiment no. 10 shows that Dea Nutrix figurine heads can be broken off in the same way, but that this break is like those caused by dropping (see experiment no. 7).

To sum up, replica ceramic figurines of Venus and Dea Nutrix were dropped onto different surfaces (earthen and brick/tile) to replicate possible accidental actions and identify natural weak points and breakage patterns, while others were broken by hand against harder brick/tile surfaces to identify other possibly deliberate breakage profiles. The results demonstrate that ‘accidentally’ dropping these figurines from height onto earthen surfaces caused no damage but that impact on a harder brick/tile surface caused Venus figurines to break at the waist and legs (their thinnest and weakest part) but not at the neck (Fig. 10.8). It was also shown that the heads of such Venus figurines were only removed by purposely striking them against a hard surface and that this unnatural breakage pattern was only the result of a deliberate action. On the other hand, the same experiments show that Dea Nutrix figurines always broke at the neck if dropped ‘accidentally’ onto a hard surface or when the head was struck on a hard surface.

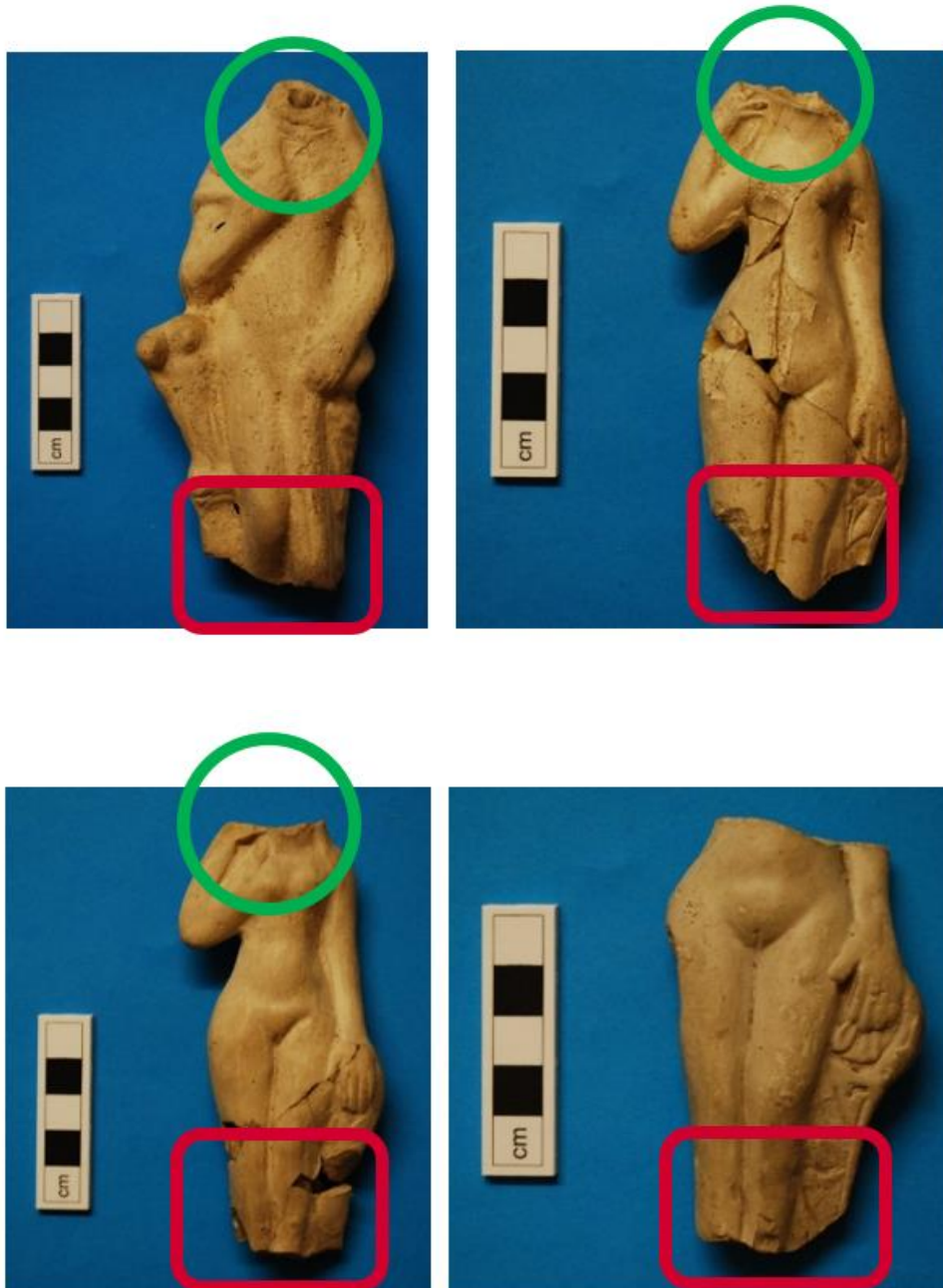
Breakage patterns like these are easily identifiable on the ancient Venus (Fig. 10.9) and Dea Nutrix figurines. Most Venus figurines are broken at the waist or ankles, or in other words, areas associated with ‘natural’ or ‘accidental’ processes, and were probably broken non-deliberately. On the other hand, it is the figurines broken at the neck that are more likely to have been the subject of more purposeful deliberate acts of fragmentation that in turn would suggest

that heads may have been the most important pieces of such broken figurines. This is not to say that all of the ancient heads were removed purposefully: it is perfectly possible that some of the heads were removed as a result of accidental rather than deliberate factors. What this research does suggest though is that the heads of some deity figurines, such as Venus, and possibly some of the other headless deities, were deliberately removed as part of a meaningful act or practice. The difficulty, of course, comes in trying to discern how these heads were used, why they were important, and which practices they are associated with.



*Fig. 10. 8. Deliberate and accidental breakage profiles of Venus and Dea Nutrix replicas.*





*Fig. 10. 9. Deliberate (green) and accidental (red) breakage patterns of Gaulish figurines: top left to bottom right, Venus nos. 127, 125, 126 and 124.*

Croxford's (2003; 2008) studies of how and why larger Roman metal and stone statues are broken gives us some insight into the possible meaning of head removal and how this might relate to more complete metal figurines and broken-off ceramic figurine heads, as well as how this practice differed between these different statuary forms. In his analysis, Croxford not only

quantifies the different surviving fragments of Roman stone and bronze statues in Britain to highlight that heads survive more often than any other body parts, but also proposes that this pattern probably has more to do with a particular preference for this part of the body by several different cultures in the past, including Romano-British and later post-Roman and Christian groups who may well have broken off, appropriated and recycled heads for various purposes. As such, all of these groups regarded heads, whether present or absent on objects, as a focal feature that conveniently represented the entire body (Croxford 2003: 88).

Although he uses the example of Roman-period statues to recognise that heads were an important representational body part, Croxford nevertheless remains somewhat reluctant to say anything concrete about exactly how this body part was used for Roman religious practices. This is partly because there are few statue heads from overtly religious contexts (bronze statue heads from Uley in Gloucestershire are some of the only ones from *in situ* temple contexts). Consequently, he prefers not to directly associate them with ‘Celtic’ ideas about the head or a distinctive ‘cult of the head’ – the likes of which may have been practised in London (e.g. Cotton 1996) - but does suggest that there was a preference for heads that ‘must result from an innate reaction or thought process’ (Croxford 2008: 304-5).

However, he is also sceptical because there are some notable differences in the survival of body parts, including heads, between different groups of Roman statuary and figurines. For instance, while far more heads than body parts of metal and stone statues survive, few single metal figurine heads have been found (Durham 2012, no. 644) and individual metal figurine body parts are also rare (Croxford 2003: 89). In pipeclay, meanwhile, I have now shown that there are far more body parts than heads. As well as the overarching factor that metal figurines and statues are far more likely to have been melted down for reuse than less valuable and non-reuseable ceramic objects resulting in the likelihood that associated levels of metal-related Roman activity are underrepresented, there is another factor that might account for the

differences between the different surviving parts of metal and stone statues, metal figurines and pipeclay figurines that we see in Britain, and this relates to the different social groups that may have used them for such practices, and the different scales they did so.

If this is true, it is, for instance, possible that the larger metal and stone statue heads may well reflect the head-related practices of larger, more well organised and wealthy social groups of people in Roman Britain which may or may not have included the Roman State. On the other hand, the smaller, less fragmented, but still valuable metal figurines may have been used by a slightly different, but still wealthy group of people, while alternatively, the heads made of cheaper ceramic pipeclay may have more to do with the practices of a lower status group – some of which may have been Gaulish immigrants (see Chapters 5, 7, 8 and 9). Thus, although metal statue and pipeclay figurine heads were both deliberately broken and may be part of broadly related practices, their size, materials, and the social groups that they are associated with, along with their subsequent deposition and retrieval, clearly vary, as did the respective treatment, groups and ancient practices associated with less broken metal figurines.

The breakage experiments carried out above therefore suggest that some of the deliberately broken-off pipeclay figurine heads found in Britain may have been part of a wider head-related religious or ritual practice. The problem is that the general lack of surviving heads, and the fact that few heads - including those of other figurine types - are from well recorded

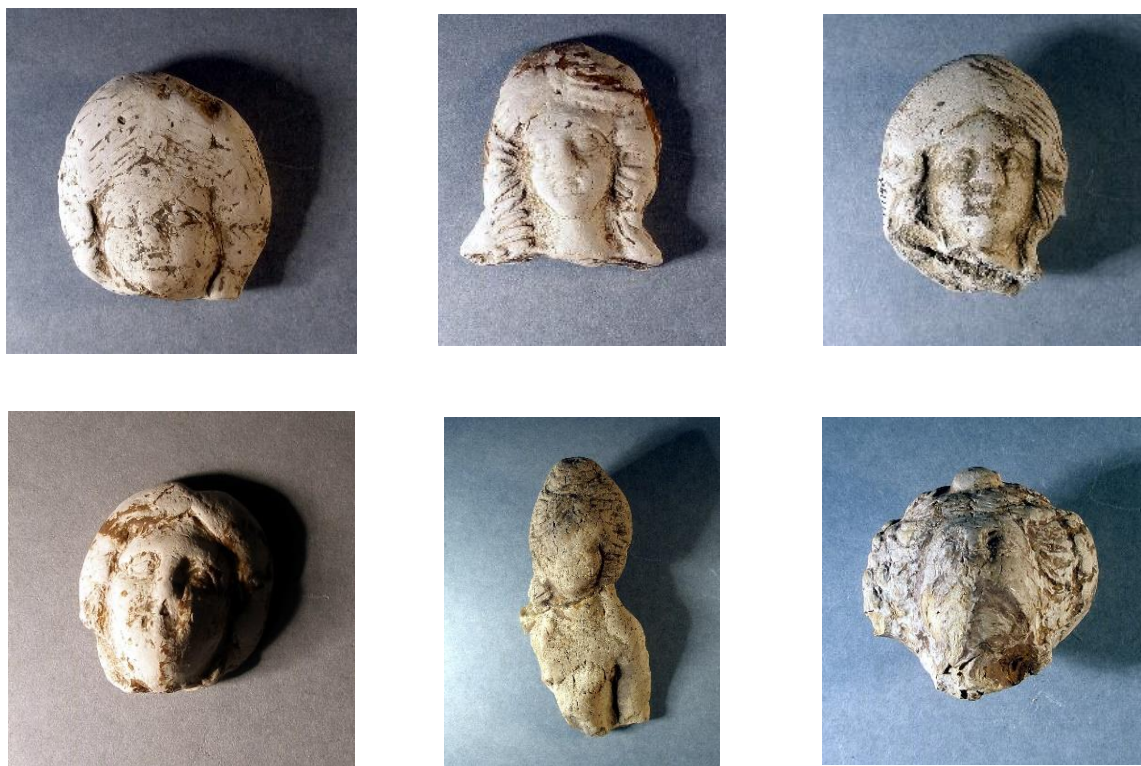
No.	Form	Depiction	Type	Site	Site Type	Location	Context	Context Date
30	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Reculver	Military		Residual	
31	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Cliffe				
32	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Hastings	Military	Ironworking site	Inside the Roman bath-house	
33	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Cirencester	Civitas Capital	Roman wall		Unstratified
34	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix?	London	London			
38	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Orpington	Religious/Villa?		Pit/ditch/topsoil?	
39	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Nor'nour	Rural	Structure	Occupation layer?	Later layers
40	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Nor'nour	Rural	Structure	Occupation layer?	Later layers
59	Figurine	Deity	Seated Mother Goddess/Matrona	Colchester	Colonia			
73	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	London			
147	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Silchester	Civitas Capital			
182	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	London			

202	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Nor'nour	Rural	Structure	Occupation layer?	Later layers
206	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Charterhouse-on-Mendip	Small town			
216	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Vindolanda	Military	North end of mansio courtyard	Above water channel	C2nd-4th
230	Figurine	Deity	Minerva	Newstead	Military	South annexe	Occupation layer	
236	Figurine	Deity	Bacchus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
238	Misidentified	Deity	Hercules	Deal	Unknown		Rubbish trench	C2nd
249	Bust	Human	Woman	Hassocks	Religious			
250	Bust	Human	Woman	Rawreth				
251	Bust	Human	Woman	Chichester	Civitas Capital	Street and timber buildings	Pit?	Flavian-early C2nd
252	Bust	Human	Woman	Silchester	Civitas Capital			
301	Figurine	Bird	Cockerel	Cirencester	Civitas Capital			
343	Figurine	Unknown		Alchester	Small town			
351	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
352	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
353	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
354	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
355	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
356	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
358	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
359	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
360	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
365	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
433	Figurine	Deity	Unknown	Flitwick	Rural	Field		
434	Fragment	Unknown		Flitwick	Rural	Field		
504	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	London	London	Trade - Quay area		
506	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	London	London	Habitation area	Rubbish dump	Early-mid C2nd (Period 2, Phase 1)
588	Bust	Human	Woman	Wanborough	Small town	Buildings? (70 RC)	Pit A	c.90-120 AD
596	Misidentified	Deity	Mother Goddess	Wroxeter	Civitas Capital	Macellum Room 2.3	Pit (dump)	90-130 AD?
597	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Wroxeter	Civitas Capital	Baths	Destruction debris (residual?)	C4th?
638	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Birdoswald	Military	South horreum (re-use of the warehouse/granary (Building 197))	Rubbish dump/sleeper wall/sub-floor backfill	Mid C4th (Period 5)
643	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Caerleon	Military	Building 3, Rooms 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3	Abandonment/demolition rubbish dump	Early to mid C4th
679	Figurine	Deity	Venus	London	London	Trade		
699	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Benwell	Military		Unstratified	
729	Figurine	Human	Comic Figure?	Ashwell	Religious	Small building in a polygonal fenced enclosure with chalk-pebble surface	Hoard? Shallow scoops in organic soil close to the edge	C1st-2nd
739	Figurine	Bird	Cockerel	Wakerley	Rural	Kiln site	Kiln fill	Late Antonine-Severan
797	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Braughing	Small town	Near Roman road	Straight-sided, square-bottomed pit (cess pit?)	C1st to 2nd
825	Figurine	Deity	Venus	Carlisle	Civitas Capital	North city wall	Ditch (18 foot down)	
874	Figurine	Unknown		Chesters	Military			
875	Figurine	Unknown		Chesters	Military			
902	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Vindolanda	Military	Northern buildings	Above burnt clay floor	Unstratified
908	Misidentified	Deity	Infant Bacchus	Unknown	Unknown			
913	Bust	Human	Woman	York	Colonia	Extramural settlement occupation ditches/land divisions		
921	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	York	Colonia	Roman building near waterfront		
924	Figurine	Deity	Dea Nutrix	Cirencester	Civitas Capital	Cemetery		

Tab. 10. 1. Context details of pipeclay figurine heads from Roman Britain.

contexts (Tab. 10.1), makes it hard to assess the exact practices they are linked with, especially when some are associated with contexts that are usually interpreted as ‘rubbish’. It is possible, however, that some of the ‘absent’ heads might have been used in particular ways that have not left a strong archaeological trace, such as in rivers or streams, where these more friable ceramic objects would have been eroded or washed away relatively quickly (Fittock 2015: 129).

Evidence that pipeclay figurine heads were sometimes deposited in water is, unsurprisingly, extremely rare in Britain as well as on the Continent but there is one site in Britain, the rural area of Ruxox Farm in Bedfordshire, where several figurine heads were found in a field that has been interpreted as possibly being a riverbed during the Roman period (Fig. 10.10; James 2009, Fadden 2010). These heads were not deposited in isolation; 61 other body-parts of Venus, eight of Dea Nutrix and six of Minerva were found with them, along with a single, rare, head of Bacchus (no. 236). This is the biggest collection of single Venus heads



*Fig. 10. 10. A selection of pipeclay figurine heads from Ruxox Farm, Bedfordshire, of Venus (nos. 353, 354, 351, 365, 357) and, on the bottom right, Bacchus (no. 236).*

from Britain so far, and the larger group of objects they are part of is generally regarded as indicating the religious significance of this site (see Chapter 9). Whether the heads at Ruxox Farm were deposited as part of a more specific ritual practice than the body parts is, however, unclear as they all come from the same layer of topsoil in the same field that was only possibly the location of a temple or a river crossing in the Roman period (Simco 1984: 56; James 2009).

## **Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter highlights that pipeclay figurines are often only partially preserved in habitation contexts while whole specimens occur in burials where they were important grave goods. A fragmentation analysis of some of the broken deity figurines reveals some subtle patterns, such as the predominance of Venus lower body parts and an overall underrepresentation of heads, which might provide some new information about religious belief and the nature of ritual practices in Britain. It is hard to know whether these patterns are the result of 'natural' breakage at structurally weak points or more meaningful deliberate actions, but experiments breaking replica ceramic Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines and comparing the results to the breaks on ancient pipeclay figurines suggests that Venus heads are more likely to have been deliberately removed and were probably more meaningful than other body parts broken at naturally weak points that are more likely to reflect accidental actions.

The lack of contextualised heads means that it is hard to understand their significance, but there is some indication that they might have been ritually deposited in ways that left little trace archaeologically, such as in water. Finally, briefly comparing the surviving proportions and distributions of pipeclay figurines and similarly broken metal statuary suggests that although the heads of both may have been used for similar ritual practices, factors like the size of each object and the value of their materials indicate that larger metal statue heads probably reflect the actions of a very wealthy and high status social group of people than the small, lower

value, ceramic heads, and that the people who used also small but less broken metal figurines were still wealthy people but used these particular objects for slightly different practices.

Although fragmentation is a complicated subject it is one with plenty of potential, and in this sense this study has at least started to explore some of the complex breakage patterns associated with ceramic figurines and their possible social significance. One avenue of further work would be to repeat the breakage experiments on Venus and Dea Nutrix figurines several more times using thinner replicas that are structurally more like the ancient Gaulish figurines. It would also be worth carrying out similar experiments on replicas of other deity, animal and human types to see if there are any significant patterns of breakage amongst the wider corpus of figurines and whether these might have been part of this kind of practice as well. More detailed work on the contexts and associated finds of pipeclay heads and Venus lower bodies that goes back to the original excavation records would also be useful, as would publishing the pipeclay figurine fragments (Fittock in prep) and other finds from Ruxox Farm, Bedfordshire.

## Conclusion

Small portable forms of statuary, such as pipeclay objects, can provide a valuable insight into the religious and social beliefs and attitudes of the culturally mixed populations of the Roman provinces. Over the past 40 years several Continental studies and catalogues have emerged covering this topic, as well as how and where pipeclay objects were produced, distributed and used in the modern countries of France (Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972), Belgium (Beenhouwer 2005), the Netherlands (Boekel 1987) and Switzerland (Gonzenbach 1986, 1995). However, as a group, the pipeclay objects from Britain have been somewhat neglected since the last major, unpublished, study of them was carried out in the 1970s (Jenkins 1977).

Pipeclay objects are viewed as having many functions in the provinces. They are typically thought to have been used in shrines for private domestic worship but were also occasionally used ritually in temples and as funerary goods in burials (e.g. Boekel 1987: 239-40, 903-5). Some or all may have been toys for children (e.g. Kyll 1966: 52-3, 67; Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 29; Jenkins 1977: 418, 523; Rüger 1980: 33, 90; Boekel 1987: 239-40 *cf.* Gonzenbach 1995: 420; Eckardt 1999: 60). Many Continental studies have explored the possibility that the function of pipeclay objects differed both within and between provincial communities (e.g. Bémont *et al* 1993; Lintz 1993; see also Fittock 2015), but that overall their cheap material and prominent female iconography indicates that they were low status objects that were primarily used by women (e.g. Rouvier-Jeanlin 1972: 63; Boekel 1987: 238; Bristow 2012: 16; Gonzenbach 1995: 387-428; see also Drinkwater & Vertet 1992: 27; Vertet 1984; Eckardt 1999: 61). However, a complete survey of the British material analysing their iconography and distribution to assess their function here has never been carried out.



Consequently, this thesis presents, for the first time in nearly half a century, a detailed study of the pipeclay objects found in Britain. Almost 1000 objects (946) consisting of figurines, busts, shrines, animal vessels and masks are now known from the province (see Appendix 1), doubling the number from 1977. My catalogue covers published material (*c.* 400 objects) and unpublished finds from museum collections (*c.* 500, including Jenkins' 1977 catalogue), archaeological units (*c.* 150) and the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). After reflecting on the scope of existing Continental studies (Chapter 1) and situating the study of pipeclay objects within the context of current theoretical debate (Chapter 2), I have not only presented a complete catalogue of pipeclay objects in Britain, but have also carried out a typochronological and distributional analysis examining their consumption and contexts, and used this information to discuss the beliefs and practices they represent in the province. Although studying one object category alone can only provide so much insight into the subject, this thesis also shows that this kind of combined approach can reveal important information about the cultural and social identities of the people that used them (Chapter 3). One way to make this a more holistic study was thus to compare pipeclay and metal figurines in detail throughout.

The first chapter of analysis (Chapter 4) shows that in the absence of production evidence in Britain, a visual examination of fabrics indicates that all of the pipeclay objects found in the province were imported. Overall, an analysis of forms and types that can be confidently associated with specific production centres either stylistically or through the distribution of identical figurines, moulds and wasters, reveals that most (73.5%) of the finds from Britain were produced and imported from workshops in Central Gaul and that only a few (5%) were made and exported from the Rhine-Moselle region. The remaining 21.5% of finds are either too fragmentary or types with no known distributions of parallels or moulds that would indicate provenance. This does not mean that the British pipeclay market was necessarily easier to access for producers and suppliers in Gaul than in the Rhine-Moselle region (in fact

the Gaulish production centres were farther away) but that cultural factors appear to have been far more influential in shaping the character of the British market.

In most cases it is only possible to broadly identify a production region for a given form or type (e.g. Central Gaul or the Rhine-Moselle region). Chemical fabric analysis of clays may improve this picture but the technique does not always yield clear results (see Lahanier & Rouvier-Jeanlin 1977; Lahanier *et al.* 1990; Hunt & Speakman 2015) and consequently was not used for this project. Yet analysing makers' marks is much more informative. Although there are few of these in Britain and stamped objects only represent a small proportion of all traded goods, the few figurine stamps there are provide a useful insight into the differing dynamics of production and supply. This analysis shows that several of the Gaulish modellers who supplied pipeclay figurines to Britain are evidenced, in contrast to the situation in the Rhine-Moselle region where only one modeller is in this way; Servandus of Cologne.

An important element of this thesis is the comprehensive analysis of these pipeclay objects it provides through a combined typological and contextual approach. Categorising and quantifying the assemblage (Chapter 5) into different forms (i.e. figurines/busts, shrines, animal vessels, masks), types (e.g. Venus, dogs, busts of women) and depictions (i.e. deities, animals or birds, humans) reveals several interesting patterns of consumption in Britain. With 627 finds making up over two-thirds of the assemblage (66%), deity figurines are by far the most common type of pipeclay depiction in the province, followed by 96 animal figurines (10%) – many of which are closely associated with deities. There is also a smaller group of 58 human figurines and busts (6%). Other notable finds include 29 shrines, 21 animal vessels and seven mask fragments (18% combined). The overall impression therefore is that most of the pipeclay objects in Britain were associated with religious practice. A closer look at the individual types of figurines and busts provides a more detailed and nuanced picture of their trade and consumption. This shows that with 401 figurines Venus is by far the most common type of

pipeclay objects from the province, followed by figurines of Dea Nutrix (153), Minerva (22) and horses (16), busts of women (16), and figurines of dogs (14) and cockerels (13). Rare figurine and bust types depict Bacchus, Cybele, Epona, Fortuna, Leda and Swan, Mars, a boar, lizard, lion and panther, young boys and a figurine of a gladiator.

A key aim of this thesis was not just to focus on the objects themselves, but rather on what they can tell us about people's beliefs and religious practices. Detailed proportional analysis demonstrates that goddesses and associated animal types linked with fertility, motherhood and protection were imported from Central Gaul and probably reflect the beliefs of groups of people who are more closely integrated into provincial Gaulish ways of doing things than the bulk of the Roman-British population. Meanwhile, rarer types from Gaul and the unusual eastern or exotic types from the Rhine-Moselle region reflect the beliefs of individuals, and were probably personal possessions of higher-status people who brought them with them when they travelled to Britain from these areas.

It was deemed important in this project to try and understand the significance of the pipeclay objects as holistically as possible, and in particular how they relate to other forms of figurative material culture. As such the collection of pipeclay objects in Britain was compared to several other Continental pipeclay collections, as well as the recently recorded collection of metal figurines that have been found in Britain, to highlight how these portable religious objects reflect different beliefs and practices between regions and social groups.

Comparing the typological composition of the pipeclay assemblages from Britain, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland highlights that consumption patterns differed in each of these regions. Chronological factors and the proximity of provincial markets to production centres both affected the trade, supply and availability of pipeclay products in these regions but overall the patterns still offer good evidence for religious choice and subtly

differing beliefs between the study areas. Mother-goddess-based beliefs about fertility and protection varied in popularity between each province but in Britain they appear to have resonated with a much greater proportion of the population than other ideologies. Close typological similarities between the British and French collections suggest that the people of Roman Britain had much closer cultural and religious links with people in Gaul than people in the Rhine-Moselle region. The mix of common and rare figurine types comprising a range of unusual and ‘exotic’ depictions and influences in London suggests that this settlement had a particularly diverse and multi-cultural community that included many foreigners.

Comparing the composition of the collections of pipeclay objects and metal figurines (traditionally perceived to be of much higher value) in Britain also highlights that there are important differences in terms of the beliefs and practices each represent. Interestingly, both metal and pipeclay objects are quite rare in Britain (946 pipeclay and *c.* 1000 metal objects), suggesting that each was only used by relatively small sections of the population and, like lamps, never really achieved widespread acceptance and use in Roman Britain. Analysing the common and rare types in each material shows that there are important differences between the core religious beliefs (and practices) associated with the respective depictions in each material. This is particularly well highlighted by the most common types in each group whereby the prevalence of metal gods starkly contrasts with the popularity of pipeclay goddesses. Other differences reveal more about the identities of people who used each material, with rare metal types reflecting a more eclectic range of types than the rarest pipeclay depictions.

In terms of chronology (Chapter 6), production dates for pipeclay objects from Britain can be assigned on stylistic grounds by identifying exact parallels from well-dated Continental contexts but their use in Britain can be better understood by analysing finds from dated contexts. Such context dates were available for 363 ceramic objects from Britain. These context dates show an increasing use of pipeclay objects in the late first and second centuries followed by a

third and fourth century decline. Initial arrivals that were not widely used included early Gaulish forms such as animal vessels and a small selection of animal and human forms and types likely brought to the province by individuals. Larger scale importation of common figurine types like Venus and Dea Nutrix, and associated animals, reflect the spread of and acceptance of new ritual practices related to fertility and protection in the second century across the province. These beliefs were mainly held by civilian populations who occasionally used pipeclay objects such as figurines and busts for funerary purposes. From the third century, quite old Gaulish figurines (some up to 200 years old) were increasingly used for funerary practices. Many of these objects are complete and in relatively good condition indicating that they might have been curated - possibly as heirlooms - by a small group of individuals.

Analysing the spatial and social distribution of pipeclay objects (Chapter 7) has been particularly fruitful because of the rich contextual data available, especially from modern finds. This analysis has shown that pipeclay objects are found throughout Britain but that the usage of figurines, animal vessels and masks, as well as specific figurine types, varies greatly between different types of site and context. While shrines, animal vessels and masks have limited distributions, a detailed study of figurines shows that these were mainly used by civilian populations on urban and rural sites. Some are from military sites but these are mainly from *vici* which were more a milieu of military personnel and civilians, and it could just be that forts were kept clean of rubbish that was dumped in ditches and near civilian settlements – although some could be real military patterns. Common figurine types are found on all types of site. Rare types, meanwhile, are also found on all types of site but their closer association with higher status sites and especially London suggest that these objects belonged to higher-status foreigners.

A close examination of the contextual data available shows that most pipeclay objects come from contexts like pits, ditches and occupation layers near to roads and buildings in

settlements. It is possible that objects such as figurines were displayed in domestic *lararia* or household shrines such as those known from Pompeii, Italy (e.g. Brain 2016), Augst, Switzerland (e.g. Kaufmann-Heinimann 1998, 2002) and Rezé, France (e.g. Boon 1983: 42), but this could not be demonstrated for Britain. The exact nature of these deposits is also difficult to establish – in other words, were the finds from pits ‘rubbish’ or do they represent structured deposits (see Richards & Thomas 1984; Garrow 2012)? Indeed, pipeclay objects are usually not found in features that contain material often associated with special deposits, such as articulated dogs or complete pots (e.g. Fulford 2001; Eckardt 2006). Other finds often accompany pipeclay objects in occupation contexts but overall these vary considerably and give no strong indication as to the gender or social status of the people who used them.

In terms of context, both pipeclay objects (especially figurines) and metal figurines appear to have been used for similar practices throughout urban and rural Britain but comparing their spatial and social distributions (Chapter 8) reveals subtle nuances in practice and differences in the social statuses and identities of their respective users. For example, the greater proportion of metal figurines on higher status sites like *Coloniae* and *Civitas Capitals* and larger proportion of pipeclay objects from lower status urban and rural (settlements rather than villas) sites generally points to metal figurines being higher status objects. Differences at ‘secondary context’ level are the most marked. Both metal and ceramic finds are found at most sites (albeit with subtle differences). Within settlement contexts, both appear in the same sort of deposits, such as in cut features that are probably mainly rubbish, though some of these may be ‘special’. Yet there are starker differences between the finds from religious contexts (see below).

As objects with strong religious iconography, it was important to closely consider the religious practices pipeclay objects were part of by analysing the finds from explicitly religious contexts like hoards, sanctuaries and burials (Chapter 9). Although they have never been found in hoards, 50 finds suggest that pipeclay objects were occasionally used as votive objects along

with other personal items at temples and sanctuaries in small towns and isolated temples in the countryside of south-east Britain. The 62 finds from burial contexts suggest that pipeclay objects, including figurines and occasionally animal vessels, were less popular for funerary purposes but that this did occur in similar areas of south-east Britain near small towns and occasionally at large urban centres. This kind of practice was more common for cremations in the first century but was more common for inhumations from the second century and exclusively thereafter. A small number of these objects that are burnt probably evidence graveside rituals. The types preferred in the first and second centuries include human busts of women and boys, animal figurines and animal vessels, while mother-goddess figurines of Dea Nutrix and Venus were preferred in the third and fourth centuries.

Analysing the little osteological evidence and grave goods from these burials suggests that pipeclay objects had a close relationship with infants. Six of the 23 pipeclay objects from burials in Britain are attributed to children based on this evidence. The identities and status of the other 17 are not clear and could belong to adults or children. The surviving osteological evidence from burials at Arrington and London suggest a particularly close relationship with children that were suffering from sickness or disease. A closer inspection of the graves additionally showed that the composition of some, such as at Baldock, Colchester and London, included elaborate grave structures and/or elaborate grave goods, suggesting that they were higher status funerary rites which were probably performed by foreigners from Gaul and, less often, the Rhineland. The only burial with imports from the Rhine-Moselle region is the second century inhumation grave by Ermine Street in Arrington, Hertfordshire, that contained the seated Matrona figurine (no. 708) and the Cloaked Figure (no. 712). A figurine of Juno (no. 518), also a Rhine-Moselle import, was found in London's eastern cemetery.

Finally, comparing the types and distributions of pipeclay objects and metal figurines from temples and burials shows that they were used differently for religious practices.

Significantly, only five metal figurines are known from funerary contexts – none of which are directly from burials - suggesting that they were not regularly used in the same way as pipeclay figurines for burial practices. Conversely, metal figurines were used more regularly than pipeclay figurines for temple-based ritual practices, although there are clear regional differences between the two. Contextual evidence suggests that both types were used in similar ways but to worship different gods so that their relationship is probably more complicated than the traditional view that ceramic objects were simply cheaper alternatives to metal ones. Instead, this research shows that while the value of each material probably was a factor, the people that used metal figurines and pipeclay objects worshipped different gods and goddesses and also carried out slightly different religious practices with them.

Finally, most pipeclay figurines from non-funerary contexts are incomplete and a fragmentation analysis has explored the potential significance of the fragments from Britain. Although Chapter 10 reveals subtle patterns of breakage that possibly reflect the symbolic importance of Venus' lower body, breaks at naturally weak points and recovery from 'refuse' deposits suggest that other missing body parts, like the head, might be more significant. Experiments breaking replica ceramic figurines and comparing the resulting broken pieces to the surviving Roman material showed that Venus figurines broken at naturally weak points like the waist and legs are more likely the result of accidental actions. However, breaking Venus figurines at the neck to remove the head was only achieved by deliberately striking it on a hard surface. In other words, heads were probably more significant than other broken body parts despite their overall underrepresentation in the province. What this means in terms of practice is unclear, especially because only complete ceramic figurines are known from burials and metal figurines are largely complete. However, the fragmentation of ceramic figurines might be a lower-status version of the practice of selectively preserving heads that is evidenced by higher-status stone statues in Britain, but interestingly not by metal figurines.



There are several areas of further research that would enhance the study of pipeclay objects in Britain and on the Continent, that would not only improve our understanding about how they were produced, traded and supplied, but also better illuminate the different religious practices they were used for and the different social groups that used them across the Western Provinces. The first is to publish this research and make the database available to the public on the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) website to provide a new resource for anyone studying Romano-British religious life and practice. From here, the most useful and exhaustive method would be to collate an up to date corpora of finds from each Roman province and carry out an equally detailed assessment as the one conducted here. This would involve considerable time, resources and close collaboration with Continental partners to record all the finds, but would provide the most comprehensive picture of how these objects were consumed and used in and between the different provinces of the Roman Empire.

In the meantime, there is still much to be done to build a better holistic understanding of the significance of pipeclay objects in Britain. One avenue would be to conduct fabric analysis on some of the material to better identify where they were made and the dynamics of their supply to Britain. It would also be useful to compare the findings of this thesis with the depictions and distributions of other material culture that frequently depict gods, goddesses and related depictions, such as on lamps, pottery, hairpins or even statuary, to see if there are any similarities in terms of practice, and the various populations and social groups that used them. It would likewise be worth comparing the fragmentation of pipeclay figurines to other broken forms of statuary in Roman Britain more extensively, and well as examining if any other figurative art forms were perhaps part of this practice, and if this differed between them.

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