

TERRACOTTA FIGURINES

*and* PLAQUES *from*



DURA-EUROPOS

*Susan B. Downey*

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS  
*Ann Arbor*

Copyright © by the University of Michigan 2003  
All rights reserved  
Published in the United States of America by  
The University of Michigan Press  
Manufactured in the United States of America  
⊗ Printed on acid-free paper

2006 2005 2004 2003 4 3 2 1

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored  
in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form  
or by any means, electronic, mechanical, or otherwise,  
without the written permission of the publisher.

*A CIP catalog record for this book is available from the British Library.*

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Downey, Susan B., 1938–

Terracotta figurines and plaques from Dura-Europos / Susan B. Downey.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-472-11237-6 (cloth : alk. paper)

1. Terra-cotta figurines, Ancient—Syria—Dura-Europos (Extinct City)—Catalogs.
2. Plaques, plaquettes—Syria—Dura-Europos (Extinct City)—Catalogs.
3. Syria—Antiquities—Catalogs. 4. Dura-Europos (Extinct city) I. Title

NB159.S95D68 2003

732'.943—dc21

2003040196

*To the memory of*  
ANNY ALLARA  
*and happy and productive times at Dura*

## PREFACE

This publication of the terracotta figurines and plaques of Dura-Europos complements my two volumes on the sculptures in stone and plaster from the site: *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 3.1.1: The Heracles Sculpture* (New Haven, 1969), and *The Stone and Plaster Sculpture: Excavations at Dura-Europos*, Monumenta Archaeologica 5 (Los Angeles, 1977). The manuscript had a long genesis. It was begun at the suggestion of and with the encouragement of Antonio Invernizzi, with whom I have enjoyed many fruitful conversations about the problems raised by the terracottas of Dura-Europos in relation to those from other Near Eastern sites. During a visit to New Haven, Connecticut, in 1986, we were able to look together at the terracotta figurines and plaques in the collections of the Yale University Art Gallery, and I profited greatly from his insights.

I made a number of research trips to New Haven to work in the archives and storerooms of the Dura-Europos collection in the Yale University Art Gallery, and I owe a particular debt of gratitude to that gallery's curator of antiquities, Susan B. Matheson, and to a series of her assistants, for help during these visits and for supplying photographs. The generosity of Susan B. Matheson in allowing me access to the archives and the material in the storerooms and the help of her and her assistants in finding the objects and locating information in the archives have been indispensable for the completion of this book. In gathering comparative material from other Near Eastern sites, I have had the generous assistance of curators in a number of museums: the staff of the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology at the University of Michigan, Maud de Shaunnesy of the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Agnès Spycket of the Louvre in Paris, Jens Kröger of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, and Adnan Bounni and Jawdat Chehadé of the Directorate-General of Antiquities and Museums in Damascus. I would like to thank especially Evelyn Klengel-Brandt of the Pergamon Museum in Berlin, for allowing me access to then unpublished terracotta figurines from Babylon in that museum's collections. My

discussions with her of this material and of the terracottas of Assur were extremely fruitful.

Insights of other scholars, shared with me over a period of years, have contributed greatly to this work. Participants in two conferences—“Arabia Antiqua,” held in Rome in 1991, and another on Palmyra and the Silk Road held in Palmyra in 1992—provided very thoughtful comments on the papers I presented there. It is impossible to acknowledge all the other scholars whose insights have been helpful, but I would like to thank especially Kerrtu Karvonen-Kannas and Jean-François Salles. The terracotta figurines and plaques of Dura-Europos constitute in some respects a unique ensemble, and the opportunity to compare the body of material from Dura with ensembles from such other sites as Seleucia on the Tigris, Babylon, Assur, and Failaka has broadened the scope of this work. The comments of participants in an art history seminar at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, in the fall of 1999 were insightful. I also owe a debt to Steven Dyson and the anonymous readers of the manuscript, for suggestions that greatly improved it, particularly in setting the terracottas in the context of the site. Discussions with my colleague Richard Lesure of the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles, about the difficult problem of interpreting figurines in prehistory added breadth to chapter 2 of this book’s introduction, on the cultural meanings of the figurines. Interpretation of the material of modest quality is difficult, and responsibility for the opinions expressed herein, as well as for any errors, is entirely my own.

This project has been supported over the years by a number of grants: a National Endowment for the Humanities Travel to Collections Grant for work in the Yale University Art Gallery; two grants-in-aid from the American Philosophical Society; and numerous grants from the Academic Senate at the University of California, Los Angeles. The manuscript was completed during the tenure of a fellowship from the Institute for Advanced Study. I am very grateful for all of this assistance. Finally, I want to thank Ellen Bauerle and Collin Ganio of the University of Michigan Press for their assistance in the editorial process. It is a great pleasure to see a project that has occupied so many years come to fruition.

# CONTENTS

*Illustrations* xi

*Abbreviations* xv

## INTRODUCTION

- 1 Dura-Europos: The Site and the Excavations 3
- 2 The Place of Terracottas in the Culture of Dura-Europos 8
- 3 The Finding Places of the Terracottas 22

## CATALOGUE

Introduction 37

Moldmade Plaques and Medallions 38

Female Figurines 82

Male Figurines 106

Figurines of Uncertain Sex 130

Animals (with or without Riders) 133

Figurines of Uncertain Subject 209

*Bibliography* 211

*Index* 215

*Plates* 221

## ILLUSTRATIONS

### TERRACOTTAS FROM DURA-EUROPOS

Photographs are courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection, unless otherwise noted.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Fig. 1. No. 1                                     | Fig. 26. No. 27   |
| Fig. 2. No. 2                                     | Fig. 27. No. 28   |
| Fig. 3. No. 3                                     | Fig. 28. No. 29   |
| Fig. 4. No. 4                                     | Fig. 29. No. 31   |
| Fig. 5. No. 5                                     | Fig. 30. No. 32   |
| Fig. 6. No. 7. ( <i>Photograph by author.</i> )   | Fig. 31. No. 33   |
| Fig. 7. No. 8                                     | Fig. 32. No. 34   |
| Fig. 8. No. 9                                     | Fig. 33. No. 35   |
| Fig. 9. No. 10                                    | Fig. 34. No. 36   |
| Fig. 10. No. 11                                   | Fig. 35. No. 37   |
| Fig. 11. No. 12                                   | Fig. 36. No. 38, cast. ( <i>Photograph by author.</i> ) |
| Fig. 12. No. 13                                   | Fig. 37. No. 39   |
| Fig. 13. No. 14                                   | Fig. 38. No. 40   |
| Fig. 14. No. 15                                   | Fig. 39. No. 41   |
| Fig. 15. No. 16                                   | Fig. 40. No. 42   |
| Fig. 16. No. 17                                   | Fig. 41. No. 43   |
| Fig. 17. No. 18                                   | Fig. 42. No. 44   |
| Fig. 18. No. 19                                   | Fig. 43. No. 45   |
| Fig. 19. No. 20                                   | Fig. 44. No. 46   |
| Fig. 20. No. 21                                   | Fig. 45. No. 49   |
| Fig. 21. No. 22                                   | Fig. 46. No. 50   |
| Fig. 22. No. 23                                   | Fig. 47. No. 51   |
| Fig. 23. No. 24                                   | Fig. 48. No. 52   |
| Fig. 24. No. 25                                   | Fig. 49. No. 53   |
| Fig. 25. No. 26. ( <i>Photograph by author.</i> ) | Fig. 50. No. 54   |

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 51. No. 55  
 Fig. 52. No. 56  
 Fig. 53. No. 57  
 Fig. 54. No. 58  
 Fig. 55. No. 59  
 Fig. 56. No. 60  
 Fig. 57. No. 61  
 Fig. 58. No. 62. (*Photograph by author.*)  
 Fig. 59. No. 64  
 Fig. 60. No. 65  
 Fig. 61. No. 67. (*Photograph by author.*)  
 Fig. 62. No. 68  
 Fig. 63. No. 69  
 Fig. 64. No. 70  
 Fig. 65. No. 71  
 Fig. 66. No. 72  
 Fig. 67. No. 73  
 Fig. 68. No. 74  
 Fig. 69. No. 75  
 Fig. 70. No. 76, *a*, left side; *b*, front  
 Fig. 71. No. 77  
 Fig. 72. No. 78  
 Fig. 73. No. 80. (*Photograph by author.*)  
 Fig. 74. No. 81  
 Fig. 75. No. 82  
 Fig. 76. No. 83  
 Fig. 77. No. 84  
 Fig. 78. No. 85  
 Fig. 79. No. 86  
 Fig. 80. No. 87  
 Fig. 81. No. 88  
 Fig. 82. No. 89  
 Fig. 83. No. 90  
 Fig. 84. No. 91, front. (*Photograph by author.*)  
 Fig. 85. No. 91, left side  
 Fig. 86. No. 92, right side  
 Fig. 87. No. 92, left side  
 Fig. 88. No. 93  
 Fig. 89. No. 95  
 Fig. 90. No. 96, left side  
 Fig. 91. No. 97, right side  
 Fig. 92. No. 97, left side  
 Fig. 93. No. 97, from above  
 Fig. 94. No. 98, right side  
 Fig. 95. No. 98, from above  
 Fig. 96. No. 99, right side  
 Fig. 97. No. 99, left side  
 Fig. 98. No. 99, from above  
 Fig. 99. No. 100, right side  
 Fig. 100. No. 100, from above  
 Fig. 101. No. 101, right side  
 Fig. 102. No. 101, left side  
 Fig. 103. No. 101, from above  
 Fig. 104. No. 102, from above left.  
 (*Photograph by author.*)  
 Fig. 105. No. 104  
 Fig. 106. No. 105  
 Fig. 107. No. 106  
 Fig. 108. No. 111, right side  
 Fig. 109. No. 111, left side  
 Fig. 110. No. 112, right side  
 Fig. 111. No. 112, left side  
 Fig. 112. No. 114  
 Fig. 113. No. 115, left side  
 Fig. 114. No. 116  
 Fig. 115. No. 117  
 Fig. 116. No. 119  
 Fig. 117. No. 120  
 Fig. 118. No. 121  
 Fig. 119. No. 122  
 Fig. 120. No. 123  
 Fig. 121. No. 124  
 Fig. 122. No. 125  
 Fig. 123. No. 126  
 Fig. 124. No. 127  
 Fig. 125. No. 128  
 Fig. 126. No. 129  
 Fig. 127. No. 130  
 Fig. 128. No. 134  
 Fig. 129. No. 135



*Illustrations*

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Fig. 130. No. 136                                    | Fig. 140. No. 147             |
| Fig. 131. No. 137                                    | Fig. 141. No. 148, right side |
| Fig. 132. No. 138, <i>a</i> , left; <i>b</i> , right | Fig. 142. No. 149             |
| Fig. 133. No. 139                                    | Fig. 143. No. 150             |
| Fig. 134. No. 140                                    | Fig. 144. No. 153             |
| Fig. 135. No. 141                                    | Fig. 145. No. 155             |
| Fig. 136. No. 142                                    | Fig. 146. No. 156             |
| Fig. 137. No. 145                                    | Fig. 147. No. 157             |
| Fig. 138. No. 146, front                             | Fig. 148. No. 158             |
| Fig. 139. No. 146, right side                        | Fig. 149. No. 159             |

DRAWINGS

All drawings are by the late Tim Seymour.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Dr. 1. No. 2   | Dr. 19. No. 78, <i>a</i> , left side; <i>b</i> , front                                 |
| Dr. 2. No. 10  | Dr. 20. No. 79   |
| Dr. 3. No. 12  | Dr. 21. No. 80   |
| Dr. 4. No. 13  | Dr. 22. No. 87   |
| Dr. 5. No. 18, mold                                    | Dr. 23. No. 90   |
| Dr. 6. No. 18, cast                                    | Dr. 24. No. 91   |
| Dr. 7. No. 19  | Dr. 25. No. 119, <i>a</i> , from above; <i>b</i> ,<br>right side; <i>c</i> , left side |
| Dr. 8. No. 22  | Dr. 26. No. 120, <i>a</i> , front; <i>b</i> , right<br>side; <i>c</i> , from above     |
| Dr. 9. No. 27  | Dr. 27. No. 125, <i>a</i> , right side; <i>b</i> ,<br>from above                       |
| Dr. 10. No. 36   | Dr. 28. No. 135, left side   |
| Dr. 11. No. 38, mold                                   | Dr. 29. No. 141, <i>a</i> , three-quarter<br>view; <i>b</i> , left side                |
| Dr. 12. No. 38, cast                                   | Dr. 30. No. 149, <i>a</i> , left side; <i>b</i> ,<br>right side; <i>c</i> , front      |
| Dr. 13. No. 44, left side                              | Dr. 31. No. 158, <i>a</i> , front; <i>b</i> , left side                                |
| Dr. 14. No. 49, right side                             |  |
| Dr. 15. No. 56, <i>a</i> , front; <i>b</i> , left side |  |
| Dr. 16. No. 62, <i>a</i> , front; <i>b</i> , left side |  |
| Dr. 17. No. 73, <i>a</i> , front; <i>b</i> , back      |  |
| Dr. 18. No. 77   |  |

IMAGES OTHER THAN THE TERRACOTTAS OF DURA-EUROPOS

The following illustrations are courtesy of Yale University Art Gallery, Dura-Europos Collection, unless otherwise noted.

ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. I. Map of the Near East with sites mentioned in the text. (*Drawn by Patrick Finnerty.*)
- Fig. II. Plan of Dura-Europos
- Fig. III. Mold with image of goddess and worshiper, purchased by Friedrich Sarre. (cast) (*Courtesy Museum für Islamische Kunst, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.*)
- Fig. IV. Drawing of graffito of mounted archer from Dura-Europos
- Fig. V. Drawing of dipinto of mounted archer from the Palace of the Dux Ripae, Dura-Europos
- Fig. VI. Photograph (*top*) and drawing (*bottom*) of graffito of mounted archer from Dura-Europos
- Fig. VII. Drawings of graffiti from Dura-Europos featuring male figure in Parthian dress (*left*) and male figure with ax, probably the god Hadad (*right*)
- Fig. VIII. Drawing of graffito of female musicians from the Temple of Aphlad, Dura-Europos
- Fig. IX. Terracotta horse in the Louvre (AO 25918). (*Courtesy Musée du Louvre.*)
- Fig. X. Dipinto of bird cult from the Temple of Aphlad, Dura-Europos
- Fig. XI. Drawing of graffito of eagles beside a temple (?) from Block C 7, House C, Dura-Europos

## ABBREVIATIONS

The abbreviations for periodicals follow the system used in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 95 (1991): 1–16. The following short titles and abbreviations are used in addition.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Andrae, W.,<br><i>Archaischen Ishtar-<br/>Tempel</i><br><i>Arabia Antiqua</i> | W. Andrae, <i>Die archaischen Ishtar-Tempel in Assur</i> , WVDOG 39 (Leipzig, 1922).   |
| Badre, L., <i>Les figurines<br/>anthropomorphes</i>                           | L. Badre, <i>Les figurines anthropomorphes en terre cuite à l'âge du bronze en Syrie</i> , BAH Beyrouth 103 (Paris, 1980).   |
| Cumont, F., <i>Fouilles</i>   | F. Cumont, <i>Fouilles de Doura-Europos (1922/23)</i> , Haut-commissariat de la République française en Syrie et au Liban, Bibliothèque archéologique et historique 9 (Paris, 1925). |
| DAFI  | Délégation archéologique française en Iran   |
| DEE   | <i>Doura-Europos Études</i> , vols. 1–3 (Paris, 1986, 1988, 1990). Vol. 4: P. Leriche and M. Gelin, eds. (Beirut, 1997).   |
| Downey, S.B., <i>Heracles<br/>Sculpture</i>                                   | S.B. Downey, <i>The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 3.1.1, The Heracles Sculpture</i> (New Haven, 1969).   |
| Downey, S.B.,<br><i>Mesopotamian<br/>Religious<br/>Architecture</i>           | S.B. Downey, <i>Mesopotamian Religious Architecture: Alexander through the Parthians</i> (Princeton, 1988).  |
| Downey, S.B., <i>Stone<br/>and Plaster<br/>Sculpture</i>                      | S.B. Downey, <i>The Stone and Plaster Sculpture: Excavations at Dura-Europos</i> , Monumenta Archaeologica 5 (Los Angeles, 1977).  |
| Du Mesnil, <i>Tessères</i>  | Comte R. du Mesnil du Buisson, <i>Les tessères et les monnaies de Palmyre</i> (Paris, 1962).   |
| <i>Dura Final Report</i>  | <i>The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Reports</i> (New Haven, 1947–69).  |
| <i>Dura Report 1–9.3</i>  | <i>The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Preliminary Report on the First [etc.] Season of Work</i> (New Haven, 1929–52).  |

ABBREVIATIONS

- Elayi, J., “Deux ‘ateliers’” J. Elayi, “Deux ‘ateliers’ de coroplastes nord-phéniciens et nord-syriens sous l’empire perse,” *Iranica Antiqua* 26 (1991): 183–87.
- Ghirshman, R., *Persian Art* R. Ghirshman, *Persian Art: The Parthian and Sassanian Dynasties* (New York, 1962).
- Ghirshman, R., *Terrasses sacrées* R. Ghirshman, *Terrasses sacrées de Bard-e Nechandeh et Masjid-i Solaiman*, vols. 1, 2, *Memoires de la Délégation archéologique française en Iran* 45 (Paris, 1976).
- Goodison, L., and C. Morris, *Ancient Goddesses* L. Goodison and C. Morris, eds., *Ancient Goddesses: The Myths and the Evidence* (London, 1998).
- Ingholt, H., H. Seyrig, and J. Starcky, *Receuil* H. Ingholt, H. Seyrig, and J. Starcky, *Receuil des tessères de Palmyre* (Paris, 1955).
- Karvonen-Kannas, K., *Terracotta Figurines from Babylon* K. Karvonen-Kannas, *The Seleucid and Parthian Terracotta Figurines from Babylon in the Iraq Museum, the British Museum, and the Louvre*, *Monografie di Mesopotamia* 4 (Florence, 1995).
- Klengel-Brandt, E., *Terrakotten aus Assur* E. Klengel-Brandt, *Terrakotten aus Assur im Vorderasiatischen Museum Berlin* (Berlin, 1978).
- Koldewey, R., *Wieder erstehende Babylon* R. Koldewey, *Das wieder erstehende Babylon* (Leipzig, 1913).
- Kraeling, C., *Christian Building* C. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 8.2, The Christian Building* (New Haven, 1967).
- Kraeling, C., *The Synagogue* C. Kraeling, *The Excavations at Dura-Europos, Final Report 8.1, The Synagogue* (New Haven, 1956).
- Legrain, L., *Terra-cottas from Nippur* L. Legrain, *Terra-cottas from Nippur* (Philadelphia, 1930).
- Leriche, P., “*Chreophylakeion*” P. Leriche, “Le *Chreophylakeion* de Doura-Europos et la mise en place du plan hippodamien de la ville,” in *Archives et scéaux du monde hellénistique*, ed. M.F. Boussac and A. Invernizzi, *BCH Suppl.* 29 (Athens, 1997), 158–69.
- Leriche, P., “Materiaux pour une reflexion renouvelée” P. Leriche, “Materiaux pour une reflexion renouvelée sur les sanctuaires de Doura-Europos,” *Topoi*, 1997, 889–913.
- Leriche, P., “Pourquoi et comment Europos a été fondé à Doura?” P. Leriche, “Pourquoi et comment Europos a été fondé à Doura?” In *Esclavage, guerre, économie en Grece ancienne: Hommages a Yvon Garlan*, ed. P. Brule and J. Oulhen (Rennes, 1997), 191–210.
- Lucian, *DDS* Lucian, *De dea Syria* (Περὶ τῆς Συριῆς θεοῦ), trans. A.M. Harmon, *Loeb Classical Library* 4 (Cambridge and London, 1961).
- McCown, D., *Nippur I* D. McCown and R.C. Haines, *Nippur*, vol. 1, *Temple of Enlil, Scribal Quarter, and Soundings*, *Oriental Institute Publications* (Chicago, 1967).
- Palmyra and the Silk Road* *International Colloquium: Palmyra and the Silk Road*, AAAS 42 (Damascus, 1996).

Abbreviations

- Rostovtzeff, M.I.,  
"Parthian Art" M.I. Rostovtzeff, "Dura and the Problem of Parthian Art," *YCS* 5 (1935): 155–304.
- Safar, F., and M.A. Mustapha, *Hatra* F. Safar and M.A. Mustapha, *Hatra: The City of the Sun God* (Baghdad, 1974).
- Salles, J.-F., *Failaka*,  
*Fouilles françaises* J.-F. Salles, *Failaka: Fouilles françaises 1984–85* (Lyon, 1986).
- Schlumberger, D.,  
*Palmyrène* D. Schlumberger, *La Palmyrène du Nord-Ouest*, BAHBeyrouth 49 (Paris, 1951).
- Seyrig, H., "Plaquettes votives"  
UVB H. Seyrig, "Plaquettes votives de terre-cuite," in *Scripta Varia*, BAHBeyrouth 125 (Paris, 1985), 301–10.  
*Vorläufiger Bericht über die von der Notgemeinschaft der deutschen Wissenschaft in Uruk-Warka unternommen Ausgrabungen*. (Issued under slightly varying titles and by various editors from 1932 to the present.)
- Van Ingen, W.,  
*Figurines from Seleucia* W. van Ingen, *Figurines from Seleucia on the Tigris*, University of Michigan Studies, Humanistic Series 45 (Ann Arbor, 1939).
- Welles, C.B.,  
"Population" C.B. Welles, "The Population of Roman Dura," in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honor of Alan Chester Johnson*, ed. P.R. Coleman-Norton (Princeton, 1951), 251–74.
- WVDOG Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
- Ziegler, C., *Terrakotten von Warka* C. Ziegler, *Die Terrakotten von Warka*, Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft in Uruk-Warka 6 (Berlin, 1963).

