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Architectural terracottas from Akragas : investigating monumental roofs from the Archaic and Classical period

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PROPOSITIONS

1. Production at Akragas can be identified by a local technical style for the manufacture of roof terracotta. It is characterized by the temper and surface treatment of objects, which differs from those used in the wider region (section 4.2, 6.3).
2. The architectural terracottas from Akragas draw on established regional conventions for decoration, profile, production techniques, and architectural solutions, but there is evidence for local adaptation in all of these aspects (chapter 6).
3. The terracotta roofs and archaeological remains clearly show that monumental buildings at Akragas from the middle to the late 6th century BC were modest in size compared to contemporary examples from other cities. But the number of structures within the sanctuaries were greater than already known (section 6.5).
4. The Corinthian influence on terracotta roofs in Sicily is much more pronounced than has been generally recognized (section 4.1, 6.2.3).
5. Architectural terracottas are complex architectural elements which exist within a wider architectural context. The final form of each object is governed not only by aesthetic considerations, but also by functional, structural, and material requirements. Therefore, the study of these objects requires a multi-disciplinary approach that draws on the theories and methods associated with the art-historical analysis of style, ceramic studies, archaeometry and architecture.
6. The use of non-destructive analysis with HH-XREF on coarse grained, non-homogenous material such as terracotta is minimally explored at present. But by working within the limitations of both the instrument and established standards for archaeometric research, it is possible to obtain results which provide new insights and direction for future research.
7. Most of the published record for Sicilian architectural terracottas is not consistent in its recording of information related to production techniques and architectural function. It is therefore imperative that any future investigation within these areas be based on primary visual observation of the material.
8. The investigation of workshops and the production of terracotta roofs in Sicily can be furthered by not only considering the objects themselves, but also the technical knowledge required to produce them.
9. The PhD process consists of moments of revelation when the researcher believes they had found a simple, all-encompassing solution. However, these are invariably followed by a discovery which will contradict everything. This experience instils a deep seated suspicion of any solution which claims to be uncomplicated and absolute.