

# Human figurines from Southern Africa

BY

R. DART

---

## 1. *Foreword.*

In 1925, when most anthropologists elsewhere failed to realize the rôle Southern Africa was about to play in unravelling the human evolutionary story Dr. A. A. E. MENDES CORRÊA, then Professor and Director of the Institute of Anthropology in the University of Oporto, was revising for its second edition his famous textbook *Homo: os modernos estudos sobre a origem do homem*. True to the title of that treatise he instantly requested further information and a photograph of the then recently-rediscovered *Australopithecus africanus*. His was thus the first textbook to carry an account of the new fossil to scientists in Europe.

The intervening thirty-three years have only served to strengthen the links thus has forged between our respective departments, the universities of which they form parts, and the nascent sister nations in Africa, to whom they belong. The University of the Witwatersrand has become the proud possessor of the DIAZ cross reconstructed by the late Mr. JOHN HARCUS from the fragments so earnestly sought and brilliantly discovered by Dr. ERIC AXELSON in 1938 and also enjoys the distinction of being the home of the Earnest Oppenheimer Institute of Portuguese Studies founded in 1952.

In 1949 this University was honoured to enroll in person as Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*) ANTONIO AUGUSTO ESTEVES MENDES CORRÊA; on October 18, 1956 it was my deeply treasured privilege to be admitted as Corresponding Member of the Academy of Arts and Sciences of Lisbon and to be conducted thither personally by this same friend and colleague and, henceforward, fellow academician.

It is therefore with profound feelings of particular pleasure that I am participating in this tribute to the distinguished anthropologist

to whom this volume has been dedicated. To those who associate my name with man-apes the subject of my choice may appear strange; but I have selected it because of the deep interest which Professor MENDES CORRÊA has shared with me in the recent, as well as the remote prehistory of Southern Africa and also because female human figurines in Southern Africa, like the wall paintings of Southern Africa, are *missing links* that assist as in understanding the significance of such cultural objects in the Late Palaeolithic period in Europe.

## 2. *Introduction: previous finds.*

In the later twenties of this century Mr. T. HOWELL of «Granot» near Schagen in the Eastern Transvaal presented the Department of Anatomy with a number of objects collected by him chiefly from the surface of his own farm. They ranged from flaked stone implements to perforated pottery discs and from perforated stones to iron implements; slag, iron and clay tuyères showed that the region had been the site of iron smelting.

Amongst the various objects was a human female figurine of unburnt clay 5  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches long x 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  inches broad at the buttocks and surmounted by a conical coiffure decorated with depressions fine enough to have been made with a grass stem or a comb tooth (see Fig. 1) (E 542). The coiffure was separated by a groove 1 mm broad from the rest of the head, the shapeless blob of the face being decorated with three depressions to indicate the mouth and eyes. It was patent that each of these depressions had originally been occupied by a small bead such as the white one still fortunately in position to indicate the right eye (see Fig. 1).

Although the figure lacked indications of upper limbs and the breast form on the right side had been damaged, the left breast was well-shaped. The buttocks and hips too had been portrayed with equal shapeliness and emphasis but the ungainly fused thighs terminate in the knee region in two rounded stumps. The vaginal and anal canals are indicated by stabs with a blunted probe that had penetrated to depths of approximately one, and one and a half centimetres respectively.

This figurine is naturally reminiscent of the numerous figurines, almost invariably representing nude female forms and bearing often in exaggerated style the external features characteristic of their sex from Aurignacian sites in France and Germany (vide SOLLAS 1911:

262-265). SOLLAS noted there the comparisons that were to be drawn between Aurignacian and Bushman cave painting practices, between the finding of perforated stones in Magdalenian strata at Salpêtrière and their use as digging weights in South Africa, and between the ivory carvings of female figurines and other objects of Eskimos on the one hand of Aurignacian and Magdalenian Europeans on the other.

The Schagen figurine was not only in friable material and decorated with a modern glass bead, but was manifestly Bantu rather than Bush in source and had come from recent iron-working environment. Nothing comparable having been encountered previously in the Union of South Africa by any member of the departmental staff no further attention was paid to the object (catalogue number E 542) until Captain G. A. GARDNER (1955) took charge of the excavations at Mapungubwe in the Northern Transvaal during the period (1935-40) and had brought to light a number of pottery figurines in the process of excavating the site K2 on Bambadyanalo hill across the valley from the Mapungubwe hill west of Messina on the Limpopo River. GARDNER unearthed on Bambadyanalo 74 skeletons of all ages and sexes and states (*loc. cit.* p. 74) «The ceremonial interments were totally different to any known Bantu burials; they were exactly similar to pre-dinastic inhumations such as I had seen in Egypt, the body being partly or fully flexed and pottery, either whole or deliberately broken, placed around the corpse».

About the skeletons Dr. ALEXANDER GALLOWAY wrote to Capt. GARDNER (*op. cit.*) «I state deliberately and with full comprehension of its significance that there is not a single negro feature in any of the skulls hitherto recovered from K2. The K2 people are thus true representatives of a pre-negro indigenous people, with which the Bantu-speaking negro peoples had never hybridized.»

These pre-negro, Boskop-Bush Bambadyanalo people, whose implements were largely of bone and whose habits were both hunting and pastoral, domestic animals were sheep and cattle and who practised beast burials similar to those of the Badarian culture of Upper Egypt, were Hottentot in culture (*vide* GARDNER 1949: 117-121).

The figurines from Bambadyanalo were markedly steatopygous and were put into the hands of Dr. L. H. WELLS (then Senior Lecturer in Anatomy in the University of the Witwatersrand), for description. Unfortunately the second Mapungubwe publication, projected to deal with the Bambadyanalo material, has not hitherto been published. Casts

of most of these figurines had however been made and preserved in the Department of Anatomy, whilst Drs. GALLOWAY and WELLS were examining the skeletal material, and are reproduced here (Fig. 2).

### 3. *The four Bronkhorst figurines.*

In November 1954, a former student in the Department of Anatomy Dr. A. G. OETTLE, now Cancer Research Officer in the South African Institute for Medical Research, brought to me the series of four recently made, and partially shattered, clay figurines, which have been photographed (see Fig. 1) alongside the specimen E 542 from Schagen. It was immediately patent that, although even cruder than those already mentioned, these specimens from Bronkhorstspuit near Pretoria shared with that from Schagen a common tradition despite the obvious differences in their modelling.

The four Bronkhorstspuit figurines apparently represent a birth, growth, procreation and delivery series from the small infant (Fig. 1 centre), with no organs of sex but with a blob on the belly to indicate its herniated umbilical region (with a broken stick 3 mm in diameter in its centre to symbolise the severed umbilical cord) up through the pre-adolescent stage of bodily growth to marital maturity and motherhood.

Small attention has been paid to other anatomical detail. Apart from those features already described and knob-like processes to indicate the head and separated limbs infancy is suggested merely by relative body size. Other than increased size the adolescent figure (Fig. 1 Upper row left) presents no decoration further than tiny circular impressions for the eyes and a slight transverse groove that seems to represent the mouth and apparently (though this is obscured by the fractures it sustained) no orifices or external organs of sex.

There are two sexually mature female figurines — one (Fig. 1 Lower row right) I interpret as a procreational motherhood figure: it exhibits massive breasts; a full expanded belly; exaggerated mons veneris and vulva area decorated with pockings apparently to indicate hair; and a vaginal orifice plugged by a small stick 4 mm in diameter probably similar to that used to indicate the umbilical cord but meant here to indicate the penetrant penis. In this figure too more care has been taken to suggest the separation of the feet from the legs and the head from the neck and shoulders. There are two eye depressions and

the mouth is suggested once more by a transverse groove but the nose, if indicated, is now lost; it and the ears may have been indicated by small blobs.

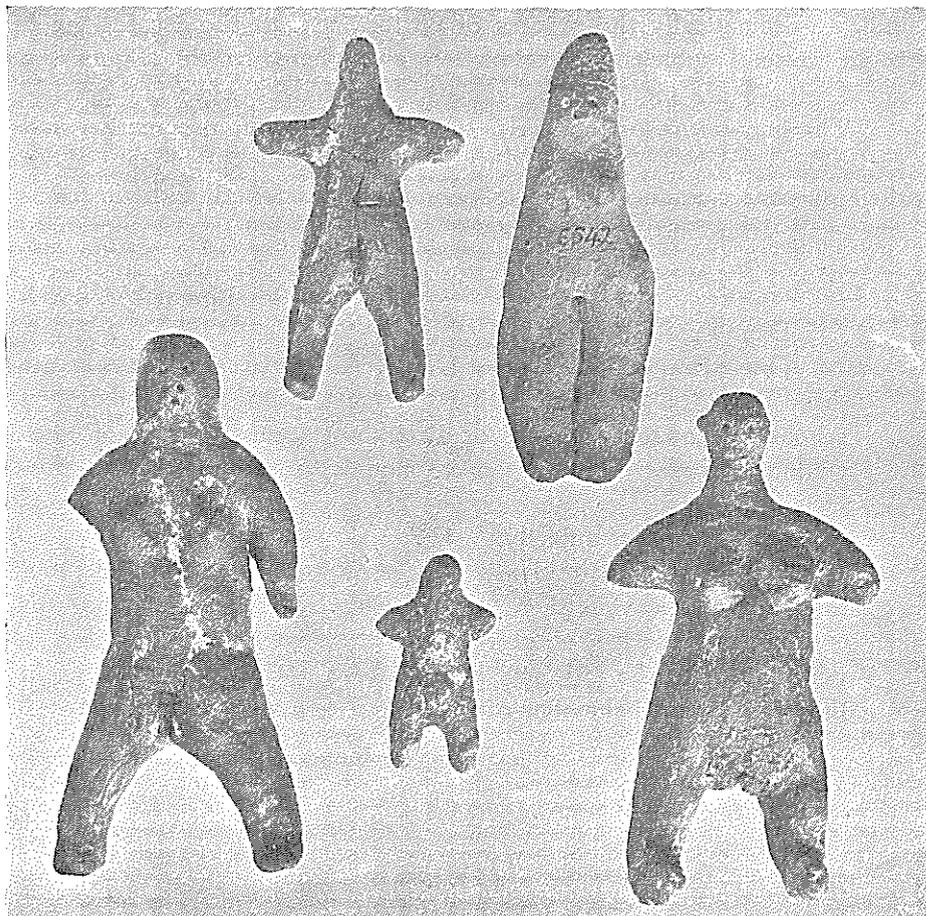


Fig. 1 — Five human figurines from the Transvaal (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  natural size). — The specimen E 542 on the right side in the upper row is a sun-baked clay female figurine from the farm *Granot* an early ironsmelting site near Schagen in the Eastern Transvaal. The other four specimens are 4 sun-baked clay female figurines recovered from a Bantu (Poch or Pogga) male initiation school site at Kortfontein west of Bronkhorstspuit and east of Pretoria in the Transvaal.

The other figure (Fig. 1 Lower row left) I regard as a parturitional motherhood figurine intended as a counterpart to the infant figurine. Because the breasts are not quite so large and the belly by contrast

with the pregnant image is collapsed in appearance, I thought at first that a pubertal type was being portrayed; but, as the vaginal orifice has been widened to a centimetre in diameter and is surrounded by transversely and longitudinally running linear depressions as though to indicate dramatically the process of parturition and the lacerations it could cause, I submit the explanation given here. In this figure the nasal orifices are indicated by stabs as well as the eyes and mouth.

The importance of this series of infancy, growth, procreation and parturition models, however, lies in the slight but crucial evidence about their purpose contained in the following letter received with the figurines and describing their source.

9th November, 1954.

Dear Professor Dart,

One of my students, now Dr. P. A. ROBERTSON brought me these figurines which he gathered from a Mapogga circumcision school at Kortfontein west of Bronkhorstspuit. They are interesting as representing anatomical models for sex instruction, presumably, though I can not say whether these have any other significance. This is not unlikely.

Dr. ROBERTSON told me that he surprised the «school» and they ran off, leaving these on the site. Normally the apparatus is completely destroyed at the end of the period of training — which training, he tells me, brings about profound alterations in the attitude and behaviour of the young men who undergo it.

Yours sincerely,

*Signed:* A. G. OETTLE.

After thanking Dr. OETTLE, I immediately got into touch with Dr. ROBERTSON, then House Surgeon at the Edenvale Hospital; but beyond learning that the school was for young lads and had congregated on his father's farm, could gather no further useful information. Dr. ROBERTSON has since joined the Tanganyika Medical service. Dr. W. D. M. JEFFREYS informed me that, as far as he is aware, no similar series of ritual objects associated with Bantu initiation rites had previously been placed on record. The friable objects were therefore repaired and strengthened with the aid of plaster of Paris and subsequent immersion in Glyptal cement.

It may be that this series is complete; that the making of a male

figure was unnecessary for the male initiation ritual. But the presence of a plug in the vaginal orifice of the fecund maternal figure with the exaggerated sexual characteristics, demonstrates that, whether or not a complete male figure was essential the whole import of these figurines was for sexual instruction.

#### 4. *Figurines from Bambadyanalo (Mapungubwe). Figure 2.*

The following year Dr. WELLS returned to South Africa from Edinburgh and visited Johannesburg after attending the Third Pan-African Congress in Prehistory at Livingstone (1956). So I took advantage of his visit to secure the following brief note about the pre-Bantu, Bambadyanalo (Mapungubwe) figurines and casts in this department that had come from two sites in Bechuanaland not far from Serowe.

«The majority of the specimens were found in a localised area of Capt. G. A. GARDNER's site K2. They were much broken and could only be partially re-assembled. Schofield concluded that they were the discards of an initiation ritual. With one exception, all the determinable figures were female, and all confined to one highly stylised pattern. The *legs* were separate, short and straight with incipient feet; the *trunk* was an elongate cylinder, the *head* either roughly rounded or tapered. The *mouth* was usually indicated by a stab, the eyes less frequently; in one case the eyes were indicated by inset beads. *Arms* usually represented by low horizontal or vertical fin-like ridges, only occasionally by tapering projections. Small applied bosses represent the *breasts* and *navel*. The *buttocks* were a separately moulded mass, usually with well-marked median cleft. The *anus* and *vagina* were indicated by stab-marks. In only one case are *labia* clearly indicated; in another a small median projection resembled a *phallus*, but since a vaginal orifice lay just behind it, it was more probably intended to represent *elongated labia*.

«The one presumably male figure, small and crude, had fused legs, large buttocks, and rough projections seemingly intended to indicate a *scrotum* and *semi-erect penis*. The whole upper part of the body was very roughly modelled.

«Nearly all the figures were treated with impressed ornament, usually a vertical line down the middle of the back, with oblique branches extending a variable distance around the sides.

«Figurines similar to these occur in S. Rhodesia in association

with pottery of Dr. SUMMERS *Stamped Ware* group, e.g. at Khami. The casts C 91 and C 92 in our collection, from Bechuanaland, seem

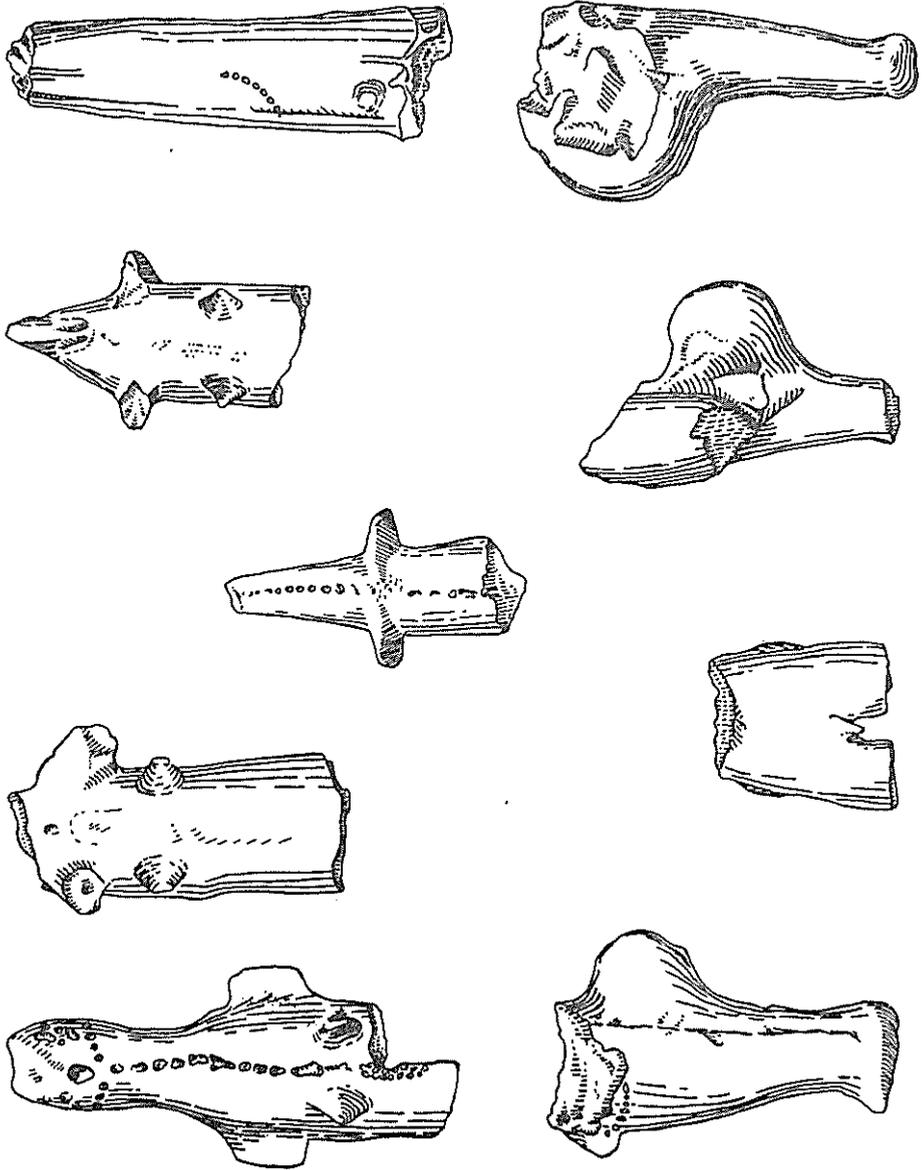


Fig. 2 — Figurines from Bambodyanalo (natural size). — Line drawings of mine clay figurines from Bambodyanalo (Mapungubwe) to show their Hottentot-Bush or Boskop-Bush female characteristics of steato-

to belong to the same general group but differ in the details, e.g. the indication of hair by inserted lines. Some modern figurines from the

Caprivi in the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum also seem very similar to those from Mapungubwe. A group of figurines from the Suhuma country in Tanganyika published by VERNEAU (*L'Anthropologie* 1917) are also to some extent similar.

«Figurine E 542, from Schagen near Nelspruit, is probably modern Swazi. It shows the traditional hair style of the Nguni married woman. The inset beads for eyes and mouth (only one still remaining) are paralleled at Mapungubwe, but the modelling of the figure is totally different, revealing a less severe stylisation, despite the absence of arms and feet. Again the vagina and anus are indicated by stabs.»

*Signed:* L. H. WELLS.

#### 5. *Figurines from Tanganyika, Rhodesia and Mozambique.*

The Tanganyika figurines referred to in Professor WELLS report are of wood and are utilised in witchcraft practices that involve their being peppered like pincushions (or like the great wooden Hindenburg statue in Berlin during the First Great War) with the great number of nails that have been driven into them.

Following up Dr. WELL'S Rhodesian information, I learned that Mr. ROGER SUMMERS had a collection of no less than 220 human figurines in clay and stone excavated from 31 sites in Southern Rhodesia and from just over its borders in the Transvaal, Bechuanaland and the Caprivi strip. It is obvious therefore that in dealing with figurines we are concerned not only with a tolerably ancient but extremely widespread and persistent cult. Mr. SUMMERS very courteously forwarded to me on January 22, 1957, a copy of the report subsequently published by him in the occasional papers of the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia (Vol. 3, No. 21 A). He also kindly sent me four reproductions of casts and one of the modern (Subiya) types for comparison with those from Bronkhorstspuit and has given me permission to reproduce here his illustrations (see Figs. 3 and 4) drawn by Mr. C. K. COOKE F. S. A.

SUMMERS (1957) has divided the 220 figurines into three classes as follows:

*CLASS 1. Stylised figures without bases* (20 sites distributed between Hartley and Messina) invariably *female*, head usually absent but mouth and eyes sometimes indicated by stabs, stylised torsos and legs although the buttocks are separated by a cleft and along with

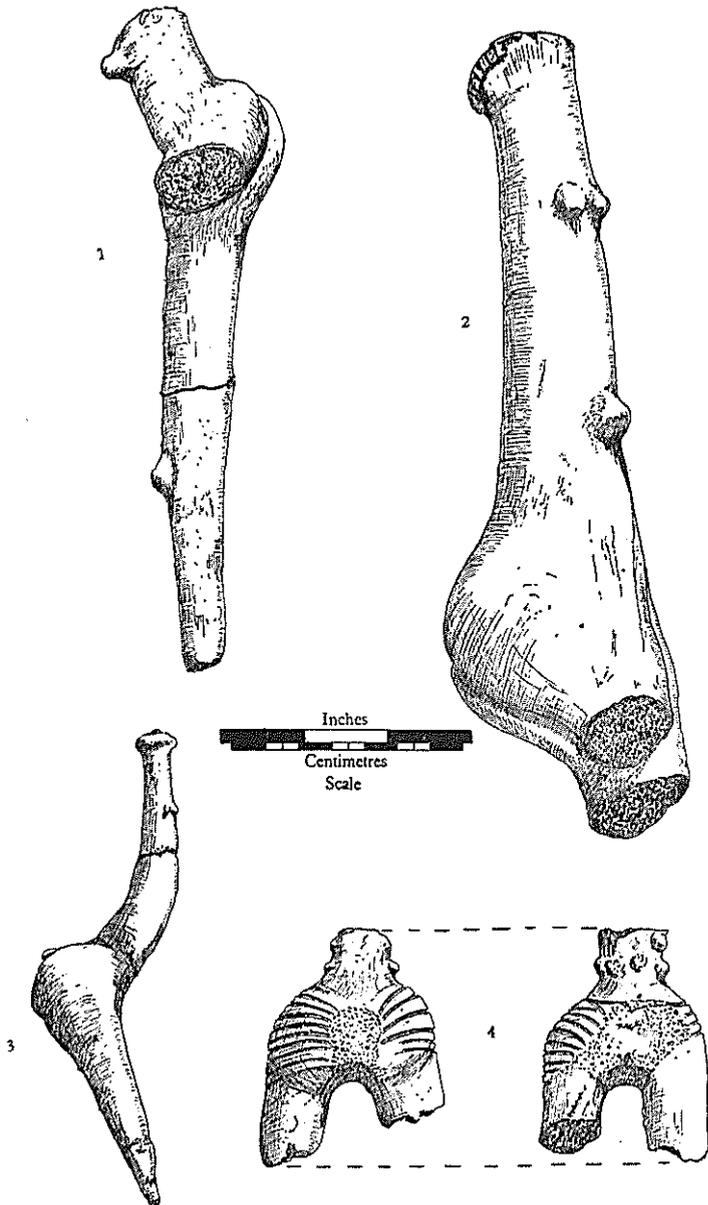


Fig. 3 — Class 1. Figurines. 1, Hillside Dam (2); 2, Carleon Estate (4); 3, Leopard's Kopje Grave (6) — see Robinson (1957); 4, Mount Alice (12). All are in clay.

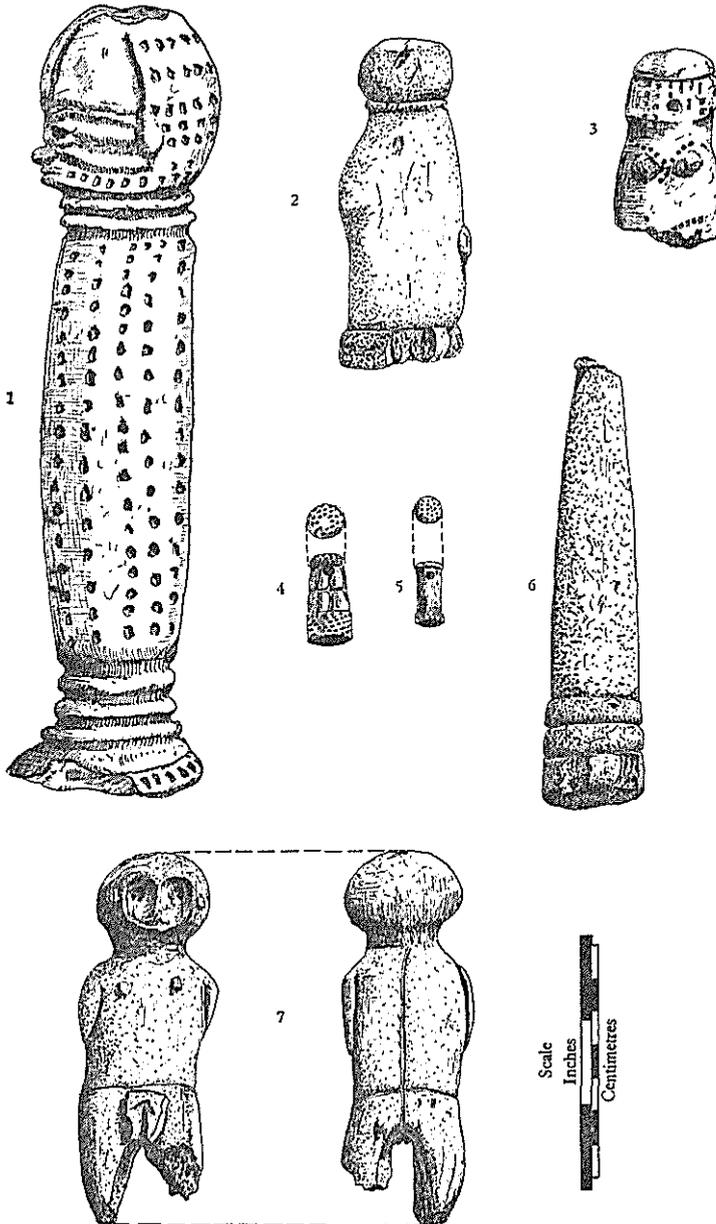


Fig. 4 — Class 2 and 3 figurines. 1, Sipolilo (25), Class 2, clay; 2, Zimbabwe Ruins (19), Class 2, soapstone; 3, Mushonga na Vhuri Cave (18), Class 1 (?), clay; 4, 5, Macardon Claims (23), Class 2, soapstone; 6, Zimbabwe Ruins (19), Class 2, soapstone; 7, Umtali Commonage (27), Class 3, soapstone.

external genitalia are well modelled; breasts frequently unmarked or small protuberances; umbilical hernia usually indicated by well modelled protuberance; about half have the whole upper part of body arched backwards at 120 to the legs; arms, completely absent; legs merely cylindrical; very slight indications of feet; one only indicates knees; legs parted; no clothing indicated; impressed or incised decoration on many, pattern usually on back and sides of body and in some extending to thighs. 70 from Southern Rhodesia: 6-8 inches in length and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 inch in diameter when reconstructed.

*CLASS 2. Stylised figures with bases.* (9 sites from extreme north to extreme south of Southern Rhodesia) sex usually indeterminate, some have breasts; heads vary from plain knobs to complete modelling; decoration occasional, incised or impressed or both; base characteristic and separated by a line or groove or a number of grooves from the rest of the figure.

In this class SUMMERS places the Zimbabwe *phalli*: most are plain cones, some carved and furnished with breasts, decorative markings and heads. Most are in clay and stone but some few are in ivory.

*CLASS 3. Naturalistic figures* (3 sites in north-eastern part of Southern Rhodesia; especially Umtali); some clay figures (2 male 1 female) but most are in soapstone.

Apart from these excavated examples SUMMERS (loc. cit.) cites two *modern examples* of clay figurines. The first coming from Subia (Subiya) in the west (i.e. from the Caprivi strip) about 50 miles west of the Victoria Falls. There the children make clay figurines and mark them with patterns very like those of Class 1; they are dressed in rags of material to resemble Subia women. They also make pedestal figures resembling Class 2 figurines. The examples were collected by the Bernard Carp Caprivi Strip Expedition of 1949; they are playthings with no known ritual or magical significance and are thrown away when broken or interest has faded; but there is a report that similar figures are used in Subia initiation schools.

The second came by way of an African Museum attendant from the north-east part of Southern Rhodesia i.e. from Budja in the Mtoko district. He did not know other figurines but he modelled in plasticene a pregnant woman, such as would have been put into Class 3, as it resembled the Umtali examples but was not furnished with external genitalia. Such figurines were made by him and his companions when herding cattle during boyhood, but were also playthings with no esoteric significance, for the Budja have no initiation rites for either sex. The

girls too would make and dress up such figures as the Subia girls do, and use them as dolls «for playing at being grown-up».

The Bronkhorstspruit figurines would obviously belong to SUMMERS Class 3 or naturalistic type, while that from Schagen (? Swazi) rather resembles Class 1 where the body is arched backwards and the form more stylised.

Although unable to obtain the human figurines (said to be a man with an erect phallus, a pregnant woman and a woman suckling four children) because they were thrown into the pool where the candidate received their ceremonial bath, Miss RICHARDS (1945) has reported the employment of comparable models for sexual instruction in Bemba (Northern Rhodesias) girls' initiation ceremonies. The sexual instruction and ritual of the puberty ceremonies amongst the South African Bantu has been surveyed by EILLEN KRIGE (1937: 100-107).

## 6. Discussion.

«Female figurines of various types are commonly found in domestic contexts in the Neolithic cultures of the Fertile Crescent and in other early Asiatic and European cultures derived there-from» says SUMMERS (op. cit.). «On the evidence of early legends and of folklore these have been interpreted as relating to the continuance of fertility in mankind, domestic animals and crops».

SUMMERS found human figurines of Class 1 and Class 2 associated with stamped ware, with rough stone walls (in 10 sites), and with cattle or sheep figurines (in 15 sites). Hence he believes *human figurines are part of the earliest agricultural cultururation in Rhodesia; they are connected with maintaining fertility.* The concentration of Class 2 figurines around Zimbabwe and of Class 1 around Bulawayo suggests to SUMMERS (op. cit.) the priority of the Bulawayo region (perhaps centralised in the Njelele Cave 35 miles south in the South Matopo Hills) in religious ceremonial tradition. Njelele today is the centre of the cult of the sky god *Mwari*, whose only surviving priest at Zimbabwe described to Mauch the full details of the sacrifice made to the god there at the time of its first discovery. Apparently the sky-god cult displaced a pre-existing fertility cult at both places; in pottery the displacement of Stamped Ware by Ruin Ware may symbolise the revolution in living that occurred when Bantu newcomers introduced the new religion. At any rate the probability is that «these objects (figu-

rines) either date from very early in the building period or, as seems more likely, that they *predate the stone buildings*» (italics mine).

WAINWRIGHT (1949: 62-66) came to the conclusion on literary and architectural grounds that «The civilization of Zimbabwe as we see it today did not derive from a single source, but was the outcome of various influences. Among these influences that of the Waqlimi (son of the sky or High God) and his people was of the first importance. They came from Gallaland and its neighbourhood (in Abyssinia) and were already installed in Southern Rhodesia before A. D. 900».

Since WAINWRIGHT wrote those words carbon-dating has shown that some of the Zimbabwe building was probably erected before 600 A. D. Cosmas Indicopleustes was recording at that time that expeditions were being sent annually by the Abyssinian monarch to Sasos a country lying south of the equator in Africa for gold in exchange for oxen, salt and iron (vide MENNELL 1902, TORREND 1891, DART 1937 and 1951, SUMMERS 1955). At that time the people in Mozambique territory were not Bantu but Boskop-Bush in type.

Whatever the final upshot about the dating of Rhodesian stone buildings may be, the Bambadyanalo people were pre-Bantu i.e. Bush in type and Hottentot in culture and must have been interred long prior to the Abyssinian inroads at Zimbabwe. The exaggerated length of the labia in the second specimen from the left in the lower row (Fig. 2) and the deliberate emphasis of the localised buttocks in the other three specimens in that row corroborate GALLOWAY's skeletal evidence that the Bambadyanalo population was Boskop-Bush in character.

Further, whatever the initiation practices of north-western Subia (Caprivi Strip) and north-eastern Budja (Mtoko District) may be, the Bemba tribe of Northern Rhodesia and the Pogga (or Poch) of the Transvaal and presumably also the Swazi and other Nguni peoples employ human figurines, both male and female, in the course of their initiation ceremonies these recent female figurines used by the Bantu are Bantu in type; neither the buttocks nor the labia suggest the racial characteristics of steatopygia and elongated labia characteristic of the Bambadyanalo figurines. In other words the Bambadyanalo figurines afford irrefragible evidence that initiation rituals, in which sexual instruction played a premier role, is of Hottentot i.e. pre-Bantu, or Boskop-Bush antiquity in Southern Africa.

This is no more than should be assumed from the fact that not merely Bantu-speaking Negroes but also the Hottentots and even the

Bushmen of South-west Africa have initiation ceremonies celebrating the advent of puberty (vide I. SCHAPER 1930). Hitherto, however, no figurines such as have been found at Bambadyanalo appear to have been discovered amongst recent Khoisan peoples or reported in their rituals. Alternatively as amongst the Bantu students of Bush and Hottentot initiation ceremonies may have been kept in ignorance of such initiation figurines.

Amongst the Va Lenge on the east coast, in the south-east of Chopiland Portuguese East Africa, on the other hand, E. DORA EARTHLY (1925) did have access to and has photographed the sacred adult male and female dolls called *mayika* carved out of wood and used in the initiation ceremonies of girls. She has also described the ritual operation on the first day of the school «which consists of the defloration of the girls by means of the sacred (ox) horn» called *tsondo*. The probable use of conical stone objects for the same purpose was discussed twenty-eight years ago (DART 1929) and the reciprocal symbolical significance of the conical and bored stones used by Hottentots has been re-examined in several subsequent articles (DART 1932, 1948, 1953). There I have also referred to the earlier work of G. D. HORN-BLOWER (1926), F. H. ROGERS (1927) and J. H. HUTTON (1927) relative to the distribution of phallic objects.

The rain-making power attributed to conical and perforated stones and to the ritual of pouring fluids through perforated stones by Bantu peoples demonstrates that the fertility notions associated with these Bush-Hottentot objects by the Bantu must be Hottentot in origin. It is valuable in this connection to recall that an essential part of the Hottentot young man's, puberty ritual included ceremonial besprinkling with human urine. After a funeral, also the cleansing rituals were initiated by the two separate circles (of men and women respectively composed of the relatives and friends of the deceased) being besprinkled in this manner by the oldest of the men (SCHAPER op cit.). In the ritual of cleansing Kikuyu from their Mau-Mau oaths (vide *The Sphere* 1952: 386-7) the perforated Thenge «stone» (stated to be made of elephant bone) is supported in a clump of sticks of the sacred Miguri bush tied together with the grass *zgoka* and seven twigs are thrust through the hole in the Thenge stone by the witch-doctor, one for each curse, as he pronounces in succession seven different curses.

These purifying rites in which the sexual organs (or symbolical representations of them) and the fluids they mediate (or are passed through them) play the ritually significant part were either invented

independently by the Khoisan peoples of South Africa or, more probably, were introduced to them by ancient unknown bringers of phallic culture to Southern Africa. Those (phallic) influences appear to have reached Southern Africa from Egypt, Mesopotamia, or India, perhaps from all three, along with perforated stones of which they are inevitable concomitants upwards of 6,000 years ago (DART 1953: 94).

#### SUMMARY

The author describes the first known series of four (infant, adolescent, procreational of maternal) clay female figurines to be recovered from a male Bantu (Pogga) initiation school at Broakhorspsprint in the Transvaal.

He compares them with other figurines of initiation school practices amongst Bantu of Bush-Hottentot peoples; of also with figurines from Bambadyonalo (Mapungubwe) of other prehistoric sites in Southern Africa.

He has traced phallic concepts of practices back to the Bush-Boskop population and the cultural influences that reached Southern Africa before the coming of the Bantu.

#### RÉSUMÉ

L'auteur fait l'étude de la première série de quatre statuettes féminines, d'argile, représentant les quatre phases de la vie de la femme, à savoir: l'enfance, l'adolescence, la procréation (grossesse) et la maternité. Ces statuettes proviennent d'une école d'initiation de garçons (Pogga) de Broakhorspruit au Transvaal.

Il fait la comparaison avec d'autres statuettes utilisées dans les pratiques d'initiation chez les peuples Banton, Boshiman et Hotento, et aussi avec des documents similaires de Bamba-dyavalo (Mapungubwe) et d'autres gisements préhistoriques d'Afrique du Sud.

Les statuettes présentent des caractéristiques en liaison avec les anciennes conceptions et pratiques du culte pholique de la population Bush-Boskop et reflètent aussi des influences culturelles qui sont parvenues en Afrique du Sud avant l'arrivée des Bantous.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- AXELSON, ERIC — *Discovery of the farthest pillar erected by Bartholomew Dias*. S. Afr. Jour. Sci. 35: 417-429. 1938.
- BROWN, A. RADCLIFFE — *Native dolls in the Transvaal Museum*. Ann. Transvaal Mus. 11: 99-102. 1925.
- DART, RAYMOND A. — *Phallic objects in southern Africa*. S. Afr. Journ. Sci. 26: 553-562. 1929.
- *Further data on the origin and phallic character of conical and perforated stones; together with an appendix on the Gogo Mtemi by A. V. Hartnell*. S. Afr. Jour. Sci. 29: 731-741. 1932.

- *Racial origins pp. 1-31 in The Bantu-speaking tribes of South Africa* ed. by I. Schapera London pp. 453. 1937.
- *The ritual employment of bored stones by Transvaal Bantu tribes.* S. Afr. Archaeol. Bull. 3: 61-66. 1948.
- *Rhodesian engravers, painters and pigment miners of the fifth millennium B. C. S. Afr. Archaeol. Bull. 8: 91-96. 1953.*
- EARTHY, E. DORA — *Initiation of girls in the Masiyeni District. Portuguese East Africa.* Ann. Transvaal Mus. 11: 103-117. 1935.
- GARDNER, G. A. — *Hottentot culture on the Limpopo.* S. Afr. Archaeol. Bull. 4: 117-121. 1949.
- *Mapungubwe 1935-1940.* S. Afr. Archaeol. Bull. 10: 73-77. 1955.
- KRIGE, EILEEN J. — *Individual development pp. 95-118 in The Bantu-speaking tribes of South Africa* ed. by I. Schapera. London pp. 453. 1937.
- SCHAPER A I. — *The Khoisan peoples of South Africa: Bushmen and Hottentots.* Routledge & Sons, London. pp. 450. 1930.
- SUMMERS, ROGER — *An ancient ivory figure from Rhodesia.* Man 49: 96, art. 131. 1949.
- *Possible influences of the iron age in Southern Africa.* S. Afr. Jour. Sci. 52: 43-47. 1955.
- *Human figurines in clay and stone from southern Rhodesia and adjoining territories.* Occ. Pap. N. Mus. S. Rhod. 21A: 61-75. 1957.
- WAINWRIGHT, G. A. — *The founders of Zimbabwe civilization.* Man 49: 62-66 art. 80. 1949.