

### **Dorothy Burr Thompson 1900-2001** by Jaimee P. Uhlenbrock

In the early 1870s terracotta figurines from the Hellenistic period began to appear on the antiquities market of Athens. Prospective buyers were told that they had come from graves near the ancient city of Tanagra in Boeotia, roughly 12 miles east of Thebes, where local inhabitants had dug them up from a vast cemetery. Of an outstanding artistic quality, they were quickly purchased by collectors eager to possess original examples of Greek sculpture, even though dealers also had resorted to selling pastiches and by 1876, outright forgeries because of the scarcity of good originals. Controlled excavations were carried out at Tanagra intermittently between 1874 and 1889 in an effort to halt the widespread looting of the graves that had developed because of the market demand for these “Tanagra figurines,” as they were called. Nevertheless, the archaeological contexts within which these Tanagras were found continued to be destroyed, and all evidence for dating and interpretation was hopelessly lost.<sup>1</sup> The inclusion of Tanagras in an exhibition dedicated to Greek art from private collections in the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1878<sup>2</sup> resulted in intensified interest in them as collectibles, as well as intensified activity in the forger’s studio. This was, in large measure, facilitated by the fact that Tanagras were made from molds. Even though most false Tanagras were easily spotted by archaeologists, many nevertheless entered museum collections, so that the entire genre of Hellenistic terracottas began to be viewed with suspicion and distrust by the scholarly

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community. Yet their popularity continued unabated among collectors. One such was Marcus Huish, who in 1900 published in London *Greek Terracotta Statuettes*, the first handbook on Greek terracottas to appear in English. Of the 29 Tanagras illustrated in his handbook; 22 are now considered to be false.<sup>3</sup>

In fact, by the beginning of this century, in spite of the discoveries of thousands of figurines at Greek sites around the Mediterranean and Black Sea little progress had been made, not only in separating the forged from the genuine but, more importantly, in understanding the particular nature of Greek terracotta figurines in general, their relationship to the other arts of ancient Greece, and their role in ancient Greek religion and society. An approach to the study of terracotta figurines as a discipline particular to the material and technique with which the figurines were made had not yet been formulated. This was the singular contribution of classical archaeologist Dorothy Burr Thompson. Yet she is also known for her important contributions to our knowledge of Greek metalwork, gardens and horticulture; theater, cult practices, and many other aspects of daily life in ancient Greece particularly in the Hellenistic period.

In 1987, a little more than a century after the first Tanagras reached the Athens art market, Dorothy Burr Thompson was awarded the twenty-third Gold Medal for Distinguished Archaeological Achievement by the Archaeological Institute of America. The citation began: "Dorothy Burr Thompson, excavator, teacher, lecturer; writer, and preeminent authority on the coroplastic art of the Hellenistic period, has proven the value of patient and painstaking observation of the smallest details that mark the intricacies of the Hellenistic minor arts. Her work on the broken pieces of ancient terracottas affords fresh insights into that notoriously complex and ill-documented field, Hellenistic art." In this year Thompson was 87, and she could

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look back on a long, productive, and groundbreaking scholarly career during which she had defined the discipline of coroplastic, or terracotta, studies. She also was looking ahead to her definitive publication of the Hellenistic terracotta figurines from a series of closed deposits in wells and cisterns found in and around the marketplace of ancient Athens, known as the Athenian Agora. Her earlier treatment of this material had clarified many issues regarding not only the art of the coroplast, or maker of figurines, but also aspects of the monumental, as well as the miniature, sculpture of the Hellenistic period.

### **Childhood and Education**

Dorothy Burr was born into a family of privilege on August 19; 1900, in the cool mountain air of Delhi, New York, where her parents had retreated in order to escape the oppressive summer heat of Philadelphia. Her father Charles Henry Burr, Jr., came from a prosperous old Philadelphia family and, after attending Haverford College and the University of Pennsylvania Law School, opened a practice for international law on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia. In 1899 he married Anna Robeson Brown, daughter of Henry Armit Brown, well-known lawyer and orator,<sup>4</sup> and Josephine Baker Brown of Philadelphia. Dorothy was the first of two daughters born into the Burr household and the one who, from early childhood, was destined to follow the path of a scholar; her sister Pamela was five years younger. Anna Burr enrolled the children at Miss Hill's School, a private Quaker school for girls on Spruce Street. only a short walk from the Burr residence on South 23rd Street. The choice may have been motivated by practical considerations, but the school also was noted for its rigorous academic program, which

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prepared young women for college.<sup>5</sup>

Charles Burr had a great love for Greek and Roman literature, which he also encouraged in his daughters while they were still very young, enrolling them in after-school classes in the classical languages at Philadelphia's Latin High School. Of the two girls, only Dorothy showed an aptitude, at first for Latin at age nine and then additionally Greek at twelve years of age while Pamela was more drawn to her mother, Charles exercised the greatest influence on Dorothy, and a very close relationship developed. He had written several treatises on the constitution. one of which was awarded the Henry M. Phillips Prize in 1912 by the American Philosophical Society for its intelligent analysis and precisely crafted argument.<sup>6</sup> Dorothy was very proud of this distinction and was thrilled when her father allowed her to copy sentences from this essay when she was twelve years old. As Dorothy matured, she and her sister spent hours in conversation on this topic, as well as many others, both intellectual and personal. Until his death in 1925, Charles Burr continued to guide the course of both his daughters' education, influencing them not only in their choice of college but also in the courses they should study and the special projects they should pursue within the context of these courses. A demanding critic with high expectations, he nevertheless treated both his girls with great affection and concern.

Anna Robeson Burr was herself a successful author of novels and biographies, publishing 27 books with firms such as Lippincott of Philadelphia; as well as Duffield, Appledorn, and Macmillan of New York between 1886 and 1936; in 1909 she also published an important critical study on autobiographical literature. Working in the morning hours at home, Anna distanced herself from family matters in order to devote herself to writing, and the children understood that she was not to be disturbed. Her reviewers consistently noted her colorful

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descriptions of characters and engaging plots,<sup>7</sup> aspects of Anna's works that also impressed the children. Their mother's successful literary career must have indelibly imprinted on the daughters the concept of a woman naturally managing a dual role, professional and domestic. Both Dorothy and Pamela, in emulation of their mother considered literary careers as children, and their parents encouraged this by exposing them to literature at an early age and expecting them to participate in literary discussions. While Pamela eventually realized this ambition as a teacher of English literature, Dorothy, who definitively chose to pursue archaeology only in her late twenties; nevertheless took great comfort in her love of writing and always viewed a literary life as singularly attractive.

In any case the children were encouraged to express themselves freely in writing. Dorothy was proud of her stories published in the Miss Hill's School journal *Colline*, and until her later 40s she worked on novels; short stories, and poetry. While she was still a child, Charles patiently and carefully made written comments on her essays and stories, indicating weaknesses in her argument; suggesting changes of mood or emphasis, and making improvements in grammar. Perhaps at the suggestion of her maternal grandmother, who was called Ba, she began at the age of 12 a diary that she kept up for the next 72 years. The first statement, written on March 12, 1912, in an engagement diary- that had been her grandmother's, simply says, "Ba gave me three diaries." The successive entries over the next ten years show her development of Victorian literary sensibilities that are strikingly close to those of her mother, as well as the influence other father's precise use of language and love of style. She added to this a wit and delight in the absurd or unusual situation- Particularly striking are her observations of people, who often are reduced to caricature. In her later archaeological writing, especially in certain

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images or in her integration of these images with historical events, one can easily see the same passionate interest in the idiosyncrasies of individuals or of events that is found throughout her childhood diaries.

Ann and Charles Burr both also had an enduring love of art, which they fostered in the children. Dorothy, in particular, showed an aptitude for drawing and painting, a talent she inherited from her father, who was himself an amateur painter. Her interest in art; however, became a passion as a result of a trip her family took to Europe when she was 13, during which they made the Grand Tour of museums, art galleries, and historic sites in England, Italy, France and Switzerland. The constant visual stimulation of the monuments, and particularly painting, further excited in her the desire to paint, an activity in which she fervently engaged throughout her life. She was particularly taken by the work of Leonardo da Vinci and longed to see his notebooks so as to understand his genius better. She had taught herself Italian the year before without the help or knowledge of her parents and it may be that her interest in Leonardo da Vinci predated the family trip. Although Dorothy never abandoned her interest in art and particularly painting it was the more literary aspect of the family's intellectual life that made the greatest mark on the intellectual development of both daughters. Yet it cannot be doubted that the experience Dorothy gained in expressing herself through form, line, color, and texture during the act of painting profoundly enhanced her ability to see aesthetic qualities or informative detail in even the most humble of archaeological objects.

It was, in fact, her mother who suggested to Dorothy when she was 20 that she consider a career in archaeology; since this would combine her education in the classics her love of

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writing, her ability to draw, and what had developed as a considerable skill in photography.<sup>8</sup> It was a very practical suggestion and one perhaps inspired by the environment within which the Burr family lived. The Burrs' neighbors and closest friends were Morris and Helen Jastrow, called uncle and aunt by the children. A respected Semitic scholar; Morris Jastrow taught at the University of Pennsylvania and often discussed ancient law with Charles Burr. Havelock recounts that when Dorothy was eleven years old, Jastrow gave her a Babylonian tablet inscribed in cuneiform;<sup>9</sup> her diaries also record a gift from Uncle Morris in 1914 of an amulet from an Egyptian mummy, which impressed her because of its great antiquity.<sup>10</sup> A lively archaeological community, the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, was within walking distance of the Burr house, and the children were often taken there, while as teenagers they attended lectures and other events on their own.

One such lecture may have been formative in the development of Dorothy's interest in archaeology,<sup>11</sup> which, however; did not manifest itself until her second year in college. Given in 1916 by Edith Hall Dohan assistant curator of the Mediterranean Section of the University Museum in 1912, this lecture described the painstaking but rewarding process of recovering a Bronze Age settlement, such as Gournia in central Crete; where Dohan had excavated in 1908 with Richard Seager. She had been one of a handful of women in Mediterranean archaeology who had attained recognition through significant research and discovery. The lecture must have made Burr mindful of the difficult and perhaps dangerous conditions that confronted a female archaeologist working in the primitive, rural areas of Mediterranean countries. But it also revealed the enviable independence, undaunted courage, and singular conviction of women such

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as Dohan, whose work measured up to that carried out by the notable male archaeologists of the day. Ten years later Dorothy was to form a close association with Dohan who became one of the readers of her doctoral dissertation.

Charles Burr had a number of important British and German clients and, as a consequence, was frequently called away to London on business. On the eve of World War I he had been engaged by Winston Churchill to intervene in trade relations between Sweden and Germany to the advantage of England. Back home in Philadelphia, Anna Burr may have believed that it was detrimental to the girls to be without their father for extended periods, so without advance notice, she moved the family to London. They arrived in England on a steamer in the penultimate year of World War I, under cover of night and an imposed blackout, so they could slip through the British blockade. Given Charles' wartime activity, the Burr household frequently hosted diplomats, ministers, business officials, and other distinguished guests in between the air raid sirens and other disturbances that marked the later years of the war in Britain. Its milieu formed the basis for one of Anna Burr's most important novels, an account of the war years in London titled *The House on Charles Street* (Philadelphia: Duffield, 1921). For the Burr children this was an exciting period which encouraged them to develop an international outlook and cosmopolitan attitude, if not a certain fearlessness in the face of danger. These characteristics became most evident not only in Dorothy's later career as a classical archaeologist in Greece but also in Pamela's eventual positions as Professor of English literature at Robert College in Constantinople, about which she wrote a book,<sup>12</sup> and at International University in Tokyo.

While in England, Charles Burr continued to encourage Dorothy in the study of the

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classics and engaged private tutors who rigorously drilled her in both Latin and Greek while engaging in critical discussions of the ancient texts. Now in her late adolescence, Dorothy found the British way of life very congenial to her artistic and literary sensibilities and she developed even further intellectually and socially as a result of living in the stimulating environment of a European capital. Her diaries from this period contain some of the most vivid portraits of individuals and encounters that she ever recorded.

Upon returning from London in January 1919, Dorothy joined the work force as a clerk, first at the American Red Cross for several weeks, then at the Burroughs Adding Machine Company. In this period Anna Burr had frequently engaged Dorothy in conversations about careers, and her office jobs were perhaps a response to those conversations. We know from her diaries that she found office work disagreeable, yet she felt that she had to make a success of it for the sake of her mother. To make this work bearable, she created verbal caricatures of her colleagues for her diary, since the only activity she considered truly suitable was literary.

Her entry into the office environment was short-lived, however, and in September 1919, on the advice of her father, she entered Bryn Mawr, a woman's college noted for its strong commitment to classical studies. Bryn Mawr had on its faculty Rhys Carpenter, a major figure in classical archaeology; who in 1920 became an influential member of the Managing Committee of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and later its director. Carpenter encouraged promising Bryn Mawr students to pursue further study in classics and archaeology at the American School. It was assumed that any bright undergraduate at Bryn Mawr interested in classical civilization would spend at least one year at Athens.

It was no different for Dorothy Burr. The specific focus of her interest in the classical

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world, however, grew less from her considerable preparation in classical languages and literature than from the aesthetic sensibilities that she had inherited from her mother and had continued to develop since childhood. In her second year at Bryn Mawr, encouraged by her father, Burr took a course on Greek vase painting taught by Mary Hamilton Swindler. Always drawn to painting, Burr must have been impressed by the subject's wealth of visual stimuli and; in the same year, decided to major in classical archaeology as well as in classical Greek. In so doing, she became the first undergraduate student at Bryn Mawr to choose this combined path of study.

Bryn Mawr afforded Burr important role models in the persons of Rhys Carpenter, who became her lifelong mentor and dear friend, and Henry Neville Sanders, whom she referred to as Sandy, as well as Miss Swindler. Carpenter's sensitive and sympathetic lectures on the Greek minor arts, Hellenistic towns, and particularly on Greek sculpture of the Hellenistic period, which Burr heard as a graduate student in 1926, caused her to turn her attention from painting to sculpture. Of greatest interest to her were Carpenter's perceptive treatments of Greek drapery and his concept of the evolution of drapery styles. She wrote in her diary that Carpenter's seminar was a "sheer delight of intellectual gymnasia--such adroit and flashing play of wit, but sound withal, I have rarely seen...A brilliant man that, sharp and flexible as a knife, not big nor great," while from Sanders she wrote that she learned to "appreciate the accuracy, thoroughness of minute research and its bearing on interpretation and understanding of things spiritual and poetical."<sup>13</sup>

## **Two Years in Greece**

Upon receiving her baccalaureate degree in 1923, Burr was awarded the Mary Garrett

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European Fellowship from Bryn Mawr in the form of \$1,000 for a year of residence and study at any institution in Europe. She chose to spend it at the American School at Athens. When she arrived at the School for the 1923-24 academic year, she joined a small group of ten students, including three other women.<sup>14</sup> The students were invited to participate in a brief excavation at the Bronze Age site of Phlius in the Peloponnese, directed by Carl Blegen, then the School's assistant director, and Hetty Goldman of the Fogg Art Museum of Harvard University.<sup>15</sup> Blegen was a highly respected archaeologist whose excavations provided excellent training grounds for students. Goldman also enjoyed a reputation as a distinguished field archaeologist. Her standing in the archaeological community must have impressed Burr, who, at first, looked to her only as a teacher and role model. Even though Burr was considerably younger than Goldman, their acquaintance was to develop into a lasting friendship.

Working alongside Blegen and Goldman at Phlius, Burr quickly learned the techniques of the field archaeologist to the extent that, in 1924, Goldman invited her and Hazel Hansen, another student from the School, to join the staff of the excavation jointly sponsored by the American School and Harvard University at Eutresis, a Bronze Age site seven miles southwest of Thebes. At this point Burr had been awarded an American School Classical Studies Fellowship for an additional year of study from 1924 to 1925. It was while excavating under Goldman in this period that Burr's training as a field archaeologist became finely tuned. It was also here that she learned to manage the rigorous physical and emotional challenges that face the field archaeologist. Goldman was known to be an exacting technician, who demanded a precise and careful attention to all details of the day's work. While the work was exhilarating, it was also exhausting and began to take its toll in an overwhelming fatigue that signaled what years

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later was to be diagnosed as hypothyroidism. In her most difficult moments, Burr wondered whether she were indeed suited for archaeological work or whether she should just follow her natural inclination for literature. She also was troubled by news from home that her family was threatened with bankruptcy as an unforeseen result of investments her father had made.

In spite of these physical and personal challenges, Burr excelled, not only in her role as trenchmaster but also in her contribution to the analysis of the daily finds. At the close of the season at Eutresis, Goldman, impressed by Burr's descriptive and critical abilities, asked Burr if she would like to stay on in Boeotia in order to study and catalogue the numerous fragments of pottery that had been uncovered. Enthusiastic about this project, Burr spent the winter at nearby Thebes, where the material from Eutresis was stored. Living under the most rudimentary conditions in a rented room in the harsh winter climate of Boeotia, Burr worked under the illumination of an oil lamp, handling hundreds of fragments of pottery, many of which were undecorated. It was her responsibility to devise a classification system, as she became sensitive to the information that could be revealed by a fragment's contour, by the surface of the clay fabric, its state of preservation, texture, feel in the hand, and color. In this work she gained invaluable experience, which provided her with extraordinary insight into the physical properties of fired clay and their visual manifestations. These skills served her well in her later studies of terracotta figurines.

While at Eutresis, Burr was notified that her father had died and that the family was now bankrupt. Feeling helpless and alone, she wrote almost daily in her diary of her longing and admiration for her father, who had also been her best friend, and of the difficulty that must now be facing her mother and sister. Continuing to battle increasing fatigue, as well as incipient

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depression, she nevertheless completed her organization and cataloging of the Eutresis fragments. She also loved the environment around Thebes, taking comfort in long walks in the countryside.

Shortly after leaving Eutresis in late winter 1925, Burr joined Blegen for a brief campaign at the School's excavation at Prosynma in the Argolid. While exploring the countryside nearby, she made an archaeological discovery that showed her to be a person of singular conviction and courage. On April 18, 1925, she decided to make a survey of the area around Midea in the Argive plain in the company of a young boy from Mycenae named Orestes and his donkey, hoping to find a site for future excavation. At Midea Orestes noticed some blocks which, upon inspection, turned out to be from a Mycenaean tholos tomb. When the owners of the land noticed Burr's and Orestes' interest in the site, they threatened to destroy the blocks with crowbars in order to excavate beneath them. In spite of Burr's firm recitation of the law and attempts to stop them, the owners continued their destructive activities. Angry and fearful for the integrity of the archaeological context, she asked Orestes to stay with the donkey, perhaps in order to leave a mark of her watchfulness, and walked across the plain to Argos to seek out officials, who sent a policeman to halt the vandalism.<sup>16</sup> Several years later, the site was identified and excavated by the Swedish archaeologist Axe Persson, who found Mycenaean royal tombs rich in objects of gold, silver and bronze.<sup>17</sup> Although Burr was excited by news of this discovery, she felt that she had lost an important opportunity.

### **Graduate Work at Bryn Mawr and Radcliffe**

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With a heavy heart and unsure about the future Burr returned from her second year in Greece to a disrupted household, which had moved to Pennstone Road at Bryn Mawr and whose major means of support was the novels that Anna Robeson Burr continued to write. Her father's expectations and advice for her professional development led her to return to Bryn Mawr for graduate work. Here she was awarded the Helene and Cecil Rubel Foundation Fellowship for the 1925-26 academic year and completed work on her M.A., which was granted in the spring.

With the passing of her father and of his influence, Burr may have felt the need to explore other educational possibilities for the pursuit of a Ph.D. She chose Radcliffe College, the institution from which her friend and mentor Hetty Goldman had received her Ph.D. As a Radcliffe Fellow for the 1926-27 academic year, she studied with George Chase and Charles Gulick. She also prepared her first publication, which appeared in the *American Journal of Archaeology* in 1927, on a fragment of a primitive statue found during roadwork undertaken between Levidhi and Kandyla near Orchomenos in 1923. Her writing in this article represents a noticeable departure from the "literary" style evident in the diaries and provides a first glimpse of an aspect of later archaeological writing--a spare, lean, and extremely lucid presentation of the facts, based on a careful assessment of the material.

The environment of Cambridge was pleasant to Burr, and she particularly appreciated the company of Goldman's sister and William Acker, a young undergraduate who eventually became a well-known Japanologist. The program at Radcliffe was marked by greater flexibility and leisure, as well as less stress and rigor than at Bryn Mawr. Burr felt that she could perhaps gain back her health. She worked on a novel and enjoyed an active, undemanding social life. But she found Cambridge dull and missed the intellectual stimulation of Bryn Mawr. She also had never fully recovered from the debilitating fatigue and ensuing depression of the previous two

years and struggled with feelings of inadequacy. As her health began to be seriously compromised, she and her mother decided that a period of rest and recuperation under a doctor's care would be necessary, and she took a year off from her studies.

While at Radcliffe, however, she had made a fundamentally important decision that significantly and permanently oriented her in her future archaeological work. Burr was drawn to a discrete group of 117 Hellenistic terracotta figurines in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston that had been found at Myrina, a small city in Asia Minor. She offered to prepare a catalogue and historical commentary on these figurines for the museum, a project that became her doctoral dissertation, completed at Bryn Mawr in 1931 and titled *Terra-cottas from Myrina in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* (Vienna, 1934). She had been interested in terracotta figurines since her first year at the American school, when she was attracted to those from Corinth, which she had hoped to be able to study and publish. The terracottas from Myrina represented for her fine, original examples of Greek sculpture in an era when mainly Roman copies or, even worse, plaster casts were the objects of study. Moreover, figurines presented her with a rich array of drapery styles to which she could apply the lessons learned from Carpenter. Coming from an affluent Philadelphia family, she also had long since developed sensitivity to clothing as an indicator of class, roles, and social status, so that she could bring a special insight to interpretations of terracotta figurines. Finally, even though Burr's father had already passed away two years before, she remembered his advice that she chose a manageable topic of study for her dissertation.<sup>18</sup>

The Myrina terracottas had been acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts between 1887 and 1901, primarily from two dealers. When Burr began research for her dissertation little was

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known of Myrina, an Aeolian city on the Kalabassary plain located between Smyrna and Pergamon,<sup>19</sup> except for its terracotta figurines. Moreover, there was no methodological model that she could follow. She effectively had to invent a discipline, which ultimately comprised of concepts and a vocabulary that, when she began her study, did not exist. Although she was able to develop this disciplinary framework only over the course of several decades, its seeds were sown in the fertile ground of her Myrina study.

The terracottas formed part of the grave offerings of the extensive Hellenistic cemetery of the city. They had been sporadically excavated and collected by peasants and the proprietor of the land Aristide Baltazzi Bey and later his brother Epaminondas between 1870 and 1879. Official excavations were subsequently carried out between 1880 and 1883 under the direction of Edmond Pottier, Saloman Reinach, and Alfonse Veyries of the Ecole Francaise d'Athenes and the Louvre Museum.<sup>20</sup> More than 5,000 graves were uncovered, from which some 1,000 figurines were brought to light. Unfortunately, only scant records were kept of the co-finds of the individual graves. Invaluable evidence for dating, such as could be provided by coins or pottery, was often not recorded as the excavators hastily tried to clear as many graves as possible. Equally hasty was their publication in 1886 of an admittedly handsome and well-illustrated catalogue *La necropole de Myrina*, which, however, presented to the scholarly community magnificent works of Greek art in a poorly documented and superficially researched format.

This publication was Burr's primary resource, but others also proved useful. Between 1883 and 1893, lavish catalogues of the private terracotta collections of Peter Alexander Sabouroff, Camille Lecuyer, Julian Greau, H. Hoffmann, Joly de Bammerville, and Van

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Branteghem had been produced;<sup>21</sup> catalogues of the Archaeological Society of Athens, the Louvre Museum, and the Royal Museum at Berlin had been newly issued; and terracottas in Dresden, Leipzig, and Vienna also appeared in print, although in a more limited format.<sup>22</sup> During the first three decades of the twentieth century, still more museums issued catalogues of their terracotta collections, including the Royal Ottoman Museum in Constantinople, the British Museum, the Archaeological Museum of Madrid, and the National Archaeological Museum in Naples.<sup>23</sup> At the same time, the collections of James Loeb, Adolf Schiller, and Fouquet were presented to the public.<sup>24</sup>

But the early twentieth century also saw the publication of a number of other, more scientific, works that were of considerably greater value for the researcher of Hellenistic Greek terracottas. A monumental typological catalogue *Die Typen der figurlichen Terracotten*, compiled by Franz Winter between 1889 and 1899, was published in Berlin and Stuttgart in 1903. Winter sought to organize all known figurines according to consistent visual criteria, such as gender, posture, and dress, regardless of provenance, although careful indications were made of the findspots of figurines reflecting a given type. This catalogue served as a basic reference for the publication of finds of terracotta figurines from more carefully controlled excavations than those carried out at Myrina. For Burr it was a most important resource as it condensed information on the location of Myrina and related figurines that had been dispersed throughout Europe through the antiquities market. But more important for her study of the terracottas from Myrina were the German publications of 1904 and 1927 on the Hellenistic finds from the late

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nineteenth century excavations at Priene, a coastal Ionian city facing the island of Samos.<sup>25</sup> -

Terracottas found in houses there, believed by the early excavators to have been destroyed by fire in 125 B.C.,<sup>26</sup> furnished Burr with excellent stylistic parallels for which a secure *terminus ante quem* was provided by the fire. Other figurines from Priene associated with Samian pottery of the late second and early first centuries B.C. afforded other significant parallels.

For the first time, Burr was considering terracottas in a museum collection from a strict archaeological perspective, even though they completely lacked their original archaeological context. This project was facilitated considerably by her fieldwork in Boeotia, during which she had handled thousands of fragments of pottery, enabling her to develop a heightened instinctive “feel” for the physical properties of clay. During extensive fieldwork conducted between 1930 and 1931 she familiarized herself with the idiosyncratic character of mold-made figurines, focusing on those from the controlled excavations on Delos, at Priene, at Pergamon, at Corinth, and at Athens, among other places, which formed the framework for her survey of the hundreds of figurines in museum collections in the United States, Europe, and Asia Minor. Only Franz Winter before her saw the necessity for this type of comprehensive fieldwork when preparing his catalogue of terracotta types, and it can be said that Burr was the first woman to venture into the magazines of museums and excavations in order to develop an intimate knowledge of the idiosyncratic character of the coroplast's art.

*Terracottas from Myrina* presented to the scholarly community the beginnings of a new and significant approach to the study of mold-made terracottas, one that started with an attentive examination of the surface of a figurine to reveal criteria for relative dating that could then be fixed in time by means of comparisons with other securely dated material. Of equal

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significance was Burr's recognition that a given type could remain in production for centuries, and therefore stylistic parallels, even though securely dated, could nonetheless be unreliable indicators of the date of a given figurine. Burr's dissertation, while fundamentally innovative in its approach to the material, nevertheless was rejected for Museum of Fine Arts sponsorship by the curator of the Classical Department Lacey D. Caskey because of fundamental differences of opinion over the format of the study, as well as its use of language. This opinion was shared by Swindler and Dohan, the two female scholars Burr admired the most but also her two most strident critics. Dohan was visiting professor at Bryn Mawr for the 1926-1927 academic year at Bryn Mawr.

Burr's dissertation readers, a responsibility she shared with Swindler. Burr had the satisfaction of developing a warm relationship with Dohan who, when Burr was 16, lectured on the excitement and challenges of archaeological work. Nonetheless, Dohan insisted that revision follow revision. Swindler, in particular, attempted to reorient the tone from that of a literary excursus to that of a scholarly dissertation. Two years later, shortly before the final draft was accepted by her committee, Burr reflected on the lessons learned in a diary entry written on April 25, 1930: "Queer that I, with fly pride in literary work should have payed so little attention to the style! Really, I didn't think of it I thought incessantly of the soundness of the argument, the care in detail, fearing chiefly my ignorance, my missing something vital or misinterpreting something obvious." In the same entry two paragraphs later, however, she felt the need to defend her style and approach:

But the old desire to treat things in the instinctive, imaginative, picturesque manner which the academicists fiercely deny me--and to treat emotion, which to a somewhat fatigued spirit seems important--is strong and demanding...Cloudy-minded, impetuous, and

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intense, I may never write nearly perfectly artistically, but I feel always that I have to say with a certain power of sincerity things that are not often written in novels. Attitudes towards Greece--the history--of Greece in the world and to various types of mind may be a better subject for a scholar than a novelist and yet I feel that put in a novel it would find richer and rounder expression.

These moving passages from Burr's diary explain the forces behind the development of her particular scholarly use of language. It is distinguished by the clarity, precision, and sparseness of words already noted in her 1927 article on the sculpture from Levidhi,<sup>27</sup> but, depending on the topic, the emphasis, or the audience, it can be delightfully enlivened by colorful words, phrases, or the occasional fantasy. When writing in 1954 of a head found in the Hedgehog Well of the Athenian Agora, she characterized it as a “fresh study of a barbarian face with a wicked squint, which caught the observant eye of the coroplast as they moved together among the crowds of the Athenian market-place.”<sup>28</sup> Such a description is reminiscent of her astute portrayals of characters in her diaries from the period of World War I. Diary recollections from the mid 1920s of Greek sunsets, wheat fields, colorful flowers, and other aspects of nature transparently inform her poetic but accurate description of the color of faience oinochoai from Alexandria, whose surfaces were “originally a brilliant shining blue, gaily touched with deeper blue, green, yellow, purple, and considerable gold exhibiting the taste for color that was always intense among the people in the blinding light of Egypt.”<sup>29</sup> She used the colorful or evocative word or phrase with singular restraint, however. Her spare writing style was a skill that she had learned well while revising *Terra-cottas from Myrnia* for eventual publication. In a conversation with me in 1966, she advised approaching the preparation of a manuscript as if one had to pay for every word. Indeed she had had to assume the expenses of the publication of *Terra-cottas*

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from *Myrina* by Adolf Holzhausens Nachfolger in Vienna, for which she was charged by the word. Her decision to publish in Vienna was a natural outgrowth of her association with the American School. Its Publications Committee had chosen Holzhausens for the first volumes of the Corinth excavations reports, *Hesperia*, and other studies.<sup>30</sup>

### **Marriage and Excavations at the Athenian Agora**

In 1933, the year before her *Myrina* study appeared, Burr published the first<sup>31</sup> of what were to become twelve articles on terracottas from the Athenian Agora, the ancient marketplace of Athens located below the north slope of the Acropolis. Excavations were begun there in 1931 by the American School, and in 1932 Burr, the first female recipient of an Agora Fellowship, began her lifelong association with these excavations. Although her scholarly work also embraced Asia Minor and Egypt, and in particular Alexandria, it is for her activities and accomplishments while working in the Athenian Agora that she will always be remembered.

In her first year at the Agora, the general fields represented by the finds were assigned to individual scholars for long-term study and eventual publication. Given the subject of her dissertation, Burr was assigned the terracotta figurines. Her closest friend in this period, and one who was to remain so throughout her life, was Lucy Shoe (Meritt); they lived next to each other at the American school for several years and later shared an apartment near the school on Kephissia Boulevard. Other members of a close-knit circle of young archaeologists to which Burr and Shoe belonged included Eugene Vanderpool, Rodney Young, Richard Stillwell; Benjamin Meritt, Oscar Broneer, Lucy Talcott, Fred Waage, Mary Zelia Pease (Phillipedes),

Agnes Newhall (Stillwell), Virginia Grace, and Homer A Thompson, among others.

Homer Thompson was a young Canadian archaeologist who had been appointed assistant director of field work of the Agora excavations under the director, T. Leslie Shear. Burr formed a close association with Thompson; and they eventually were married at Bryn Mawr in the garden of the Burr home on August 15, 1934. Lucy Shoe, Burr's best friend, accompanied her home from Greece for the wedding. Although only in his late twenties, Thompson had already distinguished himself in Canada and had been named assistant professor in Fine Arts at the University of Toronto and curator of the Classical Collection at the Royal Ontario Museum, a dependency of the University of Toronto. A year after their marriage, twin daughters Hope and Hilary were born in Bryn Mawr; a third daughter Pamela, named after Burr's sister, was born in Athens in 1938.

In spite of the demands of family life, Dorothy Burr Thompson, or DBT as she was now called continued to work alongside her husband and the others in their circle in the seasonal six-month excavations of the Athenian Agora, where she held the position of Agora Fellow until the outbreak of World War II in 1939. The archaeological atmosphere in Athens in this period was one of extreme cordiality, and intellectual interchange among the members of all the foreign archaeological schools in Greece and the members of the Greek Antiquities Service was rich and rewarding. The museum at the Agora became an important meeting point for scholars both American and foreign, and those working at the Agora benefited from the discussions with guests that took place over daily tea as well as over the material recovered in the excavations. Particularly fruitful for her were her many discussions with Gerhard Kleiner, a member of the German Archaeological Institute, who was preparing a lengthy study of Tanagra figurines. An entry in her diary captures the cordial and mutually beneficial nature of what was to be a long,

collegial relationship: "Fri Nov. 11 [1937] Just as I'd wound off the lady with the mirror [a terracotta figurine] Kleiner arrived and we had a grand session at the Agora, he insisting, but nicely, that she is mid IVc and to supper."

Even though Dorothy Thompson is one of three archaeologists who formed the core of the Agora excavation staff for more than thirty years, along with her husband and Eugene Vanderpool, she is less known as a dirt archaeologist than as a scholar and specialist in the study of the Hellenistic minor arts. Among her contributions to our knowledge of the topography of the Athenian Agora, however is her excavation in 1932 of a geometric house located under a maze of later dwellings on the north slope of the Areopagos.<sup>32</sup> Near the house she also turned up a Proto-Attic votive deposit, and she was able to recognize in the character of the finds evidence for a hero shrine. Her work at Eutresis and her knowledge of Blegen's excavations at Korakou; conducted while she was at the American School, provided her with particular insight into early architecture, since Geometric buildings were otherwise not well known. Over a period of twenty years she worked mainly at the southwest corner of the Agora. In a taped interview recorded at Bryn Mawr in 1975, she recalled that while others cleared historically important buildings and found sculptures, she was always "standing with her feet in the ancient drains" that crisscrossed this section of the marketplace. Although the debris recovered from the drains, as well as wells and cisterns, was never spectacular, it still provided important information on the city of Athens, its houses, and the furnishings of ordinary citizens. One such house, dated by its finds to the fifth century B.C., she identified as belonging to Simon, the shoemaker friend of Socrates, on the basis of hundreds of hobnails she found embedded in the floor and a cup

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fragment with an inscription reading "Simon" found outside the door.<sup>33</sup>

Dorothy Thompson also was the archaeologist in charge of the excavation of the Middle Stoa, one of the largest of the monuments at the south side of the Agora; in this latter project she was assisted by the young Claireve Grandjouan (q.v.) and Eva Brann. Lucy Shoe Meritt vividly remembers Dorothy Thompson as a top-flight field archaeologist whose notebooks were a model for everyone else to follow. Yet of all Thompson's actual excavation in the Agora in the pre-world War II period, perhaps most important was her recovery in 1936 of the garden of Hephaistos, an area originally landscaped in the third century B.C. that ran around the sides and back of the temple to Hephaistos, located on the Kolonos Agoraios at the west side of the Agora. Under her supervision, the area around the temple was cleared to bedrock and was revealed to contain two rows of rectangular cuttings that had been receptacles for flower pots. Her careful excavation and analysis of the finds from these cuttings enabled the dating and eventual reconstruction of the garden, which was carried out in 1956. This reconstruction was dedicated by the Greek government to both Homer and Dorothy Thompson, who years later in 1972 were awarded joint honorary degrees by the College of Wooster, primarily for Dorothy's work in ancient horticulture. In fact, her work on the Hephaisteion garden and her interest in its reconstruction naturally led to an interest in ancient gardens and the history of horticulture in general. This interest culminated in her preparation of a volume in the series *Excavations of the Athenian Agora Picture Books* that was titled *Garden of Lore of Ancient Athens* (Princeton, 1963).

### **War Years in Toronto**

With the invasion of Greece by Italy in 1939, tensions were such that, in 1940,

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archaeological activity was suspended in the Agora, and it was not resumed again until 1946. Dorothy Thompson's diary traces the progress of the war: "Fri Sept 16 [1934]. worked at the Agora on plastic vases. Dined with Lucy T[alcott], listening to the grim news of the Czechoslovak crisis over the radio--Semni K[arouzou] was there as nice as ever." Observations on the escalation of the conflict continued to be noted in her diary until 1939. In an entry of November 12, 1938, Thompson recounted: 'Went to museum where I met [Gerhard] Kleiner and went over various important figs [figurines] with him. We joined Semni for lunch at the Hellas having met [Gabriel] Welter on the way. He burst out, 'I am ashamed to be a German,' in a tirade against the horrors of the persecution.'" The mounting difficulties resulting from the European conflict and Greece's involvement caused the foreign archaeological schools, one after another, to suspend activity. The Thompsons returned to a more traditional academic life in Toronto in 1939, but this also was interrupted when, in 1942, Homer volunteered for the Canadian Navy.

The war years were difficult for Dorothy, but they were filled with activity both scholarly and professional, even though she was now a single parent with three young children. She frequently spent time with her parents-in-law in very congenial surroundings and formed a particular attachment to Homer's father. In 1942 she was appointed to the professorship at the University of Toronto vacated by her husband. This position in the Fine Arts Department gave Thompson the opportunity to focus more intently, though never exclusively, on the aesthetic aspects classical art. Her lectures were warmly remembered by her student Christine Havelock: "She had an intense identification with every object on the screen or in the museum's display case; they were never merely abstract documents of a remote civilization. She gave the

impression of actually having talked with the subjects of Greek or Roman portraits.”<sup>34</sup> Martin  
Ostwald, also Thompson's student at that time, characterized her to me as a very lively and  
engaging lecturer, who, in her intense desire to stimulate an interest in, and first-hand knowledge  
of Greek art, assigned works of art in the collection of the Royal Ontario Museum as topics for  
term papers. According to him she believed that classics students should have first-hand  
knowledge of inscriptional evidence rather than just the ancient texts and offered a  
“surreptitious” course on Greek epigraphy, a topic considered to be modern nonsense by the  
older professors in the department. Thompson loved teaching and recorded in her diary that  
finally she had found an activity in which she felt that she truly excelled.

During this period, Thompson's second report on figurines excavated from the Pnyx  
appeared in a 1943 supplement to *Hesperia*,<sup>35</sup> curiously, this study was anonymously buried  
within her husband's study of the pottery and other small finds. This work shows the continuing  
development of the careful and conscientious approach to the interpretation of archaeological  
finds that distinguishes her scholarship. She advocated caution in the interpretation of the  
evidence because of the frequent presence of disturbances and qualified her own observations  
with the warning that types could not be seriously discussed until evidence from other sites in  
Athens was studied and evaluated. She also continued to stress the independence of the  
coroplastic tradition, noting, for example, that realism appears in terracotta figurines much  
earlier than in the monumental arts.

In the following year, she published her lengthy and masterful study of the evidence for  
dedications of golden nikai on the Acropolis in the fifth and early fourth centuries B.C. This  
study, based on two Attic treasure records, combined her philological abilities, her mathematical

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skills, and her aesthetic sensibilities, as she built a case for the number of dedications of nikai, their style, their technique, and their dates.<sup>36</sup> This, and other articles she wrote in the 1930s and 40s on impressions from ancient metalwork, demonstrate that her approach was not limited merely to an examination of these artifacts themselves, which in any case, was always done with the most careful observation of minute detail. Rather, she tried to recapture the position and popularity in Athenian society of this aspect of the minor arts.

The faculty of the University of Toronto included the distinguished classicist Eric A. Havelock, who, in 1944, began to form what became the Ontario Classical Association. In 1946 the first issue of its journal *Phoenix* appeared. Dorothy Thompson was one of the founding members of the association and, together with Mary E. White, was a contributing editor of *Phoenix* until 1947. It was Thompson who suggested the journal's name; in the foreword to the first issue, published shortly after the bombing of Hiroshima, she wrote:

Smoke from the most ominous fire in history still hangs over Hiroshima. How should we interpret the omen that arises from the pyre? What bird, what hope, can spring from such ashes. The humanist inevitably, believes that this new phoenix must symbolize but another re-birth of the ideals of humanity, forever to be reborn in an eternal cycle.<sup>37</sup>

With the close of the war in 1945 Homer Thompson returned to the faculty of the University of Toronto as professor of Roman art, while his wife stayed in his former position for one more year until 1946. At that time Homer also was appointed acting field director of the Agora excavations upon the death of director T. Leslie Shear; in the following year, he assumed the directorship, a position he held until 1967, and with it an endowed chair at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey. Coincident with his acceptance of the Agora post,

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the University of Toronto offered him the position of director of the Royal Ontario Museum, which he declined. Until a suitable candidate could be found, the museum offered the position of acting director to Dorothy for one year. Although convinced that the position was offered to her in an attempt to secure Homer, she confessed in her diary that she was thrilled. For the sake of her husband she had already decided to give up teaching and stay at home with the children. Her new position at the museum, although temporary, buoyed her. Because this was the first time that a woman had ever held such an important post, there was a feeling among some of the staff that she would be only a figurehead. But with tact, diplomacy and determination she proved to be an effective leader in the difficult postwar period. She not only immersed herself in promoting the museum to the general public but successfully advocated for herself in a case involving salary inequity because of her gender.

Although balancing the careers of mother, museum professional, and scholar, Dorothy Thompson nevertheless felt that it was her moral duty also to promote support for Greece as it coped with the devastation of a global war, as well as the disastrous economic consequences of the civil war that followed. In her eyes, one of her most successful enterprises in Toronto up to that time was organizing the Delphic Festival, a celebratory concert of native songs and dances performed by Greek immigrants in the auditorium at Eaton's Department store. Her diary entries for this period have an almost breathless tone of excitement as she speaks of money raised, people marshaled, programs printed, and obstacles surmounted to insure the success of the event.

In a slightly different spirit, but with much the same enthusiasm, she organized an educational outreach program for the museum, the first ever in its history, by advocating the preparation of slide sets of objects from the everyday life of ancient Greece in the museum's

collection. These were accompanied by her commentary and were designed to render the Greek achievement more accessible and intelligible to schoolchildren, as well as the general public. In her introduction to the first slide set, published in the first issue of *Phoenix*, she effectively and charmingly exhorted the museum-goer to ponder, in addition to fine art, even such modest objects of ancient Greece as sandals, socks, and "old bread."<sup>38</sup> These slide sets, Thompson believed, could substitute for museum visits at a time when public transportation had been curtailed because of the war. Other museum activities included her organization of a cross-cultural exhibition of terracotta figurines that demonstrated the differing responses of craftsmen working in clay as they drew their inspiration from characters in everyday life from the ancient Mediterranean, the Far East, and Pre-Columbian America.<sup>39</sup> This project was realized in part with the assistance of her close friend at the museum Helen Fernald, curator of Chinese art.

During these dark years, Dorothy Thompson also often illuminated for her students aspects of the Greek spirit that she found embedded in nuggets of Greek Poetry. With the return of her husband and her ensuing decision to step into the background at the university, she occupied herself between 1945 and 1947 with completing translations of Greek lyric verses and folk songs, even though she was working full time at the museum. These translations had occupied her intermittently for at least ten years, as her diaries attest. She borrowed the title of the project from a collection of short stories and tales for children that she had written in the 1930s and had tried unsuccessfully to publish. Called *Swans and Amber* and published in 1948 by the University of Toronto, this collection of verses was accompanied by a brief introduction to the early Greek world and by small drawings based on motifs from Greek vase painting that

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she had selected.<sup>40</sup> In her choice of verses, she tried to reflect the global situation at the time.

The first verse is titled "Recruiting Song" and begins: "Till when must you recline, young men, when will you brace your hearts to courage?...You think you live at peace when war rules every place."

### **Postwar Years Split between Princeton and Athens**

In 1947 the Thompsons moved to Princeton, New Jersey, where Homer was appointed Permanent Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study. This was on the recommendation of epigraphist Benjamin Meritt, who had been Homer's professor at the University of Michigan and with whom both the Thompsons had worked at the Agora until 1939. This position had been occupied by Hetty Goldman, who had retired from the Institute the year before and who, until her death, was a neighbor and beloved friend of the Thompsons. The American School of Classical Studies had been affiliated with the Institute from its founding in 1935, as the Institute was one of the subscribing members lending support in the form of office space and stipends for members of the Agora staff. This arrangement was the brainchild of Abraham Flexner, the Institute's first director and long-time friend of the American School and the Agora excavations, who believed that the results of excavations should be published as expeditiously as possible. In his view this could only be accomplished in a research environment with no academic demands.

Although Dorothy Thompson was not ever a member of the Institute, she nevertheless was given office space and the other privileges accorded actual members since she was a member of the Agora staff preparing the work of the American school for publication. She occupied a small desk by a window in a huge room in Fuld Hall into which one had to descend

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by four steps; Homer's office was above another series of steps adjacent to Dorothy's desk. The center of the room was occupied by an enormous table on which the latest archaeological publications were always strewn for discussions over tea and at other times. The walls were lined with books, and specially constructed flat files designed to accommodate the plans, drawings, and photographs that resulted from the annual excavations at the Agora. Visiting scholars were warmly greeted as they were at the Agora, and the Thompsons encouraged a general feeling of family.

In this atmosphere, Dorothy Thompson worked on her preliminary reports of the figurines from a series of ten closed deposits from the Agora, as well as other articles and book reviews. Sensing a need to step into the background, she had decided to remain at home in Princeton for the period 1948 to 1953 while Homer Thompson was in Athens from January to June directing the excavations at the Agora. As a brief diversion she taught in a summer school in Toronto in 1951, was a tour guide for a fund-raising tour of classical sites to benefit the American School, and made short visits to Athens in 1948 and 1950. But it was only in 1953 that she resumed her archaeological activities at the Agora alongside her husband.

The 1950s was a heady time for Dorothy Thompson, and she confessed in her diary to being obsessed with work. Many of the projects that began to crystallize simultaneously benefited from the interest of the numerous colleagues and guests who continued to discuss their work over tea both in Princeton and at the Agora. Of all these projects, the one concerning the Agora deposits was the most fundamental and influential for all her later scholarly activities. Beginning with the title "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas," each of these reports focused on the discarded fragments of terracotta figurines and molds used for their manufacture that represented what she characterized as "that most obscure and confusing of subjects." The

pottery from these deposits provided valuable evidence for dating, which could be used in untangling the complex web of style and chronology that ensnared many scholars of Hellenistic sculpture. It also provided precious documentation for the artistic activity of certain periods at Athens, such as the third century B.C., a period for which evidence was completely lacking for the monumental arts as well as significant documentation for cult activity in this quarter of the ancient city of Athens.

The importance of the dated deposits within which the Agora figurines were found was put into higher relief by the appearance of the monumental typological study *Tanagrafiguren* by Gerhard Kleiner in 1942.<sup>41</sup> Published during the war, this volume was available in the United States in only a few copies and not until the late 1940s. In a lengthy review article published in 1950, Thompson criticized Kleiner's choice of material to examine, since most of it was looted and therefore without archaeological context. She believed that such a typological study could yield valid results only when based on the sound chronological framework provided by properly excavated material, and not on the "treacherous pastime of stylistic analysis." She warned that "until scholars learn to differentiate sharply between evidence based on excavated terracottas and that drawn from dubious material, the science can never be regarded seriously by historians."<sup>42</sup> Moreover; she felt that Kleiner concentrated not on the figurines themselves but rather on the abstract idea of type that each figurine represented. Ever mindful that information about surface anomalies, state of preservation, and technical details, among other things, could be provided by a figurine from a good context, she found the study lacking in the kind of concrete evidence that the terracotta figurines themselves could provide.

In Thompson's first article in the "Three Centuries" series, nicknamed "The Coroplast's

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Dump," she stressed the importance of meticulous attention to details that might appear trifling to all but the most expert eye. In doing so she underscored the notion that coroplastic studies was a specialized discipline that required training and the handling of masses of material from a purely archaeological rather than an art historical point of view. She believed that it was first and foremost through an examination of technical idiosyncrasies that mold sequences could be determined and that only through these sequences, coupled with an examination of the clay fabric, could the geographic origin of certain *types* be identified. Frustrated with inadequate verbal descriptions of clay color, she was the first to call for a full technical study of clay fabrics that could result in a standardized vocabulary for the description of clay color. Neutron activation was then being considered as a possible aid to such a description. Given her advocacy for the solution to the problem of clay analysis, she participated in a meeting of a small group of nuclear scientists and archaeologists held at the Institute and presided over by its director Robert Oppenheimer. Her important role in this discussion is illustrated by her introduction to an article on the application of his procedure to pottery and figurines published in the *American Journal of Archaeology* by two nuclear scientists from that meeting.<sup>43</sup> She continued to collaborate with nuclear scientists from Brookhaven National Laboratory until the early 1980s.

Although Thompson had criticized Kleiner's use of stylistic analysis in his study of Tanagra figurines, she herself found that, in the proper context, stylistic analysis could be an extremely valuable tool. In the same year that her criticisms of Kleiner's study appeared, she also published an article on a bronze statuette in the collection of Walter Baker of New York City. In this study she presented a vivid picture of a veiled and masked woman who twists while stepping out in a ritual dance. Thompson's perceptive treatment of its stylistic aspects reveals

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the aesthetic sensibilities that were formed at an early age and that, despite her concentration on sometimes pitiful fragments of the archaeological record, she never abandoned. Her astute stylistic observations, however, were merely the route by which she could relate the Baker dancer to figurines from dated deposits at the Agora, thereby determining a chronological framework for this work. Her enduring interest in and sensitivity to clothing also led her to identify Alexandria as its place of origin, a site to which she would devote more of her interest in later years.

Her most impressive foray into stylistic analysis, however, occurred in an article written two years earlier, in 1948, for the general readership of *Archaeology* magazine. Called "The Charmed Circle," this article explored the aesthetic characteristics of the circular field at the bottom of ancient Greek drinking cups and the solutions to the problems of designing for it. In Thompson's approach to this material, there is still much of the museum educator trying to enlighten, engage, and charm the reader all at once. Here Thompson indulged herself in her "literary style," as is evident in her conclusion: "Varied recasting of the theme [of the circle], infinite changes of key and of pitch, of pattern and of color, of subject and of interpretation, of thought and mood bring the hard geometric formulae to life and power. Perhaps this is the secret of the magic; the power to build upon geometric structure without either enslaving the imagination or discarding the tradition" (p- 64).

By the mid 1950s Thompson enjoyed high scholarly esteem, even though her activities also included organizing the Thompson household both at Princeton and Athens, with its routine contact with distinguished scholars, and arranging a busy schedule of travel to Greece and elsewhere. Summers at Athens were especially fulfilling as she could work over her figurine

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fragments, a process that required hours of painstaking study of minute detail. She also could share her ideas with others working in a field that was beginning to benefit from the more scientific approach that she, among others, had advocated. Specialized studies devoted to terracottas whose contexts were well documented and dated, such as those from Corinth,<sup>44</sup> Delos,<sup>45</sup> Kourion,<sup>46</sup> and Olynthos,<sup>47</sup> were regularly appearing, and these enabled Thompson to clarify in her own mind the nature of the problems that still needed to be faced. Not only was she establishing fundamental assumptions for the scholarly study of terracottas, but other scholars were also contributing to this process.

Among these was Richard Vaughn Nicholls, keeper of the classical collection of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. Nicholls was assigned the archaic and classical figurines from the Agora for study and eventual publication along with the Hellenistic material being prepared by Thompson. In the 1950s Nicholls and Thompson spent countless hours discussing the problems inherent in research on terracotta figurines, and his debt to Thompson is expressed in his recent article on the well U 13: I of the Agora.<sup>48</sup> In the course of examining the thousands of archaic, mold-made terracottas brought to light at sites in and around Athens that paralleled those from the Agora, Nicholls became interested in the effects that mass production could have on understanding the date of a figurine and the origin of its type. He was the first to put in print a system of classification for mold-made terracottas<sup>49</sup> based on earlier research conducted by the German scholar Elizabeth Jastrow.<sup>50</sup> This was a system founded on the concept of derivative production, with its categories of *type*, *group*, and *series*, its notions of parallel molds and mold

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generations; it already had been at the basis of the research of both Thompson and Agnes Stillwell, who in 1951 published the terracottas from the Potter's Quarter at Corinth.<sup>51</sup> The principle of derivative production became established as the foundation for all research on mass-produced figurines, which, at some sites like Corinth, could number in the tens of thousands. Even though Nicholls was the first to publish this classification system, it was Thompson in her "Three Centuries" articles who repeatedly demonstrated how it could be applied.

By examining the figurines from the deposits in the Agora in sequence, she was able to outline the development of the style, iconography, and techniques used by the coroplasts at Athens, as well as their preferences for certain clays. The chronology for these deposits rested on the studies of the pottery, lamps, and coins with which the figurines were found, studies that were carried out by her husband Homer, Rodger Edwards, Virginia Grace, and others. Even though this chronology has been revised by Susan Rotroff, nevertheless the relative sequence of the deposits remains more or less unaltered. In Dorothy Thompson's successive publications of the figurines from the Hedgehog Well and the Demeter Cistern, now dated to the end of the fourth century B.C., the Altar well of the second half of the third century B.C., the Satyr and Komos cisterns of the early second century B.C., the Kybele cistern of the early first and the Mask Cistern of the later first century B.C., she created a network of interrelationships from one deposit to another. This network was correlated with the evidence from the Kerameikos, the Acropolis, and the Attic countryside, confirming the continuity of certain traditions, themes, and practices of their abandonment in certain periods. She illustrated that the craft of the coroplast, intimately associated with that of the metalworker and the potter, was a vital industry at Athens,

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producing miniature sculpture of high aesthetic quality until the later third century. At that time economic troubles precipitated a steady decline. From the second century onward, the craft was marked by indifferent workmanship and an increased commercialism evident in the overuse of worn molds, sloppy retouching, and the abundant application of hand-modeled detail.

Thus, with these deposits, Thompson was able to reconstruct the history of what must have been the most popular of the popular arts at Athens in the Hellenistic period. But more importantly, her ultimate goal in understanding the evolution of the coroplast's craft at Athens was always to illuminate the religious, political, or economic realities of Athens as they were known through the literary sources, of which she had an intimate knowledge. At times these attempts appeared somewhat forced, even to her, but, nonetheless, the picture that she tried to evoke always had a historical immediacy. This can be seen in her musing over a headless figurine of a soldier belonging to Group B, which comprised material from several cisterns at a house near the Areopagos:

Had the head of our figure survived, we might have been able to tell whether this was intended as a sympathetic portrayal of a youth or the sly criticism of the hoplites, who for a brief time in the twenties enjoyed a monopoly of the franchise. It is difficult to correlate the checkered pages of Athenian history with the choice of themes in popular art; but when a totally new theme is introduced, we feel curiosity regarding its motivation.<sup>52</sup>

Carl Blegen, who had been director of the American School from 1948 to 1949 and director of the University of Cincinnati's excavations at Troy from 1932 to 1938, invited Dorothy Thompson to study and publish the figurines from Troy. This material comprised a small group of some 300 fragmentary terracottas dating from the fourth century to the early Imperial Age that had been brought to light in the ninth city of Troy, known by its classical name Ilion. The material also represented all that was known of both the sculpture and cults of Troy in the

Hellenistic period. It is unclear from the diaries exactly when Blegen assigned Thompson this topic, but we do know that she visited Troy for the first time in early August 1938. Fifteen years later, on May 4, 1953, she went to Istanbul for the first of two study visits for the Troy material, and by the same time the following year she was dividing her time at the Agora among digging, producing a film for the Archaeological Institute of America, preparing her "Three Centuries" articles, working on faience Ptolemaic portraits, and working on the Troy figurines. On May 11, 1934, she met Blegen and Jack Caskey in Istanbul to photograph the material. In diary entries written from May 12 to May 19 she spoke of time spent every day with Gerhard Kleiner in Istanbul discussing the Troy terracottas. They also took time out to go to the bazaar together and she purchased two small terracotta heads.

Although the Troy figurines did not come from closed deposits, as did the Agora figurines, they were found in concentrations of material of such a homogeneous character as to suggest that these concentrations had some chronological value. This circumstance provided Thompson with a rough framework, within which she was able to examine the figurines for their style and significance. But she noted that only after a thorough and meticulous examination of technique could the material be classified and a stylistic evolution sought. She reiterated her notion of a double date for mold-made terracottas and the implications that this can have for coroplastic studies: "Until these two dates can be determined within reasonable limits and their interrelations understood, the chronology of coroplastic art must remain in a vague and confused condition, which renders all arguments based on figurines unreliable, even dangerous."<sup>53</sup> She also repeated her belief in an independent coroplastic tradition. In the process of defining the evolution of this tradition that was particular to Hellenistic Ilion, Thompson was able to outline

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criteria for the dating of costume, drapery, headdress, hairstyles and facial types whose establishment broke new ground for coroplastic studies, as well as for Hellenistic sculpture in general. This was facilitated by her work on the figurines from the dated deposits of the Agora which provided her with valuable indications for dating. Not only was this study the first full treatment of the Hellenistic terracotta production of a specific site in Asia Minor but, in its extensive references to the artistic production of other Hellenistic centers, it provided a firmer foothold for other studies dealing with the Hellenistic art and religion of Asia Minor and beyond.

The enthusiasm that Thompson continued to feel for archaeology and the archaeological process is evident in her personal diaries in which, as she approached her sixtieth year, she still made almost daily notations about her work in the Agora: "March 9 [1959], started digging at gate. Did sections and reveled in dirt." "May 29 [1959], Scraped bedrock desperately for clues, finding painted plaster." But, as she had done throughout the 1950s, she also continued to juggle several major research projects, in addition to her work on the figurines from the Agora deposits, festschrift articles, and book reviews. One of these major projects, begun in the late 1930s, concerned the origin of the category of figurines known as Tanagras, which comprised types representing stylishly dressed young women and well-cared-for children. The other major project involved a study of Ptolemaic ruler portraits as they appeared on ritual faience jugs from Alexandria. This latter material had been mentioned in Thompson's dissertation as an important corpus that could yield vital criteria for the dating of clothing drapery styles, and facial types. In the mid 1950s she began to look at this material more carefully as a means of cross-checking and narrowing dates for figurines from the Agora

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deposits, as well as for an article in a festschrift for Hetty Goldman.<sup>54</sup> Offering a rich mine of untapped potential, these oinochoai in themselves began to be the object of more intense research for Thompson throughout the later 1960s, with the aim of outlining the changes in drapery and hairstyles as they were documented by the portraits. With her Troy volume in press at the beginning of the 1960s, she focused more intently on this and her Tanagra project.

Both were given considerable impetus by a year spent abroad in England, when Homer Thompson was named Eastman Professor at Balliol College of Oxford University for 1959 and the J.H. Grey Lecturer at Cambridge in 1960. While her husband lectured on the history of Athens and its marketplace, Dorothy Thompson was invited to lecture in London and Paris on the faience ruler portraits. This invitation compelled her to synthesize her thoughts on the topic and to share them with her colleagues. Fruitful discussions with Simone Mollard-Besques at the Louvre Museum and with Reynold Higgins at the British Museum enabled her to see her own point of view more clearly at a moment when she was complaining about "getting tangled on faience."<sup>55</sup> Equally productive were her many discussions with Higgins concerning Tangara figurines, the theme of a colloquium he held in London in early 1960. Upon returning to Athens in 1961, she began to consider the origin of Tanagras with renewed energy. After a summer spent with Higgins at the Agora discussing Tanagra problems, she completed a first draft in 1963. But this draft took an unexpected and crucial turn the following year, when, during work on the final transcript, she suddenly came to an important realization about this material, which she noted in her diary for August 19, 1964: "Worked on Cal and Tan[agra], getting new idea on theatrical origin of 4th century tcs." In a somewhat triumphant but cautious tone a few days later on August 31, she wrote: "Finished index! Also typing of Tan but it needs fussing and tidying

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and notes.”

Thompson's study on the origin of Tanagras is perhaps her most important self-contained article.<sup>56</sup> Although Kleiner and others doubted that figurines of this level of sophistication could have originated in a provincial center in Boeotia such as Tanagra and considered them more suited to the cosmopolitan taste of fourth century Athens, Thompson demonstrated the primacy of Attic molds by using the techniques of terracotta analysis that she had been instrumental in developing. She also related the impetus for the appearance of the Tanagra style to influence from the theater and the technique of retouch associated with early Tanagras to that used for small figurines of actors, which themselves imitated more costly examples in bronze. Thus the position that Boeotia held as a creative and seminal force for coroplastic production in the fourth century dissolved in the face of the Agora material. Although Tanagras could document only specifically Athenian stylistic developments, the stylistic benchmarks that Thompson singled out in the Tanagras from the Agora deposits served as an outline for the study of the coroplastic art of other centers of the Hellenistic world, since Tanagra figurines and their molds were widely exported.

During the course of 1964, when Thompson completed her article on the origin of Tanagras, she also completed the ninth and tenth preliminary reports on the figurines from the wells and cisterns of the Agora, contexts that contained figurines datable to the late first century B.C. The tenth report was the final one in the series. Now she was ready to prepare the culminating study on all the late classical and Hellenistic figurines from the Agora, which was to appear together with that of Richard Nicholls on the Geometric through classical material for a volume in the series *The Athenian Agora*. Aside from the book reviews and encyclopedia

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articles she continued to be asked to write, Thompson turned her attention almost exclusively to what she called “faience topics,” even though this embraced all the arts of Alexandria, as well as the cult of the Ptolemaic queens. Based on the faience oinochoai issued to commemorate the cults of Arsinoe II, Berenike II, Arsinoe III, and Kleopatra I, this study considered material that was narrowly dated from 267 B.C. to 176 B.C. and that could be attributed to a specific queen by inscriptions. Although they had been cited or discussed individually by scholars in earlier literature, these vases as a class of objects had been the focus of only one special study, carried out in 1901, when only a few were known.<sup>57</sup>

The importance of these vases lay in their decoration, which comprised applied reliefs of a queen associated with cult paraphernalia. These reliefs were made from piece molds. By a most painstaking and meticulous examination of the technical details of the casts resulting from these molds, as well as the color and character of the faience itself, Thompson was able to insert the unscribed oinochoai within the series of inscribed examples to arrive at a clear picture of the evolution of dress and physiognomy. When that study was completed it embraced not only chronological, and therefore stylistic, issues, which had been Thompson's original concern. It also explored the cult of the Ptolemaic queens, whose personae Thompson believed to be merged with Agatha Tyche, their personal protector, in a chthonic ritual. Although many scholars did not accept her conclusions regarding the cult significance of these oinochoai, nevertheless her treatment of the subject opened up a fruitful dialogue. It was, however, the stylistic framework that she developed for the representations of the queens themselves that made the strongest impact. Erica Simon believed that it necessitated a revision of the criteria for dating sculpture of the Hellenistic Baroque, which did not originate in Pergamon but rather in the Alexandria of

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Ptolemy Philopater.<sup>58</sup>

In the process of discussing the iconography of Kleopatra I, as it appears on this queen's oinochoai, Thompson referred to an Isis image on the Tazza Farnese. One of the more celebrated examples of the Alexandrian minor arts, this low cup, carved from a large banded sardonyx and decorated with an allegorical scene, had been the object of much discussion; few were in agreement as to its date or meaning. In 1976 Thompson was invited to participate in an international symposium in Berlin on Ptolemaic Egypt and took this opportunity to air her views concerning the interpretation of the allegorical scene of the Tazza Farnese, which also resulted in a new date. In a succinct and well-crafted argument, Thompson proposed that the scene, which features a dynamic, youthful figure hastening toward Zeus in the company of allegorical figures, in reality is a "poem on Actium." She saw it as a metaphor for the arrival in Egypt of Octavian (Augustus) and the change from the old gods to the new. Its date consequently had to fall early in the last third of the first century B.C.--a date only several decades later but an entire empire away from the one that had been proposed previously. In a parallel but brief study, she also focused on a small faience image of a poor fisherman, as if to contrast the opulence and splendor of the Alexandrian court as seen in the Tazza Farnese, with the poverty of the peasants on the Alexandrian streets.<sup>59</sup>

In her later investigations, Thompson never lost her opportunity to revise her dating--as was the case when a new study of the coinage of Ptolemy Philopater appeared<sup>60</sup>--or her identifications and interpretations of the Ptolemaic queens and their cult. Although by the late 1970s she had taken up her Agora material again and with a renewed enthusiasm perhaps fed by

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her Alexandrian work, she still looked at new challenges with Alexandrian eyes. Thus when Alison Frantz photographed for her an impression in clay of a seated man and standing woman engaged in cult activity--taken from Hellenistic metalwork in the Archaeological Museum in Salonika--Thompson recognized a scene of probable Alexandrian origin related to a mime or drama. In typical Thompson fashion, she mused that the male figure might be Ostanès, an Iranian sage, who introduced into Alexandria his doctrine of cosmic sympathy.<sup>61</sup>

Throughout the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, the Thompsons continued to work at the Agora while balancing other obligations, some of which included teaching during the academic year. In spite of her love for this profession, Dorothy Thompson had never been interested in obtaining an academic position, aside from the one at the University of Toronto she held during the war. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, she did hold visiting professorships or lectureships at several academic institutions, including her alma mater Bryn Mawr College, Princeton University, and the University of Pennsylvania. She also functioned as a primary reader for several dissertations, including those of Ellen Reeder<sup>62</sup> and Malcolm Bell, III., who had been a member of the Princeton University expedition to Morgantina, Sicily, was studying the terracotta figurines, busts, masks, and molds recovered from the necropolis and six votive deposits at Morgantina for his doctoral project. In the introduction to the publication of his revised and expanded dissertation *Morgantina Studies I, The Terracottas*,<sup>63</sup> Bell fondly records Thompson's visit to Morgantina and to the National Archaeological Museum at Syracuse in 1970, where a portion of the terracottas were housed. His debt to Thompson and to her achievements in the field of coroplastic studies is evident throughout this book. Other younger scholars,

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including Stella Miller<sup>64</sup> and me,<sup>65</sup> also acknowledged long conversations and fruitful guidance in difficult periods of wrestling with terracotta figurines, or even with nonscholarly issues.

Indeed, by the late 1960s Thompson was viewed as a formidable, if not the preeminent, figure for the study of terracotta figurines of the Hellenistic period, and many were the dissertations and manuscripts on all aspects of Hellenistic art that were sent to her for comment from the United States and abroad. Her reputation at that time is reflected in remarks made by reviewers of *Troy*. Brian Sparkes wrote: "The fact that Mrs. Thompson has agreed to study the terracottas [from Troy] promised painstaking attention to detail, combined with a wide knowledge of the field...Now that Mrs. Thompson has shown once again, as with the Agora groups in *Hesperia*, what blood she can infuse into broken members, let us hope that she will next present a general book on Hellenistic terracottas, which only she is capable of writing."<sup>66</sup>

Reynold Higgins expressed similar sentiments:

It is greatly to the credit of the Cincinnati expedition to Troy that anything as marginal to the main object of the dig as the Hellenistic terracottas should be so meticulously published, and published by the one person capable of doing them justice...The last crumb of information is extracted from each fragment, but in a completely painless manner.<sup>67</sup>

These views also were echoed by Inez Jucker<sup>68</sup> and A. W. Byvank,<sup>69</sup> among others, who commented on Thompson's exceptional reputation from previous publications and the care and extraordinary scholarship with which the material was treated.

## **Later Years**

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In 1967 Homer Thompson retired as director of the Agora excavations. However, both he and Dorothy continued to work at the Institute in the winter and at the Agora in the spring and summer, preparing their respective publications on the Agora material among other projects. This activity was interspersed with extended travel abroad, usually upon returning from Athens to the United States. Thus, in 1970 they traveled to Iran in 1971, on the occasion of the awarding of an honorary degree to Homer from the University of Tel Aviv, they toured the Middle East. In 1972 the Thompsons shared the Australian-American Educational Foundation Distinguished Visitor Award, which required them to lecture at eight universities in Australia and New Zealand; on their return to the United States they traveled around the world, touching down at Thailand, India, Afghanistan, Iran, and Athens before arriving back home at Princeton. During all of these travels, Dorothy maintained her diaries, which continued to sparkle with her keen observations of people and places.

In the early 1970s, Dorothy began to integrate the Hellenistic figurines from the Agora deposits already published with those from undated contexts that she had not previously studied. It was as if she were starting anew. Her diary entries for August 1974, written in her seventy-fourth year, convey a sense of the continuing struggle she faced when dealing with such enigmatic material as mold-made terracottas, although she was able to maintain a sense of humor in difficult moments: “Aug 7 Put away bases and sorted unidentified gables- Helen Besi sick (poison fr[om] figs[figurines]?) ...” “Aug 8 More collection of nasty bits (unidentified)...” “Aug 16 Started sorting and arranging figs by type and order—a bad business--no clear criteria.” In spite of these difficulties, she steadily progressed in her organization of the corpus of the Agora figurines. Yet diary entries for the later 1970s until the final one of 1984 show that she

found an increasing and perhaps welcome, diversion in the activity of students and the other younger archaeologists who worked at, or visited, the Agora. Such distractions also caused occasional irritation: “May 25 [1977] Nice breeze. Started Carol in the index of contexts and typed my last cat[alogue] of males but forever interrupted!” “Aug 5 Last stages of bases including writing summary, a nasty task. Pinkie [Joan Connelly] doing well with her flowers--an interesting girl. D[avid] Jordan got a new curse tablet with hair pulled out of the head of a girl named Tyche.” “Nov 9 [1984] clear and warm with an astonishing brisk shower. Tried in vain to finish hell[enistic] heads, but a visit from Leila Marazoni, full of her excavations on Amorgos with its protog[eometric] walls, temple and all sorts of goodies fascinate.”

Less than a year before Thompson wrote this last entry in the final volume of her diaries, her beloved sister and close friend Pamela died at Bishop White Nursing Home in Roxborough, Pennsylvania. It took Thompson more than a year to recover from this devastating blow to her equilibrium. For the first time since 1953 she did not have an extended stay at the Agora, as she was occupied settling Pamela's estate and coming to terms with the death of a sister who was five years her junior. But a welcome diversion came in the form of a plan by the Publications Committee of the American School to reissue in a single volume her "Three Centuries" articles together with the lengthy analysis of Hellenistic pottery that Homer Thompson had written in 1932.<sup>70</sup> This 1987 volume, called *Hellenistic Pottery and Terracottas*, was inspired by the revision of Hellenistic chronology and greater understanding of Hellenistic culture that had taken place over the previous two decades. Dorothy Thompson's role in this revision had already been acknowledged in 1982 in an issue of *Hesperia* dedicated jointly to Thompson and Virginia Grace, whose studies of stamped amphora handles constituted one of the main vehicles for this

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revision. *Hellenistic Pottery and Terracottas* included a lengthy preface and revised dating for the Agora contexts, both written by Susan Rotroff. Homer and Dorothy individually addressed Rotroff's revisions in the "Afterthoughts" that preceded their respective reprinted articles. The Publications Committee also reissued *Swans and Amber* on the occasion of the founding of the group Friends of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

Now in her later 80s, Thompson continued to incorporate new ideas into the preparation of her Agora volume. She was assisted in this by Margaret Rothman, who inducted her into the intricacies of the computer and helped her simplify some of the complexities of her material. But with the increase in her years came the inevitable decline of her health and the dwindling of her intellectual reserves. She also no longer had the stamina for extended hours in the office. In 1988 I visited her in the large room at Fuld Hall at the Institute, where, discussing her health, she recounted the circumstances that led up to her family's decision no longer to allow her to drive. Even in this tale there was much of the scholar who was noted for meticulous attention to every detail. She occasionally experienced double vision, she explained, which everyone believed made her a hazard on the road. However, she added in an objective tone, since she had such a keen eye she could recognize immediately when the two oncoming automobiles were identical in every respect, so she knew definitively on which side of the twin cars she should steer her own.

The determination and self-confident tone evident in this story are typical of Thompson's personality, which her physical presence does not at first reveal. She has always been petite, with dark eyes; as a younger woman she had a pretty face framed by short, dark hair; as well as an insatiable appetite for clothes. Her daughter Pamela accurately characterized for me her lively and expressive manner, enthusiasm for life and projects, dedication to family, organizational prowess, extreme verbosity, outspokenness or honesty, sometimes to the point of



abruptness--occasionally even rudeness. She noted that some have labeled her mother "prickly," and many more have referred to her as "feisty" in a complimentary way. She created the impression that she knew what she wanted, was not afraid to ask for it and usually got it. She also had a lifelong dedication to her friends, many of whom dated back to her youth, when she became friends with the geologist Dorothy Wycoff from her Bryn Mawr days, or with Agnes Newhall Stillwell, Lucy Shoe Meritt, or Julia Henning. To those who sought her help and advice on matters either scholarly or personal she was an attentive listener and sympathetic participant in the discussion. In social situations she was capable of out-talking most of her companions but always to their interest and delight.

An exhibition of Hellenistic figurines called "The Coroplast's Art: Greek Terracottas of the Hellenistic World" marked the occasion of Dorothy Thompson's ninetieth birthday. It was accompanied by a scholarly catalogue of the same name written by "students" of Thompson, who, in a series of essays and catalogue entries, synthesized the state of coroplastic studies over the course of the century that had marked her life.<sup>71</sup> The opening and closing venues of the exhibition, Princeton and Cambridge, were chosen to symbolize both the beginning of her study of terracotta figurines in 1927 at Radcliffe and Princeton, the place where she lived most of her life, conducting research on terracotta topics. In celebration of her achievements, Thompson, at the opening of the exhibition, was awarded an honorary doctorate of humane letters from the State University of New York at New Paltz--the intermediate venue for the exhibition and institutional home of its curator (this writer). At the age of ninety and before an audience of some 300 guests, including her family, friends, and colleagues, Thompson spoke at the award ceremony with singular clarity and passion about a small figurine of a Nike that she had once

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seen for sale on the antiquities market in Germany and that subsequently had been purchased by the Art Museum at Princeton University.<sup>72</sup> Her love of this genre of Greek art, which she often described as representing a great map of ancient Greek life, was extraordinary. But much more so was her contribution to its study and understanding, which Lucy Shoe Meritt fittingly praises for its “method, insight, understanding, and amazing ability to see the significance of it all and to express it in magnificent English.”<sup>73</sup>

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1974

--Review of C. M. Havelock, *Hellenistic Art: The Art of the Classical World from the Death of Alexander to the Battle of Actium*, Greenwich, Connecticut 1971, *Archaeology* 27, pp. 70-72

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--(with H.A. Thompson) Review of *Pergamon, Gesammelte Aufsätze* (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Pergamenische Forschungen I). E. Boehringer, ed., Berlin 1972, *AJA* 78, pp. 310-12

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--"O Dea Certe," *AntK* 18, pp. 82-84

--Review of B. Schmaltz, *Das Kabirenheiligtum bei Theben, V, Die Terrakotten aus dem Kabirenheiligtum bei Theben: Menschenähnliche Figuren, Menschliche Figuren und Gerat*, Berlin 1974, , *AJA* 79, pp. 382-84

1978

--"The Tazza Farnese Reconsidered," *Das ptolemaische Agypten* (Akten des internationalen Symposions, 27-29 Sept.1976 in Berlin), Mainz, pp. 113-22

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--"A Faience Fella," *Studies in Classical Art and Archeology, A Tribute to Peter Heinrich von Blanckenhagen*, Locust Valley, New York, pp. 175-78

--"A Numismatic Commentary on the Ptolemaic Cult Oinochoai," *Greek Numismatics and History, Essays in Honor of Margaret Thompson*, Wetteren, Belgium, pp. 251-55

--Review of E. Topperwein, *Terrakotten von Pergamon* (Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Pergamenische Forschungen III), Berlin 1976, *AJA* 83, pp. 117-18



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--"More Ptolemaic Queens," *Eikones*,. *Studien zum griechischen und romischen Bildnis* (Hans Zucker zum sechzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet) (*AntK*, Beiheft 12), Bern, pp. 181-84

1981

--"A Dove for Dione," *Hesperia* Suppl. XX, *Studies in Athenian Architecture*,. *Sculpture and Topography*

1984

--"Quae Saga, Quis Magus," *Alessandria e il mondo, ellenistico: studi in onore di Achille Adriani*, Rome, pp. 309-17

"Les ateliers d'Athenes aux I<sup>ve</sup> et III<sup>e</sup> siecles," *Les dossiers* 81 (March 1984) 32-38.

### Notes

The biographical details in this chapter are based on conversations with Dorothy Barr Thompson's husband Homer, their daughters Pamela Sinkler-Todd, Hilary Kenyon, and Hope Kerr, with Lucy Shoe Meritt and Martin and Lore Ostwald. The biography by Christine M Havelock, "Dorothy Burr Thompson (b. 1900): Classical Archaeologist," in *Women as Interpreters of the Visual Arts 1820-1979* (Westport/London, 1981), 357-71, provided an important framework and many details. An invaluable source of information has been diaries kept by Thompson for more than 70 years. They are being transcribed by Lore Ostwald and Mabel Larg and edited for publication. I am indebted to Lore Ostwald for her assistance with the diaries, for her insights into the life of Thompson as it was recorded in the diaries, and for her hospitality. I also am grateful to Lorette Treese, archivist, Bryn Mawr College, for allowing me to hear an oral history tape featuring Lucy Shoe Meritt and Thompson. Rudy Meixell of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Marty Hackett of the University of Pennsylvania Archives and Records Center, and Roy Goodman, American Philosophical Society curator, provided important information.

1. For a detailed discussion of the discoveries of Tanagra figurines and their reception by the art market see R. Higgins, *Tanagra and the Figurines* (Princeton 1986), 41, 163-78.

2. O. Rayet, *Les beaux-arts et les arts decoratifs a l'Exposition universelle de 1878*, 2 (Paris, 1878), 49 ff.
3. Higgins, *Tanagra*, 166.
4. Henry Armit Brown gave the Centennial Address of the First Continental Congress at Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia in 1874, as well as the Valley Forge Oration, a quote from which is inscribed on the large monument at Valley Forge.
5. See *The Best Private Schools of the United States and Canada* (Boston, 1915), 134
6. "Treaty-Making Powers of the United States and the Methods of its Enforcement as Affecting the Police Powers of the States," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 51 (1912): 271-422.
7. There is a touch of genius in the character drawing of St. Helios. What a book! The author has a sensitive creative imagination...and true story-telling ability. St. Helios is a figure, no denying that, and the book is one that deserves a place among the best novels of thee year" *Book Review Digest* 21 (1925): 108.
8. Diary, Aug. 31, 1920: "Today after a lovely grey musing now, Mother talked a little about Archaeology as a possible career--that eternal question! Of course I will write if I feel it is there, but I will not commercialize in it--better give up the idea of money for a time. A.[rchaeology] is tempting; the more I think o fit the more it appeals--the subject, the travel, the people, the literary and photographic possibilities--I wonder,--I wonder!"
9. Havelock, "Thompson," 358.
10. May 22, 1914.
11. Havelock, "Thompson," 358-59; implies that the lecture was in 1912; the diaries record only one lecture by Dohan: March 6, 1916. Given that Havelock's biography "was based largely on personal interviews with Thompson, it may be that Thompson heard more than one lecture by Dohan.
12. *My Turkish Adventure* (New York, 1951).
13. May 21, 1926.
14. These statistics are culled from the list of students appended to L. S. Meritt, *A History of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1939-1980* (Princeton, 1984). They contradict information provided by L.E. Lord, *A History of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1882-1942 An Intercollegiate Project* (Princeton, 1939), 163, where it is noted that only two students attended the school for the 1923-24 year.

15. C. Blegen, "Excavations at Phlius," *Art and Archaeology* 20 (1925): 23-33; W. Biers, "Excavations at Phlius, 1924. The Prehistoric Deposits," *Hesperia* 38 (1969): 443-58; id., "Excavations at Phlius, 1924. The Votive Deposit," *Hesperia* 40 (1971): 397-447.
16. In the story of Burr's discovery as recounted by Axel Persson, *The Royal Tombs at Dendra near Midea, SkrAth* 15 (1931): 8, Orestes and the donkey return home to Mycenae. He also notes that the trip took place on Sunday, while in the diary it took place on Saturday. There are other discrepancies.
17. Persson, *Tombs at Dendra*.
18. See Havelock, "Thompson," 362.
19. For a survey of recent studies on Myrina and its figurines see J. Uhlenbrock, "East Greek Coroplastic Centers in the Hellenistic Period," in J. Uhlenbrock, *The Coroplast's Art: Greek Terracottas of the Hellenistic World* (New Paltz/New Rochelle, 1990) 73-76.
20. The early finds of figurines are detailed in E. Pottier and S. Reinach, *Le necropole de Myrina* (Paris, 1887), 1-18.
21. A. Furtwangler, *Die Sammlung Sabouroff* (Berlin, 1883-87); A. Cartault, *Collection Camille Lecuyer, terres cuites antiques trouvee en Grece et en Asie mineure* (Paris, 1882, 1885); id., *Terres cuites d'Asie mineure* (Paris, 1881); id., *Catalogue des objet d'art antiques de la collection H. Hoffmann* (Paris, 1886); id., *Terres cuites Grecques, collection Julien* (Paris, 1891); id., *Collection Van Branteghem* (Paris, 1892); id., *Antiquites, collection de feu M. Joly de Bammerville* (Paris, 1893).
22. A. Derewitzky, A. Pavlowsky, and E. von Stern, *Das Museum der kaiserlich Odessaer Gesellschaft fur Geschichte und Altertumskunde, Lieferungen I, II* (Odessa, 1897-98); *AA IV* (1889) 159 ff., *AA V* (1890) 95ff. (Dresden); *AA VI* (1891) 27ff. (Leipzig); *AA VII* (1892) 117ff. (Vienna).
23. G. Mendel, *Musee imperiaux ottomans. Catalogue de figurines grecques de terra cuite* (Constantinople, 1908); H. B. Walters, *Catalogue of the Terracottas in the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities in the British Museum* (London, 1903); A. Laumonier, *Catalogue de terre cuite du musee archeologique de Madrid* (Bordeaux/Paris, 1921); A. Levi, *Le terrecotte figurate del museo nazionale di Napoli* (Florence, 1926).
24. J. Sieveking, *Der Terrakotten der Sammlung Loeb* (Munich, 1930); R. Zahn, *Sammlung Baurat Schiller, Werke antiker Kleinkunst* (Berlin, 1930); P. Perdrizet, *Les terres cuites grecques d'Egypte de la collection Fouquet* (Nancy/Paris/Strasbourg, 1921).
25. T. Wiegand/H. Schrader, *Priene* (Berlin, 1904); K. Regling, *Die Munzen von Priene* (Berlin, 1927).

26. A reevaluation of the numismatic evidence from Priene has resulted in a raising of the date of the conflagration to ca. 155 B.C.; see E. Toppeweinr-Hoffmann, "Terrakotten von Priene," *IM* 21(1971):127.
27. "A Primitive Statue from Arcadia" *AJA* 31(1927) 169-76.
28. "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas IB and C: The Late Fourth Century B.C., the Hedgehog Well and the Demeter Cistern," *Hesperia* 23 (1954): 77.
29. *Ptolemaic Oinochoai and Portraits in Faience. Aspects of the Ruler Cult* (Oxford, 1973), 12.
30. For a complete list of Holzhausens publications for the American School see L S Meritt, *A History of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 1939-1980* (Princeton, 1980), 243.
31. "Agora Excavations: The Terracotta Figurines," *Hesperia* 2 (1933); 184-94.
32. "Agora Excavations: A Geometric House and a Proto-Attic Votive Deposit," *Hesperia* 2 (1933): 342-640.
33. "The House of Simon the Shoemaker," *Archaeology* 13 (1960): 234-40.
34. Havelock, "Thompson," 364.
35. An earlier article focused on material from earlier excavations, *Hesperia* 5 (1936): 170-79; the second was "The Figurines," in *Small Objects from the Pryx* (*Hesperia* suppl. 7, 1943), 112-66.
36. "The Golden Nikai Reconsidered," *Hesperia* 13( 1944); 173-209.
37. *Phoenix* 1 (1946).
38. *Phoenix* 1 (1946): 18-20.
39. "Figures in Fun," *Archaeology* 3 (1950): 132-33.
40. Republished by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens in 1988.
- 41 *Tanagrafiguren. Untersuchungen zur hellenitischen Kunst und Geschichte* (*JDAI* suppl. 15, 1942). .
42. *AJA* 54 (1950): 443.
43. E. V. Sayre and R. W. Dodson, "Neutron Activation Study of Mediterranean Potsherds "

*AJA* 61 (1957): 33-41.

44. A. N. Stillwell, *Corinth XV, ii, The Potters' Quarter, the Terracottas* (Princeton, 1952).

45. A. Laumonier, *Exploration archeologique de Delos, XXIII, Les figurines de terre cuite* (Paris, 1956).

46. J. H. Young and S.H. Young, *Terracotta Figurines from Kourion in Cyprus* (Philadelphia, 1955).

47. D. M. Robinson, *Excavations at Olynthus, XIV, Terracottas, Lamps and Coins Found in 1934 and 1938* (Baltimore, 1952).

48. "The Stele Goddess-Worship: Terracottas from Well U 13:1 in the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 64 (1995): 406.

49. "Type, Group and Series: A Reconsideration of Some Coroplastic Fundamentals," *BSA* 47 (1952): 217-26.

50. "Abformung und Typenwandel in der antiken Tonplastik," *OpuscArch* 2 (1941): 1-28

51. Stillwell, *Potter's Quarter*.

52. "Three Centuries of Hellenistic Terracottas. Part I: The Early Third Century B.C. Ila: Group B," 115.

53. *Troy*, supplementary monograph 3 (Princeton, 1963), 20.

54. "The Persian Spoils in Athens," *The Aegean and the Near East; Studies Presented to Hetty Goldman* (Locust Valley, 1956), 281-91.

55. Diary, Feb.29, 1960.

56. "The Origin of Tanagras," *AJA* 70 (1966) 51-63

57. R. Mowat, "Le vase sacrificatoire des reines d'Egypte," *RevNum* 5 (1901): 14-35.

58. Review, *Gottingische Gelehrte Anzeigen* 227, \_ (1975): 215.

59. "A Faience Fella," *Studies in Classical Art and Archaeology: A Tribute to Peter Heinrich von Blanckenhagen* (Locust Valley, 1979): 175-78.

60. "A Numismatic Commentary on the Ptolemaic Cult Oinochoai," in *Greek Numismatics and Archaeology: Essays in Honor of Margaret Thompson* (Wettern, Belgium, 1979), 251-55.

61. "Quae Saga; Quis Magis," *Alessandria e il mondo ellenistico: studi in onore di Achille Adriani* (Rome, 1984), 309-17.
62. E. Reeder Williams, "Ancient Clay Impressions from Greek Metalwork," *Hesperia* 45 (1976): 41-66.
63. *Results of the Princeton University Archaeological Expedition to Sicily* (Princeton, 1981).
64. "Menon's Cistern," *Hesperia* 43 (1974): 195.
65. *The Terracotta Protomai from Gela: A Discussion of Local Style in Archaic Sicily* (Rome, 1988), 18.
66. *JHS* 85 (1965): 231.
67. *Antiquity* 38 (1964): 147.
68. *Festschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 24 (1965, 1966): 248.
69. *Mnemosyne* 18 (1965): 330.
70. "Two Centuries of Hellenistic Pottery," *Hesperia* 2 (1933).
71. Uhlenbrock, *Coroplast's Art*.
72. Art Museum, Princeton University Y1989-28. Museum purchase, gift from friends and colleagues in honor of Francis Follin Jones.
73. Telephone conversation with the author.