a) Terracotta figurine of a young man holding a cockerel (LR.776) https://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/?s=LR.776



'Tanagra' figures, dating from the third century BCE, are named after the town in Greece where they were first found in large quantities, most often in tombs. They are small terracotta human figures made in hollow moulds, brightly painted in watercolour after firing. Although they follow an older tradition of terracotta figures used as cult images or votive objects, they may have been used simply as ornaments. The cock in ancient Greece was a symbol of virility and also a preferred sacrifice to Aesculapius, the god of healing.

Place: Boeotia, Greece

Date: ca. BCE 400-350

Acquisition Source: Hon. Evelyn Saumarez, 1902. Purchased in Athens

1873.

Dimensions: Height 19.1 cm

b) Wooden 'ba-bird' figurine from Ptolemaic Egypt (LR.404)

https://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/?s=LR.404



In late ancient Egyptian funerary practice, the 'ba-bird' represented the individual personality of a human being, which left the body and passed to the afterlife when the person died. It was portrayed as a bird with a human face that accurately represented the deceased. Wooden figures of ba-birds are often found attached to coffins.

Place: Egypt

Date: ca BCE 300

Acquisition Source: Gwendolen

Crewdson, 1918-19

Dimensions: Height 16 cm; length 13.5

cm

c) Panther aryballos (LR.820)

https://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/?s=LR.820



A small spherical pottery flask from archaic Greece, used to contain perfume or oil. Such flasks are often seen in vase paintings, hanging by straps like shower gel containers, being used by athletes who are bathing. This example is decorated on one side with a panther, on the other with an owl.

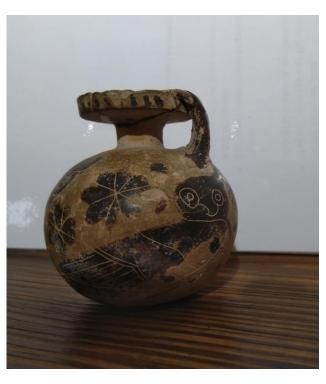
Place: Lake Copais, Boeotia, Greece

Date: ca BCE 600-550

Acquisition Source: Ethelwyn Pearson,

1936

Dimensions: Rim diameter 3.3 cm; diameter at widest point 6 cm; base diameter 3.3 cm; height 6.5 cm



d) Phoenix roof ridge tile from Ming China (LR.1057)

https://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/?s=LR.1057



According to traditional Chinese belief, roofs are platforms of communication between the world of the living and the spirit realms. They were decorated with symbolic human and animal figures to ward off evil and to act as a magnet for blessings and good fortune.

Place: Beijing, China

Date: CE 1368-1644

Acquisition Source: Dorothy Vazeille Temperley, 1962

Dimensions: Height 34.7 cm; width (at base) 21.5 cm; depth (at base) 12.7 cm

e) Coptic tunic fragment (LR.465)

https://www.lrc.girton.cam.ac.uk/?s=LR.465Te



The 'Coptic' art of Christian Egypt in the sixth to seventh centuries CE shows a mixture of Egyptian, Greek and Roman influences, and in turn influenced Islamic art. A large quantity of Coptic textiles survives thanks to the custom of burying the dead clothed in the usual garment, the tunic, woven from linen or (as in this example) wool, in the dry conditions of Egypt.

Place: Egypt

Date: CE 575-699

Acquisition Source: Gwendolen Crewdson 1918–19

Dimensions: Length 25 cm; width 21.5 cm