

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