



COROPLASTIC STUDIES INTEREST GROUP MISSION STATEMENT

The Coroplastic Studies Interest Group (CSIG) was organized in 2007 under the auspices of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA). It is one of the 13 Interest Groups of the AIA that normally comprise AIA members. Although membership in the AIA is not a prerequisite for membership in the CSIG, CSIG members are encouraged to join the AIA. The CSIG takes its name from the word *koroplastes*, the ancient Greek term that referred to a modeler of images in clay.

1. CSIG membership is international and is free of charge. Originally formed by archaeologists working at ancient sites around the Mediterranean and Europe, the CSIG welcomes membership from scholars studying terracotta figurines from other regions of the world and also has expanded to include anthropologists, historians, and interested specialists from other disciplines.

2. The study of terracotta figurines has changed dramatically in the past several years and continues to develop rapidly. Now, interpretive study can include analyses of the context, chronology, function, production, and sources and types of clay of terracotta figurines, as well as their distribution and display, and the religious, historical, social, economic, and political meanings of these diverse, ubiquitous, and important objects of material culture. The CSIG now provides a venue for issues regarding developing studies of terracotta figurines. Its members propose and implement means for the distribution of ideas and data. The CSIG particularly wishes to support and encourage scholars new to the field of coroplastic studies. To these ends, the *CSIG News* is published. This is a bi-annual newsletter containing communications by CSIG members on a variety of issues and is accessible on-line, free of charge, through the CSIG website. The CSIG website also contains bibliographies related to coroplastic studies, web links to coroplastic research tools, a discussion page, and a directory of members with their areas of specialty and contact information.

3. Periodic meetings are held to discuss issues relative to the CSIG and to the study of terracotta figurines, although it is understood that the international nature of the organization precludes participation in these meetings for many who are members. A succinct summary of the proceedings of these meetings is found on the CSIG website and also is distributed promptly to the membership.

4. As an Interest Group of the Archaeological Institute of America, the CSIG endorses the Archaeological Institute of America's Code of Ethics. This directive states that members should:

- Seek to ensure that the exploration of archaeological sites be conducted according to the highest standards under the direct supervision of qualified personnel, and that the results of such research be made public;
- Refuse to participate in the trade in undocumented antiquities and refrain from activities that enhance the commercial value of such objects. Undocumented

antiquities are those which are not documented as belonging to a public or private collection before December 30, 1970, when the AIA Council endorsed the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Property, or which have not been excavated and exported from the country of origin in accordance with the laws of that country;

- Inform appropriate authorities of threats to, or plunder of archaeological sites, and illegal import or export of archaeological material.

It should be noted that the AIA Code of Ethics does not constitute rules that the membership must follow. The Code is rather a guideline for ethical behavior and a statement about responsibility to the archaeological record. (Excerpted from the AIA website <http://www.archaeological.org/webinfo.php?page=10352>)

5. The CSIG promotes the systematic study and documentation of legally-excavated terracotta figurines. At the same time, it recognizes the necessity for responsible research regarding those figurines of unknown provenience and stratigraphic origin—those targeted and removed from scholarly attention by the 1970 UNESCO Convention on Cultural Property—so long as such research places those artifacts within the context of known objects, establishing relationships and correspondences with published research to the largest extent possible. Parameters of uncertainty must be clearly and openly stated at the outset of such research and in its presentation to specialists and to the public. In every instance, the aim of the CSIG is to promote high standards of scholarship and instruction in the area of coroplastic studies. Its members will alert colleagues to matters of fact and interpretation that may affect us all, and will support public education about why this study is important.

6. The CSIG shall be:

- A forum that transcends national, cultural, linguistic, and disciplinary boundaries, open to all scholars regardless of class, gender, religion, race, or nationality;
- A pluralistic organization governed by democratic processes based upon widespread and collegial consultation.

7. Membership in the CSIG comes with the understanding that there will be a cordial exchange of ideas, as well as an ethical and responsible use of material that may be shared but still is unpublished