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SECRETARY'S & EDITOR'S ADDRESS
Department of Archaeology and Classical Studies
Stockholm University
106 91 Stockholm, Sweden
secretary@ecsi.se | editor@ecsi.se

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LINDA TALATAS

Statuettes of pregnant sows from Knidos

New light on the cult of Demeter

Abstract

Four marble statuettes of pregnant swine were found in the sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos over 160 years ago, but have been largely overlooked in previous research, even though the connection between pigs and Demeter has long caught the attention of scholars, especially in relation to the piglets required for the celebration of her Eleusinian Mysteries. The statuettes raise several questions. Why make sculptures of pregnant sows? Who dedicated those offerings, and in what context? Are they related to the sacrifice of pregnant sows? And ultimately, why pregnant sows for Demeter? The article starts with a presentation of the four marble sows from the sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos, followed by a more general examination of the archaeological evidence for pig, piglet, and pregnant sow representations at Greek sanctuaries. I will then explore the epigraphical evidence for pregnant sow sacrifices, all of which is in connection with the cult of Demeter, and contextualize it with other sacrifices of pigs and piglets. I will complete this study with a brief overview of the zooarchaeological evidence for the sacrifice of pregnant sows. The collected evidence will be used to better understand the use of pregnant sows and their religious significance in the cult of Demeter.*

Keywords: Asia Minor, cult, Demeter, Greek religion, Knidos, pig, piglet, pregnant, sculpture, sow, statuette

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Introduction

It is well known that pigs played an important role in the cult of Demeter: no one could be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries without bringing a piglet.[1] In *Peace* by Aristophanes, Trygaeus even tries to borrow three drachmas from the god Hermes to obtain a piglet in order to participate in the Eleusinian Mysteries.[2]

The specific choice of representations of pregnant sows—in the form of figurines, statues, reliefs or on painted vases—as offerings in the sanctuaries of Demeter or as sacrificial animals, has not benefited from the same amount of scholarly attention as that given to the piglets, even though the pregnant sows might carry a much deeper meaning.

The present research aims at shedding light on the use of pregnant sows in relation to the cult of Demeter, starting with four Early Hellenistic marble statuettes from Knidos, an ancient Greek city in south-western Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. I will argue that the statuettes depict pregnant sows. I will begin with a presentation of the statuettes and then turn to representations of pigs in general found in sanctuaries, and more particularly of pregnant sows and piglets. I will also explore the epigraphical evidence for the sacrifice of pregnant sows and contextualize it with sacrifices of other pigs and piglets, along with a brief overview of the zooarchaeological evidence for the sacrifice of pregnant sows. With the help of this

* This paper is the fruit of a lecture titled 'Pregnant sows in the cult of Demeter', which I presented at the Swedish Institute at Athens' *Greek Religion Seminar* on 17 October 2018. I would like to warmly thank Jenny Wallensten, the director of the Institute, for her invitation, as well as Gunnel Ekroth and Stella Georgoudi, whose comments and references have been a great help in the shaping of this article.

[1] Those piglets were likely deposited in the Eleusinian *megara*: see Clinton 1988, 69–80; 1992, 63; 2003, 52–53. Pigs were also sacrificed to Demeter and her daughter Kore (Persephone) and consumed at Eleusis: see Clinton 1993, 54. See also Clinton 2005, 167–171, on the use of pigs in Greek rituals and the use of piglets for rites of purification in various contexts.

[2] Ar. *Pax*, 374–375: "ἐς χοιρίδιόν μοί νυν δάνεισον τρεῖς δραχμάς: δεῖ γὰρ μυηθῆναί με πρὶν τεθνηκέναι" (Translation adapted from Eugene O'Neill Jr.: Well then, lend me three drachmas to buy a piglet; I wish to have myself initiated before I die). Here, the double meaning of *choiros*, which refers both to the use of piglets in the cult but also to female genitalia, is used as a crude comical effect by Aristophanes. See Murphy 1972, 170.

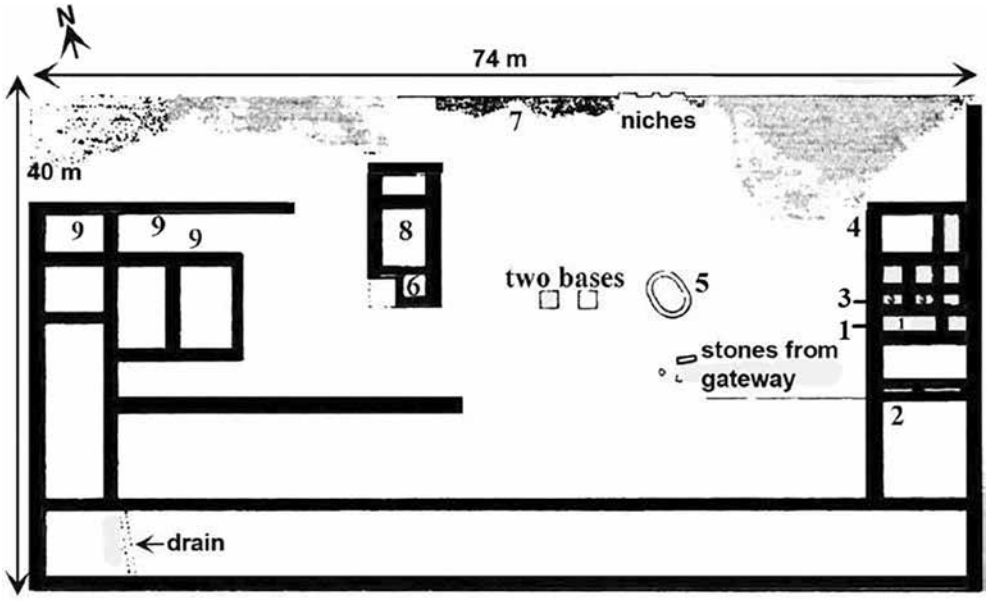

Fig. 1. Plan of the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Knidos. Newton 1865, pl. 22 in Karatas 2014, 338, fig. 259, slightly modified.

evidence, I will, finally, explore the importance of offerings of pregnant sows, whether they be live animals or representations, for our understanding of the cult of Demeter and of the participants to her cult.

Four statuettes of pregnant sows from Knidos will be the starting point for our study on the cult of Demeter.[3] A few ancient authors refer to animal statues in religious contexts, but no mention of pig statues in ancient Greek sanctuaries is found in literary sources.[4] And, even as the epigraphical material attests to the sacrifice of pregnant sows in several sanctuaries of Mainland Greece, no literary account refers to these sacrifices in the Cyclades, in the Ionian islands, or in Asia Minor. While working on animal statues found in Greek sanctuaries of the Mainland, the Aegean islands, and the coast of Asia Minor from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods, I came to the realization that swine statues were an extremely rare type of *anathema*.[5] Apart from a piglet from the Late Hellenistic or Roman period now displayed at the Archaeological Mu-

[3] Smith 1900, 202–206, in his sculpture catalogue for the British Museum, presents four swine statues (Smith 1900, nos. 1303–1306), which—as will be argued below—appear to be pregnant; he also presents a piece of a swine statuette (Smith 1900, no. 1307) which is too fragmentary to be sexed or discussed. Two statuettes of calves (Smith 1900, nos. 1309–1310), as well as a fragment of a ram's head (Smith 1900, no. 1308) were also found in the same sanctuary. See Karatas 2014, 333–356 for a good overview of the topography and material found at the sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos. See also Chaniotis 2009, 61–66, for an interesting insight into the female voices from Knidos through the material discovered at the sanctuary of Demeter.

[4] Talatas 2017, 455, for a list of animal statues mentioned in literary sources. Writing in the 2nd century AD Pausanias shows a particular interest in older monuments and objects, and he often refers to offerings from the Classical or Hellenistic period; however, he only describes offerings that he deems noteworthy by their size, political context, or related anecdotes, and his accounts are therefore to be treated carefully.

[5] An *anathema* is an object set as an offering to one or several deities, for instance a statue dedicated to a god in a sanctuary. Talatas 2017, 121–151 on swine dedications at ancient Greek sanctuaries. In a similar manner to other animals represented (bulls, horses), many clay figurines of pigs can be found at Greek sanctuaries, which usually cannot be sexed.

seum of Eleusis, I found only the four Early Hellenistic marble statuettes from Knidos and now in the British Museum.[6] All of them were found in the *temenos* of Demeter and Kore by Charles Thomas Newton and his team in the winter of 1857–1858 (*Fig. 1*).[7] They were discovered in a votive pit within the *temenos* of Demeter, so we do not know where they were originally placed. When excavated, three niches in the bedrock to the north side of the sanctuary were found to accommodate some offerings.[8] All three niches were sizeable; only the dimensions of the one to the right are published (*c.* 122 cm high by 67 cm deep and 74 cm wide) and it is possible that the swine statues were deposited in the votive pit after being exhibited here first.[9] The niche to the left was painted blue. The very large niche to the right contained an inscription indicating a dedication to Demeter.[10] The measurements of the two other niches are not known, but an over-life-size statue of an enthroned Demeter was found closeby; it is therefore likely that those niches were made to accommodate larger offerings.[11]

The swine statuettes can be dated to the third quarter of the 4th century BC, the most flourishing period of the sanctuary, based on the sculptural evidence presented by Arthur Hamilton Smith in his catalogue of sculptures kept at the British Museum.[12] The statuettes appear to have been made by three different artists, which suggests that they were not offered as a group or in pairs, as is the case with some other animal statues, but as single dedications. Let us refer to them as S1 (*Fig. 2*), S2 (*Fig. 3*), S3 (*Fig. 4*), and S4 (*Fig. 5*).[13] When they were first catalogued at the British Museum by Smith, three of them were entered as "pigs" (S1, S2, S3) while the fourth was sexed, described as "sow" (S4). Smith notes that "the beast is very fat" for the "sow" (S4) and one of the "pigs" (S3), and he categorizes another fragment as the snout of a boar. The complete absence of tusks indicates that the statuettes represent domesticated animals rather than wild animals: both male and female pigs have tusks sufficiently long to be trimmed, and the trimming of tusks is a sign of domestication. The pronounced mane is not an indication that the statues depicted wild boars, but that domesticated pigs in Early Hellenistic Knidos were visually similar to wild animals (*Fig. 6*).[14]

A closer look reveals that all four statuettes represent females.[15] The two best-finished statues (S1 and S2) even have details of a vulva as the tail of the animal is set to the side, in order to better display their female characteristics (*Figs. 7, 8*). The prominent bellies of the fat animals indicate that they are pregnant.

The finest sculpture of the group (S1, *Figs. 2, 7*) comes with an inscription on its plinth: "Πλαθαινίς, Πλάτωνος γυνά, Δάματρι καὶ Κούραι"[16] (From Plathainis, wife of Platon, to Demeter and Kore). The work is extremely detailed, and the irregular shape of the belly reveals pregnancy with the presence of several fetuses underneath the skin.[17] It is also interesting to notice that the animal is depicted with eight clearly visible but unpronounced nipples (and space for two more in the front), indicating that the young sow represented was in her first pregnancy: after nursing the first litter of piglets, a sow's nipples remain protruding.

Even though the four statuettes of pregnant sows vary in quality and were not all executed by the same artist, they are all part of the same series of offerings set at the sanctuary of Demeter in Knidos. The rest of the offerings excavated at the site are objects commonly found at sanctuaries of Demeter. Sixteen inscriptions were also uncovered at the sanctuary of Demeter in Knidos, almost all of which are carved on statue bases and indicate offerings made by married women.[18] The name of Plathainis, wife of Platon, the dedicant of sow S1, also appears in two other inscriptions

They were produced quickly and were thus inexpensive offerings. There are very few freestanding animal statues in stone or bronze.

[6] For the Eleusis statuette: Eleusis, Archaeological Museum, inv. 5053, *c.* 420–350 BC, Preka-Alexandri 1991, 19, fig. 2. For the Knidos statuettes: Smith 1900, 205–206, nos. 1303–1306; London, British Museum, inv. 1859,1226.28–31.

[7] Smith 1900, 202–206. Demeter appears to be the main deity of the sanctuary; in some inscriptions she is associated with Kore, and in some with Pluto Epimachos, Hermes, and perhaps Hekate and the Dioskouroi.

[8] Karatas 2014, 338; Newton 1865, 175; Newton & Pullan 1863, 376.

[9] Newton & Pullan 1863, gives the dimension in inches.

[10] *IKnidos* I, 145; Newton & Pullan 1863, 713, no. 80. It reads: "Δάμα[τρι ……] / ΑΡΙΑΤΗΛ.Κ?Ο?ΙΤΟΥ γυνά" (To Deme[ter...] from Ariate?, wife of Lykoritos). The dedication was likely addressed to Kore as well, but the end of the first line is illegible.

[11] Newton & Pullan 1863, 378; the statue is now in the British Museum, inv. BM 1859,1226.26. Smith 1892, no. 1300.

[12] Smith 1900, 205–206, nos. 1303–1306.

[13] S1 = Smith 1900, 206, no. 1305; S2 = Smith 1900, 205, no. 1303; S3 = Smith 1900, 206, no. 1304; S4 = Smith 1900, 206, no. 1306.

[14] Talatas 2017, 121–122, for physical characteristics of domestic pigs in Greek antiquity. The statuettes have previously been understood to be wild boars because of their pronounced mane (Smith 1900, 206), but domesticated pigs and wild boars were visually quite similar. See also Talatas 2017, 122 on indigenous black pigs.

[15] The British Museum very kindly provided new photographs to complement those published in 1900; all these images have also been added to the British Museum online collection.

[16] *IKnidos* 1, 137.

[17] The irregularities on the sow's belly cannot be clearly seen on the photographs but can be observed when a light source is oriented towards the statuette, and they would have been clearly visible if the statuette was displayed in a place with natural light.

[18] Karatas 2014, 333–356. The votives found at Knidos included terracotta lamps, terracotta figurines of *hydrophoroi*, 14 marble female breasts, marble statuettes of women, but also larger marble statues of women (such as Smith 1892, no. 1301), the above-mentioned statue of Demeter (Smith 1892, no. 1300), a pair of marble calves (Smith 1892, nos. 1309–1310), and 15 curse tablets from the 2nd–1st centuries BC—only one of which was dedicated by a man (*IKnidos* 1, 150–159). Twenty-nine inscriptions were found at the sanctuary: *IKnidos* 1, 131–197.

Fig. 2. Sow S1, left side and inscribed plinth. © The Trustees of the British Museum. H: 41.9 cm.

Fig. 3. Sow S2, left side. London, British Museum, inv. 1859,1226.29. © The Trustees of the British Museum. H: 23.2 cm.

Fig. 4. Sow S3, left side. London, British Museum, inv. 1859,1226.30. © The Trustees of the British Museum. H: 23.2 cm; L: 33 cm; W: 12.8 cm.

Fig. 5. Sow S4, left side. London, British Museum, inv. 1859,1226.31. © The Trustees of the British Museum. H: 22.3 cm; L: 33.4 cm; W: 14.1 cm.

Fig. 6. Indigenous black pigs at Fotiadis Farm, located in Exochi, at the foot of Mount Olympus. Photograph: courtesy of Fotiadis Farm.

found in the same sanctuary.[19] The longest, and latest, was carved on a block of blue marble and reads: "Δάματρι καὶ Κούραι καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς τοῖς παρὰ Δάματρι καὶ Κούραι χαριστεῖα καὶ ἐκτίματρα ἀνέθηκε Πλαθαινίς, Πλάτωνος γυνά" (Plathainis, wife of Platon, to Demeter and Kore, and the gods beside Demeter and Kore, as gratitude and veneration offerings).[20] This indicates that her last offerings at the sanctuary were offered to Demeter and her daughter Kore but also to other gods next to them, possibly meaning that those other gods had their statues set close to them (other inscriptions in the sanctuary mention Pluto Epimachos, Hermes, and perhaps Hekate and the Dioskouroi), as *charisteia*

[19] *IKnidos* 1, 137–138.
[20] London, British Museum, inv. GR 1859.12-26.37; *IKnidos* 1, 138.

Fig. 7. S1, back. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Fig. 8. S2, back. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

(thank-you offerings) and *ektimatra* (honorific offerings).[21] Stylistically, the pregnant sow S1 appears to have been an earlier offering and might as well have been an *euche* (wishful offering). One can guess a fertility wish, which came true, and was followed by offerings of gratitude. The sow was made by a talented artist and offered by Plathainis, and it would have been a beautiful and fitting offering for Demeter and Kore. Plathainis was likely an upper middle-class woman who, through her offerings, expressed her piety as well as her belonging to the community. Indeed, the statues she placed in the sanctuary were not only a gift to the goddess, but objects seen by all those who would enter the sacred space: it was therefore a way to express her wealth while choosing a theme that reflects on her piety. The presence of other statuettes of pregnant sows in the same sanctuary indicates that those were highly appropriate offerings for the goddesses at that time and place.

Swine representations in sanctuaries

Pigs and piglets are often represented in sanctuaries, particularly in the context of sacrificial representations.[22] Folkert van Straten has shown that, in the Classical period, they represent 12% of the sacrificial animals depicted on vase paintings (behind cattle, sheep and goats), but they are the most common animal appearing on votive reliefs representing sacrifices: they occur in 44% of instances and represent 44% of the victims on votive slabs (as one sacrificial scene can include several sacrificial animals).[23]

Pigs are also often depicted as figurines. Some were found at Kalydon, Thasos, and Lindos, for instance, but notably only in sanctuaries of female deities: Demeter, Artemis, Athena, and Hera.[24] Figurines of worshippers carrying piglets appear to be exclusively connected to sanctuaries of Demeter (and

[21] Smith 1900, 202–206. Several of the inscriptions found at Knidos (*IKnidos* 1, 131–197) mention the gods "next to Demeter", who likely had their statues set in the sanctuary next to hers.

[22] Talatas 2017, 134.

[23] See van Straten 1995, 173.

[24] Bevan 1986, 71, finds representations of pigs at seven sanctuaries of Demeter, six of Artemis, four of Athena, and two of Hera.

Fig. 9. Red-figure loutrophoros *by Phintias. Athens, National Museum, inv. Acr. 636. Avramidou 2015, fig. 4, after Kaltsas & Shapiro 2008, 256–257, no. 116.*

Kore), and are likely linked with the rites of the Thesmophoria. There are a few statuettes of boys carrying piglets at Eleusis, and many figurines of both pigs and women carrying piglets at Acrocorinth.[25]

Depictions of sacrificial victims do not often indicate the sex, even though a few representations do clearly show adult sows. Nothing in any of the known representations of sows in vase paintings, votive reliefs, or clay figurines indicate that the animal could be pregnant.[26]

In my doctoral dissertation on free-standing animal statues in Greek sanctuaries, I have tackled the subject of animal representation and sacrificial context and shown the strong links between pigs and sanctuaries of Demeter.[27] In her unpublished doctoral thesis on the sanctuaries of Demeter in western Asia Minor, Sara Karatas underlines the importance of pigs at sanctuaries of Demeter through the clay figurines of swine found at most of the goddess's sanctuaries.[28] Elinor Bevan offers a general survey of the presence of animal representations in sanctuaries throughout Greece: she only found 19 sanctuaries containing pig representations in the *c.* 100 sanctuaries she scrutinized. All of them were connected to female deities, with Demeter as a favourite recipient of swine representations, found in seven of the sanctuaries studied.[29] However, Bevan does not note any pregnant sow representation. Apart from two large groups at Lindos and at Acrocorinth, both from sanctuaries of Demeter, the number of free-standing pig representations seldom exceeds five pieces. Bevan also examined the evidence of human—usually female—figurines carrying piglets, and these are only found at sanctuaries of Demeter, with particularly large groups at Tiryns (120), Lindos (about 25), and at Acrocorinth (at least 20).[30]

What is clearly depicted as a sow, being led to sacrifice, on a red-figure *loutrophoros* by Phintias from the Acropolis of Athens (*c.* 520–510 BC) (*Fig. 9*), has sometimes been interpreted as a pregnant animal.[31] This interpretation is solely made on the basis that the animal is fat and has heavy teats. The latter feature is clearly an indication that the sow has given birth to piglets, but we cannot assume that this sow is represented as pregnant, only that, if she was pregnant, this would not be her first pregnancy. Similarly, a 5th-century BC votive relief, also from the Athenian Acropolis (*Fig. 10*) clearly depicts a mother sow, but not necessarily a pregnant one.[32]

A little further down the timeline, we can also note a few figurines, mostly from Late Hellenistic and Roman Egypt (*Fig. 11*), and maybe Ionia, which depict mature female fig-

[25] See Talatas 2017, 134; Bevan 1986, 71–71, 371.
[26] Ekroth 2014, 159.
[27] Talatas 2017, 121–151.
[28] Karatas 2014, 631–637.
[29] Bevan 1986, 71. See *Note 24* above.
[30] Bevan 1986, 72.
[31] Athens, National Museum, inv. Acr. 636. See Avramidou 2015, 15; Bremmer 2005, 10; van Straten 1995, 26, fig. 20, V67; Gebauer 2002, 55–57.
[32] Athens, Acropolis Museum, inv. AkrM 581. Bremmer 2005, 10; van Straten 1995, 77, fig. 79, R58.

Fig. 10. Marble votive relief from the Athenian Acropolis, 5th century BC. Athens, National Museum, inv. Acr. 581. Avramidou 2015, fig. 5.

Fig. 11. Woman riding a pig. London, British Museum, BM Terracotta IV, no. 3169, from Fayum, Ptolemaic Egypt. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

ures and children riding very fat and likely pregnant sows.[33] The cists and *stelai* that the women carry also suggest elements of eastern rituals, but their headdresses are reminiscent of those worn by priestesses in the Greek world. These women also present iconographical similarities with the character of Baubo, who offers comic relief to the mourning Demeter through making obscene jokes and uncovering her genitalia.[34]

Studying pig representations brings us to the realization that there is a general lack of obvious representation of the sex of the many clay figurines of pigs. As for sculptures, the Knidos sows (S1, S2, S3, and S4) are the only published examples of pigs that can be identified as pregnant sows, and there is no certain representation of pregnant swine sacrifice on vase paintings, figurines, and votive reliefs. Therefore, we are reliant on epigraphical sources to discuss the sacrifice of pregnant sows.

Epigraphical evidence for the sacrifice of pregnant sows

Most gods and goddesses welcomed swine sacrifices: in sacrificial calendars, pigs amount to around 20% of the recommended sacrifices.[35] Sacrificial calendars and sanctuary accounts are also our richest source of information on the sacrifice of pregnant sows. Martin P. Nilsson had already gathered most of the available evidence on the subject.[36] van Straten and others mention the sacrifice of pregnant victims in passing.[37] However, it is not until the last quarter of the 20th century that

[33] London, British Museum, BM Terracotta IV, no. 3169, from Fayum. Several other similar statuettes have been looted and circulated on the art market; their provenance is therefore uncertain.

[34] See Karatas 2014, 628–631 on Baubo and aischrologia in the cult of Demeter in western Asia Minor.

[35] Talatas 2017, 125; van Straten 1995, 173, using the calendars of the deme of Thorikos (*CGRN* 32), of the deme of Erchia (*CGRN* 52), of the Marathonian Tetrapolis (*CGRN* 56), of the genos of the Salaminoi (*LSS* 19), and the fragmentary Athenian law code associated with Nichomakos (*LSS* 9–10). Aphrodite appears to be the only deity who abhors pigs, see Paus. 2.11.8. In Ar. *Ach.* 793, Dikaiopolis asserts that pigs are not sacrificed to Aphrodite—which brings on the comical reply of a Megarian who answers that Aphrodite is the only one to whom *choiroi* (then meaning female genitalia) are offered. The aversion of the goddess to swine sacrifice finds an etiological explanation in the killing of Adonis by a wild boar.

[36] Nilsson 1973, 151–152.

[37] van Straten 1995, 26.

these sacrifices benefited from a renewed attention, in particular with the contributions of Stella Georgoudi, Ioanna Patera, Fritz Graf, and Jan Bremmer.[38]

The epigraphical material (*Table 1*) includes at least nine different recurring sacrifices of pregnant sows, in six locations (the Marathonian Tetrapolis, Paiania, Mykonos, Delos, Lindos, and Andania).[39] All of these victims were offered to Demeter.[40]

The other known instances of pregnant animal sacrifices include nine ewes and one cow, and were not specific to Demeter but offered to different goddesses: the Eumenides, Ge, Rhea, Demeter, Daeira, Theban Pelarge, Hera Antheia, Artemis, Athena Skiras, and Athena Polias, and, finally, unknown recipients in the months Pyanopsion and Gamelion at Marathon.[41] Pausanias only refers to the sacrifice of a pregnant ewe to the Eumenides, which he compares to a similar cult in honor of the Moirai.[42]

Almost all sacrifices of pregnant victims are offered to goddesses associated with fertility.[43] When it comes to the material value of pregnant sows, it is logical that they cost a higher price than piglets or non-pregnant females because, as Gunnel Ekroth points out, killing pregnant animals affects the flock's ability to increase.[44] The only Attic source that provides a price for these special victims is the calendar of the Marathonian Tetrapolis, but the inscription is too damaged for a secure reading of this value.[45] However, the accounts of Hellenistic Delos give us a more secure idea of prices of pregnant sows as compared to other animals listed for sacrifice.[46] Prices fluctuate from year to year, but they generally appear to be about 25% higher than the prices of animals observed in accounts from the Classical period from other sites. Indeed, while in most of the Classical documents, piglets cost 3 drachmas, they range from about 2 to 6 drachmas in Hellenistic accounts from Delos.[47] In these inscriptions, the prices for pregnant sows range between 15 and 40 drachmas, and except in one instance, are always more expensive than the adult male pigs sacrificed in the same accounts.[48] The high monetary value of pregnant sows, therefore, shows that they were choice offerings, financially, but also because offering a pregnant animal means offering not only what already exists, but also what is to come.

It seems that the cults of Demeter requiring pregnant sows in the Hellenistic period, unlike earlier ones, are more readily inclusive of a male recipient along with the goddess. Both on Delos and in Mykonos, at the same time that Demeter receives a pregnant sow in sacrifice, Kore receives an adult boar and Zeus Eubouleus or Bouleus receives a piglet.[49] Even though Zeus receives the least expensive of the three victims, his association to the sacrifice might indicate a dimension of the cult that would be more oriented towards a family triad of gods rather than directly linked with the Mysteries of Demeter. For the Mysteries at Andania, in the 1st century AD, several gods receive sacrifices simultaneously: Hermes, Apollo, the Great Gods, and Hagne—but only Demeter receives a pregnant sow.[50]

An interesting note in the sacrificial calendar of Mykonos is that the sow must be *prototokos*, in her first pregnancy. This puts her at a key moment of transition between the stages of her life.[51] This state of transition between the stages of life

[38] See Patera 2019, 33–62, for the most recent study on sacrifices to Demeter and Kore and their price, including pregnant victims. See also Graf 1985, 27, 60–61; Georgoudi 1993; 1994, 171–186; 2011, 101–107; 2016, 91–102; Bremmer 2019 (a revisited version of Bremmer 2005).

[39] To this list, I chose not to add the decree concerning Eleusinian cults at Phrearrhioi, dating from 300–250 BC because it is too fragmentary for a safe reading: Λ[..?.. Δή]-[μητρι Θεσμο]φόρωι ὗν πρ[..?..]. (*CGRN* 103). The inscription has sometimes been interpreted as including a *prototokos* sow to Demeter Thesmophoros, See Patera 2019, 49.

[40] The name of the receiving deity is lacking in one of the three instances of pregnant sow sacrifices found in the Marathonian calendar, but the context indicates that this sacrifice was also likely for Demeter. *CGRN* 56, A43; *CGRN* 56, B48–49.

[41] Bremmer 2019, 338.

[42] Paus. 2.11.4.

[43] Lupu 2009, 142; Georgoudi 1994, 171–186; 2011, 101–107; 2016, 91–102. The unconvincing and modern concept of "negative sacrifice" was proposed by Graf and contested by Bremmer. See Graf 1985, 27, 60–61 and Bremmer 2019. Graf's theory was mainly based on Pausanias' description of the festivals to the Eumenides and to the Moiriai, in the context of which sacrifices of pregnant ewes were associated with atypical libations of water and milk while omitting other expected offerings, such as wine, resulting in what was considered as a "negative sacrifice". It makes more sense to apply the notion of negative sacrifice for those very particular instances, but not to extend it to all sacrifices of pregnant animals.

[44] Ekroth 2014, 168, likens the sacrifice of pregnant females to the sacrifice of uncastrated males.

[45] See *Table 1*. *CGRN* 56, A43, B48–49. Sokolowski (*LSCG* 20 A 43, B48–49) transcribes the number in brackets while Lambert, on whose edition the *CGRN* entry is based, keeps a question mark in front of the proposed transcription for the value of the three pregnant sows mentioned in the inscription (Lambert 2000).

[46] Bruneau 1970, 287, accounts no. 145 (41 drachmas) (*IG* XI.2 145), 204 (25 drachmas) (*IG* XI.2 204), 228 (*IG* XI.2 228), 287 (15 drachmas), 290 (26 drachmas) (*ID* 290), 316 (*ID* 316), 338 (2[2] drachmas, 2 obols) (*ID* 338), 372 (37 drachmas) (*ID* 372), 440 (28 drachmas) (*ID* 440), 442 (32 drachmas) (*ID* 442), 444 (36 drachmas) (*ID* 444), 459 (*ID* 459), 460 (40 drachmas) (*ID* 460), each list one pregnant sow for Demeter.

[47] Bruneau 1970, 287, accounts no. 145 (*IG* XI.2 145), 203 (4 drachmas) (*IG* XI.2 203), 287 (2 drachmas, 2 obols) (*IG* XI.2 287), 290 (*ID* 290), 338 (*ID* 338), 372 (1 to 4 drachmas) (*ID* 372), 440 (4 drachmas) (*ID* 440), 442 (4 drachmas, 3 obols) (*ID* 442), 444 (4 drachmas, 5 obols) (*ID* 444), 459 (4 drachmas) (*ID* 459), 460 (6 drachmas) (*ID* 460), 461 (5 drachmas) (*ID* 461); each list a piglet to purify the Thesmophorion.

[48] See Bruneau 1970, 287.

[49] See Bruneau 1970, 287 for Delos and *CGRN* 156, 12–13, and 16 for Mykonos. Zeus receives this sacrifice under the epithet of Eubouleus in Delos and Bouleus in Mykonos.

[50] *CGRN* 222, 33, 68.

[51] *CGRN* 156, 16.

Table 1. Pregnant sows as sacrificial animals in epigraphical sources

Source	Sacrificial animal	Date/occasion	Recipient	Reference
Sacrificial calendar of the Marathonian Tetrapolis 375–350 BC	1 pregnant sow	Gamelion yearly	[Unknown: fragmentary text]	*CGRN* 56, A43
	1 pregnant sow	Anthesterion yearly	Demeter Eleusinia	*CGRN* 56, B48
	1 pregnant sow	Anthesterion yearly	Demeter Chloe (by property of Meidylos)	*CGRN* 56, B49
Cultic decree of Paiania 450–425 BC	1 pregnant sow	Antheia yearly	Eleusinion	*CGRN* 25, A30
Sacrificial calendar of Mykonos *c*. 230–200 BC	1 pregnant sow + 1 sow	12th Posideon yearly	Demeter Chloe	*CGRN* 156, 12–13
	1 pregnant sow *prototokos* (in her first pregnancy)	10th Lenaion yearly	Demeter "at the song for the sake of produce" (transl. J.-M. Carbon, *CGRN* 156)	*CGRN* 156, 16
Sacrificial calendar from Lindos 200–175 BC	1 pregnant sow + 1 pregnant animal (ewe?)	7th Sminthaios yearly	Demeter (?)	*CGRN* 179, 3
Regulation of the Mysteries at Andania *c*. 23 AD	1 pregnant sow	Mysteries yearly	Demeter	*CGRN* 222, 33
	1 pregnant sow in procession (possibly same animal as above)	Mysteries yearly	Procession for Demeter	*CGRN* 222, 68
Hieropoioi accounts from the Thesmophorion at Delos 302–171 BC (13 annual accounts)	1 pregnant sow worth 41 drachmas		Demeter	*IG* XI.2 145, 4; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 145
	1 pregnant sow worth 25 drachmas		Demeter	*IG* XI.2 204, 48; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 204
	1 pregnant sow		Demeter	*IG* XI.2 228, 1; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 228
	1 pregnant sow worth 15 drachmas		Demeter	*IG* XI.2 287, A, 69; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 287
	1 pregnant sow worth 26 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 290, 88; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 290
	1 pregnant sow		Demeter	*ID* 316, 120; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 316
	1 pregnant sow worth 2[2] drachmas, 2 obols		Demeter	*ID* 33, Aa, 59; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 338
	1 pregnant sow worth 37 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 372, A, 104; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 372
	1 pregnant sow worth 28 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 440, A, 36; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 440
	1 pregnant sow worth 32 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 442, A, 200; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 442
	1 pregnant sow worth 36 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 444, A, 31; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 444
	1 pregnant sow		Demeter	*ID* 459, 61; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 459
	1 pregnant sow worth 40 drachmas		Demeter	*ID* 460, t, 66 ; Bruneau 1970, 287, no. 460

(childhood and adulthood, maidenhood and motherhood, life and death) might have held a symbolic value connected with the passing of seasons.

The Greek gods are known to shift easily both to human and animal forms—Zeus' love affairs are one of the best examples of this, as he can approach his lovers in the shape of a husband, as a bull, or even as a swan. Strong associations exist between Greek gods and animals, and the unconsumed offerings of piglets to Demeter, the sacrifices of pregnant sows for the goddess, the statuettes of pregnant sows from Knidos, and the many figurines from Acrocorinth of women carrying piglets all point to a deep connection between Demeter and pigs, and especially pregnant sows and piglets.

Even though we know pregnant sows were sometimes sacrificed, we lack precise indications as to how the sacrifices were performed. They were most probably led by priestesses—at least one priestess of Demeter and one priestess of Kore are

mentioned in the accounts from Delos where pregnant sows are referenced.[52] Because the festivals mentioned on the inscriptions have an official and civic dimension—the victims, wine, barley, and wood for the sacrifice are paid for with public funds on Delos, and in Mykonos—the Boule, the council, is in charge of inspecting the victim and giving the sacrum and a thigh of the non-pregnant sow to the goddess. Priests and archons were in charge of making sure that everything proceeded beautifully. We therefore know that men were also involved in the particular instances of pregnant sow sacrifices we know of from inscriptions. That does not exclude the possibility that some sacrifices of pregnant sows were performed in contexts from which men were excluded. However, men could still have been involved in the payment, when their wives needed to sacrifice to Demeter—for instance, in the context of the Thesmophoria at Delos.[53]

As to the actual details of the killing and consumption of pregnant victims, literary sources are absent, and inscriptions can be fragmentary or unclear in their phrasing. The only detail disclosed in the Mykonos inscription is that the back of the pregnant sow offered to Demeter Chloe must be cut ("νῶτογ κόπτετα[ι] τῆς ἐγκύμονος"), but nothing is said of the sharing of meat portions from any of the pregnant sows.[54] Jan-Mathieu Carbon suggests that the back of the animal might be cut out to be burnt on the altar with the *osphys* while the rest of the animal, including the fetuses, might have been treated otherwise, in an *agizein*-type ritual. He also notes that a revision of this calendar shows that a priestess rather than a *mageiros* was given the perquisites (the *osphys* and the thigh) at those rites.[55]

Piglets and fetuses in texts and epigraphy

In the epigraphical sources, nothing is said of the fetuses, and there would normally be about six of them in the sow. Whether the fetuses were disposed of separately from the rest of the carcass is unknown. If the piglets contained in the sow were, as suggested by Carbon, treated in a different type of ritual while the sow itself was sacrificed according to the principles of a *thysia*, we might have here a hybrid type of sacrifice.[56] We could imagine a *thysia* of the sow and a holocaust of the fetuses for instance.[57] We do not know if the fetuses would have been considered "piglets".[58] In some instances, fetuses of sacrificed sows might have been thrown down the *megara* at the Thesmophoria—as they were the closest concrete thing to animal seeds and mixed up with vegetal seed, they could be part of the "fertility mix" produced at the Thesmophoria.[59]

Piglets were commonly used for purification at sanctuaries, and these animals were likely not consumed but offered whole as holocausts, as seen in epigraphical sources from the Classical and Hellenistic periods.[60] And while Pausanias is not prolific on the subject of pigs, he mentions the use of piglets for purification by female umpires in charge of overviewing the girls-only Heraean Games at Olympia; but without giving any specific indications as to what was done to those piglets.[61]

The choice of piglets for purification rituals, in which the animals would likely not be consumed, can be explained by their very low price compared to other victims, and by their wide availability, since each sow could give birth to a litter of six piglets on average (and up to twelve) once or twice a year.[62] But, aside from the availability and affordability of piglets, their use in sanctuaries seems to be connected with particular sacrificial associations with specific deities: Demeter appears as the prime recipient of those offerings.

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[52] Bruneau 1970, 287.

[53] Bruneau 1970, 287, lists pregnant sows for sacrifice from the account of the Thesmophorion, which are likely intended for the women-only Thesmophoria festival.

[54] *CGRN* 156, 13.

[55] Carbon 2017, 158, n. 36.

[56] Carbon 2017, 158, n. 36. In a *thysia*, specific parts of the animal are burnt as an offering to the honored deity, and the rest is consumed by the celebrants.

[57] Carbon 2017, 158, n. 36. In a holocaust, the animal is entirely burnt.

[58] See Schaps 1991, 208–209, on lexical distinctions for terms regarding swine in ancient Greek texts.

[59] See Ruscillo 2013, 190–191 on the different possible times of throwing of piglets in the *megara* and the textual evidence in Clement of Alexandria (*Protr*. 2.17.1) stating that the piglets were thrown down at the Thesmophoria, refuted by Clinton 1988, who considers that it refers to a local Alexandrian festival; Dillon 2002, 112–118.

[60] Bruneau 1970, 193, 286–288; Parker 1983, 283, 371–373; Ekroth 2002, 60–61; 2018, 51; Clinton 2005, 168–176. The sacrificial calendars and accounts mention holocausts of piglets for purification, and 91% of all sacrificed swine victims in those epigraphical sources are piglets (χοῖροι). See van Straten 1995, 177; Talatas 2017, 125 and the inscription from Delos *IG* XI:2 235, 1.3, quoted by Ekroth 2018, 42, mentioning a piglet used for purification and possibly subsequently deposited in a *bothros*.

[61] "Whatever ritual it is the duty of either the Sixteen Women or the Elean umpires to perform, they do not perform before they have purified themselves with a pig meat for purification and with water." (Paus. 5.16.8, transl. W.H.S. Jones).

[62] Information on breeding was kindly provided in June 2016 by Fotiadis Farm, breeder of indigenous black pigs located in Exochi, at the foot of Mount Olympus.

Sacrifice of pregnant sows: zooarchaeological evidence

Zooarchaeology is still an emerging discipline, and studies on faunal remains are becoming more systematic. However, some of the evidence from earlier excavations is irremediably lost, and reliable databases are still lacking.[63]

Swine bones are found at many sanctuaries, but are mostly recovered from consumption debris, rather than from the sacrificial deposits, and those pigs may have been sacrificed by another kind of ritual than a *thysia*.[64] For instance, pig bones are predominant in the dinner debris from the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Acrocorinth, where both burnt and unburnt bones were found, and the pigs seem to have been brought whole to the kitchen.[65]

Ekroth remarks that "larger amounts of burnt pig bones seem to come from Demeter sanctuaries, where deposits of burnt juvenile or even foetal piglets have been recovered, apparently representing a sacrificial practice distinct from the *thysia* as all parts of the animals' bodies seem to have been included".[66] The presence of foetal bones is an indication that the sacrifice of pregnant sows was indeed a practice that took place at sanctuaries of Demeter.

At Mytilene, Deborah Ruscillo connects the discovery of thousands of charred piglets to Thesmophoric rituals: the piglets would have been thrown down a *megaron* to rot (the location of which was not identified), and their rotted remains then mixed with seeds and burnt in the pit that was excavated and in which the burnt remains were found.[67]

Why offer pregnant sows to Demeter?

The epigraphical and zooarchaeological evidence indicates a clear link between pregnant sows and the cult of Demeter, since sacrifices of pregnant sows for Demeter are recommended in the inscriptions, and the discovery of foetal remains in sanctuaries of Demeter confirm this practice. The goddess, at times in association with Kore, is the only known recipient of this specific type of sacrificial animal, and the only known and certain representations of pregnant sows are found at the sanctuary of Demeter and Kore at Knidos. Pigs being very prolific, it is not surprising that they would be associated with goddesses of fertility, and the Roman author Cornutus (1st century AD), in his work on Greek religion, writes that pregnant sows are sacrificed to Demeter because they are prolific, they conceive easily, and they have perfect offspring.[68]

In Greek mythology, domestic pigs do not have an important role. However, a *scholion* to Lucian mentions Eubouleus' herd falling into Hades at the same time as Kore, and, according to Ovid, when Demeter searches for Kore, the girl's tracks had been obliterated by pigs.[69] Accordingly, the *scholion* explains the throwing of piglets along with wheat cakes in the shape of snakes and phalli down the *megara* at the Thesmophoria; the remains of the piglets were then retrieved and mixed with seeds, as a rite done in honor of Eubouleus and his herd falling in the same chasm as Kore. Even though these myths are etiological, they serve as an illustration of the deep religious connection that existed between Demeter, Kore, her passing into the underworld, and the pigs. The *scholion* to Lucian considers the piglets thrown in the pits along with wheat-cake snakes and male genitalia to be *charisteia*, thank-you offerings to Demeter, as she provides the fruits of the earth and civilized the human race.[70]

A young pregnant sow is a potent symbol of the cycle of life and of the promise of abundance. Just as an ear of wheat contains many grains, the pregnant sow can contain as many as twelve fetuses, and the sow may be considered as a symbol of agriculture. Considering this symbolism, it is possible that sacrificing a sow could be related to sacrificing the first fruits of a harvest, an *aparche.* The sacrifice of an expensive animal, which has been fed to maturity, and the killing of both the mother and the piglets she carries before their birth (and when the animal is *prototokos*, she is literally bearing her first fruits), can be seen as a way to signal to the goddess that she is receiving what is most precious in the herd and asking in return the gift of abundance. Pregnant sows can be considered as an optimal sacrifice as they have an important value for the herd: as

[63] For references on the current state of zooarchaeological research in relation to Greek religion, see Ekroth 2007, 249–272; 2009, 125–151; 2014, 153–174.

[64] Ekroth 2007, presents an overview of the zooarchaeological evidence from sanctuaries in her study of meat in ancient Greece, establishing different degrees of sacred meat, and notes that pig bones appear to have often been consumed at sanctuaries even when their bones do not appear to be part of the god's share.

[65] Bookidis *et al*. 1999, 32–33, 43.

[66] See Ekroth 2009, 137, no. 47 for the bibliography of the related zooarchaeological evidence. Crabtree & Monge 1990, 118.

[67] Ruscillo 2013, 193.

[68] Cornutus, *Theol. Graec.* 56; Patera 2019, 33–34.

[69] Schol. Lucian, *Dial. Meret*. 2.1 (Rabe 1906, 275.23–276.24); translation by Foley 1994, 73: "When the earth opened up for Korê, a swineherd named Eubouleus was swallowed with his swine in the same chasm. In honour of Eubouleus, piglets were thrown into the chasms of Demeter and Korê along with wheat cakes in the shape of snakes and phalli as well as the cones of the prolific pine tree. The rotted remains of the piglets are drawn from underground *megara* by women called bailers (*antlêtriai*) who had purified themselves for three days. They clapped and shouted as they descended to scare away snakes that were said to live in the chasms. The remains were mixed on the altar with the seed about to be planted in order to produce a good harvest." Ov. *Fasti* 4, 463–466.

[70] Schol. Lucian, *Dial. Meret*. 2.1; Rabe 1906, 275–276. See Patera 2019, 35 and Ruscillo 2013, 189 for commentary.

fertile animals, they represent future income. Sacrificing them means sacrificing future benefits, and only the most beautiful animals (*kallisteuousai*) are fit for the goddess.[71] Giving a pregnant sow in sacrifice can also be compared to sacrificing the first ears of corn, as those also carry future wealth—but on a much bigger scale, as the sow has been fed an important amount of food to reach maturity.

Demeter is the goddess who has the power to make all vegetation die or thrive. She teaches agriculture to Triptolemus, and it is through the culture of cereals that men and herds may be fed and multiply. In the context of public sacrifices, which are the ones recorded in the calendars and in the accounts of the Thesmophorion at Delos, choosing to offer a pregnant sow to Demeter is a gesture aiming at ensuring the goddess's favor in agricultural endeavors. In exclusively female cults, such as the Thesmophoria, the women of a community ritually take charge of its future in terms of reproduction. And in private contexts, we can suppose that the same imagery motivates the offering of representations of pregnant sows—such as a wealthy woman, like Plathainis, offering the finest of our Knidos sows (S1). Small and simple clay offerings can be difficult to identify, and it is possible that many of the little clay pigs offered in sanctuaries of Demeter were intended to represent pregnant sows, and those inexpensive offerings might have been offered by women from a greater range of social backgrounds.[72]

In terms of seasons, the sacrificial calendars seem to indicate that pregnant sows were usually sacrificed in the winter. Indeed, such sacrifices are prescribed in Gamelion (January–February) and Anthesterion (February–March) for the Marathonian Tetrapolis, for the Antheia (February–March) at Paiania, and on the 12th of Posideon (December–January?) and the 10th of Lenaion (January–February, equivalent of the Gamelion in Attica).[73] Sows can easily be impregnated at any season, and the calendar dates for sacrifices being precise, it is very likely that the animals were chosen and mated ahead of the sacrifice for the purpose of the cult. The dates were likely chosen to match the agricultural cycle, as those sacrifices were made when the wheat and barley were starting to sprout (several of the sacrifices of pregnant sows are addressed to Demeter Chloe—her epithet suggests green fields), but godly protection was still needed for the cereals to reach maturity in the summer. In any case, sacrificing pregnant animals at the end of winter was not a choice made to spare expenses, as not only would a fertile animal be lost for the herd after it had been fed to maturity, but it would also have been fed through winter, when fewer resources were available. Offering a pregnant sow at the end of the winter or the beginning of spring represented an important financial sacrifice.

The presence of pregnant sows in the cult of Demeter might however reach even beyond the links that can be made with the fertility of the earth, the cycle of life and death, the agricultural cycles, and the aischrological components of the cult. Just as Demeter represents the Mother *par excellence*, Kore is the Daughter: when considered through the prism of Demeter's cult, she is just that, and does not need to be referred to by her name. Both goddesses act as strong symbols of the stages of life and the passing of seasons, of death and rebirth.

In the cult of a goddess linked with fertility and the stages of womanhood through the loss and reunion with her daughter Kore, the animal being pregnant for the first time (as required in the sacrificial calendar from Mykonos) symbolizes the complete cycle of the mother and daughter, Demeter and Kore.[74] In the calendar of Mykonos, the sacrifice of the *prototokos* sow is associated with Demeter "at the song for the sake of produce", on the 10th of the month of Lenaion, while Demeter Chloe receives a pregnant sow on the 12th of Poseideon, but in that occurrence, no precision is given as to whether the animal should be in her first pregnancy.[75] This is also what the statue of a young pregnant sow offered by Plathainis (S1) might embody. It shows a promise of new life, but one that has been conceived but not yet born, just as Kore is taken into the underworld on the brink of adulthood, before she reaches motherhood, accompanied by a herd of pigs, an animal noted for its fertility. In that regard, pigs, and especially pregnant sows, act as strong symbols of Demeter and Kore.[76] In a religious and mythological world, where gods can easily shift into animals, and have strong animal attributes, the omnipresence of pigs in the cult of Demeter and Kore and the reinforced association of Demeter with pregnant sows might have been

[71] The sacrificial calendar of Mykonos (*CGRN* 156, 12–13), which requires the sacrifice of two sows for Demeter Chloe, one of which has to be pregnant, specifies that the most beautiful sows must be selected.

[72] Karatas 2014, 632, shows that pigs were the most commonly offered animal figurines at sanctuaries of Demeter in Asia Minor and the islands off the Ionian coast. She also presents a table by Kozlowski 2003, 106, pl. 1 showing that in sanctuaries of Demeter in other Greek regions (Thasos, Corinth, Cyrene, Pella, Knossos, Proerna, Ampelia of Pharsale) from the Archaic to the Hellenistic periods, pigs were the second most popular animal clay figurines after horses, and represented 20% of the bulk of animal figurines.

[73] Smith 1973, 24, n. 25 for the date equivalences of the sacrificial calendar of the Marathonian Tetrapolis (*CGRN* 56), Mykonos (*CGRN* 156). For the sacrifice of a pregnant sow in Lindos on the 7th of Sminthaios, the equivalence is less certain, but it could have been at the transition between winter and spring, around March—see *CGRN* 179 for references on the debate on the date of this sacrifice. See also Clinton 2005, 178; Bremmer 2019, 343.

[74] *CGRN* 156, 16 on the sacrifice of a *prototokos* sow for Demeter "at the song for the sake of produce".

[75] See Georgoudi 2011 for a brief on the particularities of Demeter Chloe and the sacrifice of pregnant sows.

[76] Bevan 1986, 79.

an expression of a theriomorphic aspect of the goddesses, as pigs, and, perhaps even of Demeter as a pregnant sow.[77] The sculpted pregnant sows from Knidos could represent sacrificial animals, but they could also represent an animal that is pleasing to the goddess being directly linked to sacrifices, even though sacrifices of pregnant sows for Demeter were not uncommon. Those sculptures date from the Early Hellenistic period, and we have no earlier example of statues of pregnant sows for Demeter: it would not be impossible for Demeter to have had a pig shape, which would not necessarily be expressed in earlier representations in the context of a cult that revolves around Mysteries and secrecy.

This idea finds an echo in the story of Eubouleus's herd of pigs falling in the underworld along with Kore and covering her tracks.[78] And it is not a coincidence that, as seen earlier in this article, at both Delos and Mykonos, Zeus (Eubouleus in Delos and Bouleus in Mykonos) receives a piglet at the same time as Kore receives a male pig and Demeter a pregnant sow.[79] The homonymy of this Zeus, who appears to present a certain closeness to Plouton, and the euphemism contained in his epithet suggest superstitious fear.[80] Indeed, this godly triad appears to be strongly associated with pigs, and Demeter, the Mother, more particularly with pregnant sows, which, aside of their symbolic value, are also the priciest sacrificial animals, while Kore receives a young male, a *delphakion*, which is more expensive than the young pig received by Eubouleus.[81] Therefore, even though Demeter is often honored together with Kore, and sometimes also Eubouleus, she is given primacy and it is only to her that pregnant sows are offered.

To conclude, the small marble sows from Knidos, which were excavated over 160 years ago and have previously drawn little interest among researchers, are nonetheless interesting because they tell us that pregnant sows have a place important enough in Demeter's cult to appear in the shape of statuettes. Thanks to the little sow of higher artistic quality (S1), and the inscriptions accompanying her other dedications, Plathainis, who would otherwise remain anonymous, marked her importance within her social community, and we get a glimpse into her world through her offerings to Demeter. These statuettes are also a reminder that there is still a lot to be explored in already discovered material if we look at it through a new prism.

Focusing on private offerings of limited artistic and material value, which have traditionally been considered as having only minor importance, is particularly important to improve our knowledge of social identity and the everyday relationship of ancient Greeks to their gods, especially when it comes to women or worshippers from modest backgrounds.

LINDA TALATAS
UMR 7041 ArScAn (« Mondes grecs archaïques et classiques »)
Institut d'art et d'archéologie
Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne
3, rue Michelet. 75006 Paris. France
xindara@gmail.com

Abbreviations

CGRN = *Collection of Greek Ritual Norms*, eds. J.-M. Carbon, S. Peels & V. Pirenne-Delforge, Liège 2016–. http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be/

IKnidos = Blümel, W. 1992. *Die Inschriften von Knidos* vol. 1 (Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, 41), Bonn.

LSCG = Sokolowski, F. 1969. *Lois sacrées des cités grecques*, Paris.

LSS = Sokolowski, F. 1962. *Lois sacrées des cités grecques. Supplément*, Paris.

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[77] Exploring this idea further would extend beyond the framework of this paper. See Kindt 2019, 155–170 for an investigation on zoomorphism in Greek religion, and her concluding note on "the need to consider supernatural bodies in all their different manifestations and to write divine zoomorphism more firmly into our accounts of divine corporality in ancient Greece". See also Bremmer 2020, for a recent and complete historiography on the controversial subject of the *theriomorphism* of the major Greek gods. Demeter, like many Greek gods, can take animal forms, and she turns into a horse to escape Poseidon's passion as she searches for Kore. Poseidon mates with her in the shape of a horse, and she gives birth to the horse Arion (Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.6.8). She is represented in Arcadia with a horse head, and with many other beasts growing out of her head, a dolphin in one hand and a dove in the other (Paus. 8.42.1–4). Even if there is no other literary evidence for a possible shift between Demeter's anthropomorphic form and a pig shape than the etiological myths presented in the following paragraph (schol. Lucian *Dial. meret.* in Rabe 1906, 275–276. Ov. *Fasti*, 4, 463–466), the many links between the goddess and the pigs are reason enough to keep this possibility open.

[78] Schol. Lucian *Dial. meret.* in Rabe 1906, 275–276. Ov. *Fasti*, 4, 463–466.

[79] See Bruneau 1970, 287 for the Delian accounts and *CGRN* 156, 12–13 and 16 for the sacrifice calendar of Mykonos.

[80] See Bremmer 2013, 35–39 for references on Eubouleus.

[81] See Patera 2019, 37.

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