

	<p>Object: Pig, offering to Demeter</p> <p>Museum: Museum August Kestner Trammplatz 3 30159 Hannover (0511) 168-42730 museen- kulturgeschichte@hannover- stadt.de</p> <p>Collection: Ancient Cultures, Collection Erhart Kästner</p> <p>Inventory number: 1966.56</p>
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Description

The pig is one of the oldest domesticated animal species. Primarily, it was kept and specifically bred to expand the nutritional basis for humans as a source of meat. Nevertheless, man's relationship to the pig is ambivalent, which in some cultures and cults of the Mediterranean region was expressed either in taboo regulations on consumption or in ritual use. Some regarded it as unclean, others as a sacrificial animal assigned to certain gods.

In the Hellenic region, the pig has been documented in cultic-ritual contexts since the Neolithic, i.e. the period when its domestication began, and is particularly associated with fertility cults.

Its relationship to goddesses, who stand for fertility and reproduction, is not only attested by archaeological or archaeozoological findings in Demeter or Aphrodite sanctuaries. Literary testimonies also report on special cult and sacrificial acts (Athenaios, *Deipnosophistai* 111, 95 f.), e.g. the oath and atonement sacrifice.

Especially in the cult of Demeter and Kore, however, the pig plays a special role. Not only young piglets were offered to the goddesses, but also figures in the form of pigs were consecrated. The sacrifice of piglets to Demeter as the goddess of fertility and protector of marriage can also be explained by a special aspect: The Greek word 'choiros'. It means not only 'young pig' (= piglet), but also 'vulva of a girl'. The piglet sacrifices and votive offerings in pig form refer, among other things, to the custom of young nubile girls before their wedding to ask for the favour of the goddess responsible for this aspect.

This votive figure was created in imitation of Rhodian models. (AVS)

Former collection Erhart Kästner, Wolfenbüttel

Basic data

Material/Technique:

Clay / from the mould

Measurements:

Length: 9.8 cm, Height: 5.3 cm

Events

Created	When	500-450 BC
	Who	
	Where	Boeotia
Collected	When	
	Who	Erhart Kästner (1904-1974)
	Where	Wolfenbüttel
[Relation to person or institution]	When	
	Who	Demeter
	Where	

Keywords

- Sus
- Votive offering
- wedding

Literature

- Forstenpointner, Gerhard (2001): Demeter im Artemision? - Archäozoologische Überlegungen zu den Schweineknochenfunden aus dem Artemision. Ulrike Muss (Hrsg.), Der Kosmos der Artemis von Ephesos, ÖAI Sonderschriftenband 37 (Wien), 49-71
- Liepmann, Ursula (1975): Griechische Terrakotten, Bronzen, Skulpturen. Hannover