The Role and Function of the Potnia Theron Motif in the Art of the Greek World 9th-6th century BC.

Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of PhD Classics.

April, 2025

Thea Wolff

4238278

Supervisors: Dr. Chrysanthi Gallou, Prof. Hannah O'Regan

Department of Classics and Archaeology, School of Humanities, Faculty of Arts University of Nottingham

The Role and Function of the Potnia Theron Motif in the Art of the Greek World 9th-6th century B.C.

- Abstract
- Acknowledgements
- Abbreviations
- Figures
- Tables

1: Introduction

- 1.1: Scope
- 1.2: Terminology
    - 1.2.1: *Potnia Theron*
    - 1.2.2: Mistress of Animals
    - 1.2.3: Alternative Terms
- 1.3: Name
- 1.4: Definition
- 1.5: Questions and Aims

Chapter 2: The Pre-Classical *Potnia Theron*

- 2.1: Introduction
- 2.2: Earliest examples: Çatal Höyük
- 2.3: Near East
    - 2.3.1: Queen of the Night plaque
    - 2.3.2: Lamashtu
    - 2.3.3: Master of Animals
    - 2.3.4: Ugarit

- 2.4: Minoan
    - 2.4.1: Seals
    - 2.4.2: Snake Goddess
    - 2.4.3: Upraised Arms figures
    - 2.4.4: Xeste 3 figures
- 2.5: Etruscan
- 2.6: Conclusion

Chapter 3: Attributes of the *Potnia Theron*

- 3.1: Animals
    - 3.1.1: Lions
    - 3.1.2: Large felines
    - 3.1.3: Snakes
    - 3.1.4: Fantastic animals
    - 3.1.5: Horses
    - 3.1.6: Goats/sheep/deer
    - 3.1.7: Sea animals
    - 3.1.8: Other animals
- 3.2 Birds:
    - 3.2.1: Long necked water birds
    - 3.2.2: Small birds
    - 3.2.3: Corvid-type birds
    - 3.2.4: Other birds
- 3.3: Mixed attributes (two or more animals)
- 3.4: Plant and natural motifs
- 3.5: Missing
- 3.6: Conclusion

Chapter 4: Dress and appearance of the Potnia Theron

- 4.1: Introduction
- 4.2: Headwear
    - 4.2.1: *Poloi*
    - 4.2.2: Headband
    - 4.2.3: Headdress
    - 4.2.4: Veils
    - 4.2.5: Caps
- 4.3: Hair
    - 4.3.1: Braids
- 4.4: Dress
    - 4.4.1: Type

    - 4.4.2: Decoration
    - 4.4.3: Belts
    - 4.4.4: Split skirts
- 4.5: Outerwear
- 4.6: Feet and footwear
- 4.7: Jewellery
- 4.8: Nudity
- 4.9: Conclusion

Chapter 5: Hybridity and monstrosity in images of the *Potnia Theron*

- 5.1: Introduction
- 5.2: Wings
- 5.3: Bee-bodied figures
- 5.4: Bird-like faces
- 5.5: Animal feet
- 5.6: Gorgons
- 5.7: Vegetal additions
- 5.8: Conclusion

Chapter 6: Pose and context of the *Potnia Theron*

- 6.1: Composition
    - 6.1.1: Symmetrical – two animals
    - 6.1.2: Symmetrical – multiple animals
    - 6.1.3: Asymmetrical – two animals
    - 6.1.4: Asymmetrical – multiple animals
    - 6.1.5: Asymmetrical – one animal
- 6.2: Relation to animals
    - 6.2.1: Active control
    - 6.2.2: Passive control
- 6.3: Pose
    - 6.3.1: Position of arms
    - 6.3.2: Position of legs
    - 6.3.3: Feet
    - 6.3.4: Movement
- 6.4: Supplementary figures
- 6.5: Framing
- 6.6: Fill motifs
- 6.7: Conclusion

Chapter 7: Roles of the *Potnia Theron*

- 7.1: Intro
- 7.2: Specific Identities
    - 7.2.1: Artemis
    - 7.2.2: Demeter
    - 7.2.3: Kirke
    - 7.2.4: Gorgons/Medusa
    - 7.2.5: Britomartis & Diktynna
    - 7.2.6: Kybele
    - 7.2.7: Aphrodite
    - 7.2.8: Hekate
- 7.3: Mistress of Animals
    - 7.3.1: Hunting
- 7.4: Liminality & Boundaries
- 7.5: Apotropaic
- 7.6: Kourotrophos
- 7.7: Cult
- 7.8: Conclusion

8: Conclusions

- 8.1: Methodology and boundaries of research
- 8.2: Findings and Contributions of This Study
- 8.3: Suggestions for further research

Appendix – Image Catalogue

Abstract

This thesis presents an exploration of the *Potnia Theron* motif, aiming to redefine its role and function. While existing scholarship has often approached the *Potnia Theron* in unclear and conflicting ways—commonly conflating it with the identity of Artemis—this study seeks to offer clarity. By identifying the iconographic elements that define the *Potnia Theron*, this study offers a more precise definition of the motif and its various subtypes, including hybrid forms, hunting figures, and figures associated with specific myths. This clearer understanding not only enriches the discussion surrounding these images but also encourages further study into the *Potnia Theron* and its associated identities.

This study offers an iconographical analysis of the Potnia Theron motif, grounded in a catalogue of images from the Greek world spanning the 9th to the 6th centuries B.C. The analysis reveals the distinct unifying features of the Potnia Theron motif and the substantial variation within it, reflecting its complex associated identities. By clearly separating the Potnia Theron's visual representation from its diverse identities, this research deepens our comprehension of motif and identity. The roles associated with the Potnia Theron often present contradictions, such as protector of animals and huntress, as well as diverse roles, including *kourotrophos* (“child-nurturer”), *apotropaion* (object to “turn away” evil) and protector of liminal spaces.

Keywords

Potnia Theron, Mistress of Animals, Archaic, hybridity, apotropaic, Greek religion, iconography.

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the kindness of Bill Marples, to whom I am wholeheartedly grateful.

I wish to express my deep appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Chrysanthi Gallou and Prof. Hannah O'Regan, for their valuable guidance and encouragement throughout this research process.

I am also thankful for the insightful advice and support provided by Dr. Andreas Kropp and Prof. Esther Eidinow during the earlier stages of my thesis development. Their contributions have significantly enhanced my work.

Abbreviations

Ael. NA. Aelian - *On the Nature of Animals*. Aelian, *On the Characteristics of Animals II* tr. A. F. Scholfield (Cambridge, 1959).

Apollod. Bibl. Apollodorus - *The Library*. Apollodorus, *The Library, with an English Translation* tr. J. G. Frazer (Cambridge, 1921).

Apul. Met. Apuleius - *Metamorphoses*. Apuleius, *Apuleius Metamorphoses The Golden Ass I* tr. W. Adlington (London, 1922).

Ap. Rhod. Argon. Apollonius of Rhodes - *Argonautica*. Apollonius Rhodius *Argonautica* tr. R. C. Seaton (London, 1912).

Ar. Ran. Aristophanes - *The Frogs*. Aristophanes, *Peace, Birds, Frogs* tr. B. B. Rogers (London, 1927).

Ar. Lys. Aristophanes - *Lysistrata*. Aristophanes, *Lysistrata, Thesmophoriazusae, Ecclesiazusae, The Plutus* tr. B. B. Rogers (Cambridge, 1946).

Arist. Hist. An. Aristotle - *History of Animals*. Aristotle, *Historia animalium* tr. A. L. Peck (Cambridge, 1979).

Callim. Hymn 2. Callimachus - *Hymn to Apollo*. Callimachus, *Hecale. Hymns. Epigrams* tr. D. L. Clayman (London 2022).

Callim. Hymn 3. Callimachus - *Hymn to Artemis*. Callimachus, *Hecale. Hymns. Epigrams* tr. D. L. Clayman (London 2022).

Diod. Sic. Diodorus Siculus - *Library of History*. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History. Volume II* tr. C. H. Oldfather (Cambridge, 1935).

Eur. Bacch. Euripides - *Bacchae*. Euripides, *Bacchae, Iphigenia at Aulis, Rhesus* tr. D. Kovacs (Cambridge, 2002).

Eur. Hipp. Euripides - *Hippolytus*. Euripides, *Children of Heracles, Hippolytus, Andromache, Hecuba* tr. D. Kovacs (Cambridge, 1995).

Eur. Phoen. Euripides - *The Phoenician Women*. Euripides, *Helen, Phoenician Women, Orestes.* tr. D. Kovacs (Cambridge, 1994).

Hes. Theog. Hesiod - *Theogony*. Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and days, Testimonia* tr. G. W. Most (Cambridge, 2018).

Hdt. Herodotus - *The Histories*. Herodotus, *The Histories* tr. A. De Sélincourt (Harmondsworth, 1954).

Hom Il. Homer - *The Iliad*. Homer *Iliad Books 1-12* tr. A. T. Murray (Cambridge, 2014).

Hom. Od. Homer - *The Odyssey*. Homer *The Odyssey Books 1-12* tr. A. T. Murray (Cambridge, 1995).

HH 27. Homeric Hymns - *Hymn 27 to Artemis*. *Homer, Homeric hymns, Homeric apocrypha, Lives of Homer* tr. M.L. West (Cambridge, 2003).

Lactant. Div. inst. Lactantius - *Divine Institutes*. Lactantius *The works of Lactantius, Volume 1.* tr. W. Fletcher, (Edinburgh, 1840).

Ov. Met. Ovid - *Metamorphoses*. Ovid *Metamorphoses Vol. 1.* tr. F. J. Miller (Cambridge, 1951).

Paus. Pausanias - *Description of Greece*. Pausanias *Pausanias Description of Greece Vol. IV* tr. W.H.S. Jones (Cambridge, 1965).

Philostr. VA. Philostratus - *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*. Philostratus *Apollonius of Tyana, Volume II: Life of Apollonius of Tyana, Books 5-8* tr. C.P. Jones (Cambridge, 2005).

Pind. Ol. Pindar - *Olympian Odes*. Pindar *Olympian Odes. Pythian Odes* tr. W.H. Race (Cambridge, 2014).

Plut. Lyc. Plutarch - *Life of Lycurgus*. Plutarch *Lives, Vol. I. Theseus and Romulus. Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola* tr. B. Perrin (Cambridge, 2014).

Plut. Quaest. Rom. Plutarch - *Roman Questions*. Plutarch *Moralia, Volume IV: Roman Questions. Greek Questions. Greek and Roman Parallel Stories. On the Fortune of the Romans. On the Fortune or the Virtue of Alexander. Were the Athenians More Famous in War or in Wisdom?* tr. F.C. Babbitt (Cambridge, 1936).

Porph. Abst. Porphyry - *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*. Porphyry *On Abstinence from Killing Animals* tr. G. Clark (London, 2000).

Porph. De antr. nymph. Porphyry - *On The Cave Of The Nymphs*. Porphyry *On The Cave Of The Nymphs* tr. R. Lamberton (New York, 1983).

Strab. Strabo – *Geography*. Strabo *The Geography of Strabo: In Eight Volumes. IV, [Books VIII-IX]* tr. H. L. Jones (Cambridge, 1988).

Xen. Const. Lac. Xenophon - *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians*. Xenophon *Scripta Minora* tr. E. C. Marchant (Cambridge, 2015).

Xen. Hell. Xenophon – *Hellenica*. Xenophon *Hellenica V. I. Books 1-4* tr. C. L. Brownson (Cambridge, 2014).

LIMC. *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (1981) Zürich.

Figures

Img.2.1: Seated figure from Çatal Höyük showing enthroned nude female flanked by large felines. 6th millennium B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museum_of_Anatolian_Civilizations_1320259_nevit.jpg accessed 08/01/25.

Img.2.2: Marble statue of Kybele shown enthroned with lion. Roman 1st-2nd century A.D. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/251202?&searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=kybele&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1 – accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.3: Queen of the Night plaque showing standing winged figure on the backs of paired lions, flanked by owls. From Babylon ca. 1792-1750 B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Museum_Queen_of_the_Night.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.4: Amulet showing Lamashtu with animal features, suckling a pig and a jackal. Lamashtu holds snakes and stands on the back of a donkey. Neo-Assyrian, ca. 800BC-550 B.C. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1925-0715-1 - accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.5: Tondo from Attic alabastron ca.520 B.C. showing gorgoneia with lion-like face, shown frontally. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Terracotta_alabastron_(perfume_vase)_MET_DP124844.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.6: Chalcedony scarab showing gorgon holding snakes. From Kerch, 5th century LIMC Vol.6.I p.180 fig.261.

Img.2.7: Bull-headed lyre of Ur showing Master of Animals figure (top panel) with bulls. ca. 2550–2450. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bull_Headed_Lyre_of_Ur.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.8: Master of Animals figure with horses from Ras Shamra-Ugarit ca.1300-1190 B.C. Crouwel (1991) p.66 fig.2.

Img.2.9: Winged figure with Daedalic hairstyle, reconstructed from fragments from Syme, Archaic period. Lebessi (2010) p.196 fig.19.2.

Img.2.10: Master of Animals figure, gold pendant from the Aegina treasure ca.1850-1550 B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aegina_treasure_03.jpg - accessed 08/01/25.

Img.2.11: Ivory pyxis lid showing a female figure between two goats that she feeds with bunches of grass. ca.1550-1150, Minet el Beida Tomb III in Ugarit, now in the Louvre. https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010136316# - accessed 08/01/2025.

Img.2.12: "Mother of Mountains" seal from Central Palace at Knossos, now in Heraklion Archaeological Museum, showing female figure on a mountain flanked by lions. A tripartite shrine to the left and male figure to the right. Evans (1930) p.463 fig.323.

Img.2.13: Faience "Snake goddess" Figures from Knossos ca.1700-1580, showing the pose and costume of both figures. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Θεές_των_Όφεων_6391.JPG - accessed 08/01/25.

Img.2.14 Protogeometric terracotta house or temple model with upraised arm figure inside. From Archanes. Prent (2009) p.236 fig.19.7.

Img.2.15: Minoan terracotta figures from LM III period, with upraised arms showing cut-out skirt to reveal feet. Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.516.

Img.2.16: Xeste 3 wall painting from Akrotiri ca.1600-1500, showing seated figure with griffin and monkey. Vlachopoulos (2008) p.498 fig.41.20.

Img.3.1: Kybele votive relief showing figure seated between lions, 2nd-3rd century A.D. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1882-1108-1 accessed 12/02/2025.

Img.3.2: Protoattic Amphora by the Polyphemus painter, showing gorgons with "cauldron" shaped heads, second quarter of 7th century, Eleusis. Markoe (1989) pl. 2.

Img.3.3: Vase fragment, showing row of inverted birds under funerary bier, Geometric period. Ahlberg (1971) Vol.2.

Img.3.4: Lebes painting of Aphrodite riding a swan with Eros (above), ca.350. LIMC Vol.II.2 p.91 Aphrodite 931.

Img. 4.1: “Necklace Swinger” figure from the Lustral Basin frieze, Xeste 3, Thera. Rehak (2004) p.88.

Img. 4.2: Wounded woman” figure from the Lustral Basin frieze, Xeste 3, Thera. Rehak (2004) p.88.

Img. 4.3: Maenad from white-ground kylix from Athens dated ca.480-70. Dillon (2002) p.140.

Img. 4.4: Relief fragment from Tenos showing vine-like headdress. Simantoni-Bournia, E. (2017) p.32.

Img.4.5: Sealstone with goddess holding sacred symbol (snake frame) between griffins, Knossos, Neopalatial period (1700-1450 BC) Sakellarakis (1984) p.85.

Img.4.6: Etruscan headwear from tomb art. Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.32.

Img. 4.7: Clazomenian sarcophagus showing figures with ponytail and cap. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_Antikensammlung_Berlin_30030#/media/File:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_Antikensammlung_Berlin_30030_06.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

Img. 4.8: Clazomenian sarcophagus showing figure with ponytail and cap. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Klazomenian_sarcophagi_in_the_British_Museum#/media/File:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_-_Albertinum_Group_-_battle_scenes_-_chariot_race_-_horsemen_-_animals_-_London_BM_1896-0615-1_-_05.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

Img. 4.9: Geometric krater with prothesis scene utilizing black and white check cloth. Attic Greek ca. 750–735. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/248904 accessed 12/02/2025.

Img. 4.10: Athena (right) wearing an aegis with gorgoneion. Red-figured cup by Douris, c. 480-470 BC. From Cerveteri. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Jason,_Dragon,_and_Athena_(Douris)#/media/File:Douris_cup_Jason_Vatican_16545.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

Img.4.11: "Goddess with upraised arms" figures from Karphi, showing skirt shaped to display feet. LM IIIb-c Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.516 fig.1.

Img. 4.12: Gold and copper alloy spiral-shaped earrings, Cyprus, 5th century. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/242779 accessed 12/02/2025.

Img 5.1: Relief of winged figure shown with long feathers extending across wings (indicated in red). Original image in Dexter (2011) p.193.

Img 5.2: Detail of winged figure showing upper part of wing (shown in blue) unfeathered with long feathers on lower wing (shown in red). Original image: Wace (1929) p.261.

Img.5.3: Bronze shield from Olympia showing short feathers/scales on upper wing (blue) and longer feathers on the lower wing (red). Original image: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Escudo_olimpia.jpg accessed 02/01/25.

Img. 5.4: Plate from Rhodes showing *Potnia Theron* figure with wings which have two rows of small feathers. Original image: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1860-0404-2 accessed 02/02/25.

Img.5.5: Gorgon antefix from Sicily, ca.620-10 showing triple row of long feathers (shown in red, blue and green) on wings. Original image: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgoneion_Syrakus.jpg accessed 02/01/25.

Img. 5.6: Plate showing winged figure with pointed upper edge of wings (shown in red). Original image: LIMC Vol.VIII.2 p.678 Potnia 17.

Img. 5.7: Red figure cup showing maenads with hands covered by their sleeves. https://www.kimbellart.org/collection-object/red-figure-cup-showing-death-pentheus-exterior-and-maenad-interior accessed 04/01/25.

Img.5.8: Cult figure of Ephesian Artemis, showing skirt carved with rows of animals. 2nd century A.D. Rogers (2012) Pl.1.

Img.5.9: Boeotian terracotta figure with elongated profile. https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=465439&partId=1&searchText=boeotian+terracotta&page=1 accessed 05/01/2025.

Img. 5.10: Terracotta figure from Boeotia with stylised body. https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=462886&partId=1&searchText=boeotian+terracotta&page=1 accessed 05/01/25.

Img.5.11: Eurasian Collared Dove showing the shape of the tail feathers. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian_Collared_Dove,_Chittagong,_Bangladesh_%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%A0%E0%A7%80_%E0%A6%98%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%98%E0%A7%81.jpg accessed 05/01/2025.

Img.5.12: Mallard duck displaying wing shape with upcurving tips while flying. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erpel_Startend_P1280086-2-PSD.jpg accessed 05/01/25.

Img.5.13 Relief pithos ca. 675-650 showing "hippogorgon" with distinctive face style. Hurwit, J.M. (2006) p.121-36. P.124.

Img.6.1: Lion gate, Mycenae, c.1250 B.C. showing lions posed either side of pillar. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lions_Gate_detail.JPG accessed 07/02/25.

Img.6.2: Red-figure kylix krater ca.470. Thracian women with tattoos including dotted sun motifs. Mayor (2014) p.100.

Img. 7.1: Terracotta time depicting seated figure of Artemis with small deer, from Brauron. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis_and_doe,_painted_relief_on_terracotta_tile,_late_6th_century_BC,_AM_Brauron,_Bram25.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

Img. 7.2: Metope from Thermon showing gorgoneia with "beard". Payne (1931) p.80.

Img.8.1: Marble statue of Kybele as Potnia Theron from Latium. 3rd century AD. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cybèle_Potnia_theron.jpg accessed 28/02/2025.

Img.8.2: Hawkwind “Space Ritual” L.P. Cover by Barney Bubbles from the Nik Turner Archive. Showing iconographic parallels to the Potnia Theron figure in the placement of the central figure and animal attributes. Turner & Thompson (2016) p.286.

Tables

Table 2.1: Comparison of covered and uncovered feet of *Potnia Theron* figures.

Table 3.1: Types of animals within the IC.

Table 3.2: Types of fantastic animals within the IC.

Table 3.3: Types of ruminants within the IC.

Table 3.4: Other animal types within the IC.

Table 3.5: Types of birds controlled by the *Potnia Theron* within the IC.

Table 3.6: Types of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures which hold multiple animals in the IC.

Table 4.1: Types of headwear worn by *Potnia Theron* figures.

Table 4.2: Types of headband worn by *Potniai Theron* divided by how they are worn on the head.

Table 4.3: Types of long hair worn by Potnia Theron figures in the IC.

Table 4.4 Number of times each dress type is found worn by a *Potnia Theron* figure within the IC.

Table 4.5: Number of times each configuration of wings and dress occurs on *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 5.1: Sub-groups of winged *Potniai Theron* in the IC, divided by wing type.

Table 5.2: Positioning of wings on *Potnia Theron* figures

Table 5.3: Covering of feet and legs of *Potnia Theron* figures.

Table 5.4: Position of snakes on *Potnia Theron* figures.

Table 6.1: Number of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 6.2: Symmetry of animals held or controlled in *Potnia Theron* images based on number of animals.

Table 6.3: Symmetry of animals held or controlled in *Potnia Theron* images based on animal type.

Table 6.4: Animals shown in symmetrical *Potnia Theron* images within this study.

Table 6.5: Animals shown flanking the *Potnia Theron* in symmetrical images.

Table 6.6: Animals shown in *Potnia Theron* images with one animal.

Table 6.7: Distribution of active and passive control examples within the IC.

Table 6.8: Ways that animals are held in *Potnia Theron* scenes.

Table 6.9: Positioning of the face and body of *Potnia Theron* figures within this study.

Table 6.10: Arm positions of *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 6.11: Leg positions of *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 6.12: Foot positions of *Potnia Theron* figures of the IC.

Table 6.13: Distribution of moving, still and seated *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 6.14: Frame types seen in *Potnia Theron* examples from the IC.

Table 6.15: Fill motifs from *Potnia Theron* images.

1: Introduction

1.1 Scope

The *Potnia Theron* or "Mistress of Animals" (see **Section 1.2.2**) is commonly defined as a central female figure which holds or controls animals.[1] As there is little ancient literary evidence referring to the *Potnia Theron* motif, most of our information must come from visual culture. To make the most of this evidence, the iconography of the *Potnia Theron* motif must be decoded and interpreted. A better understanding of this iconography aims not only to better define the *Potnia Theron* motif, but also to build on existing studies in Early Greek iconography. In turn, seeking to expand our overall understanding of Geometric and Archaic Greek art and its purpose in the Greek world. Many sources specify the *Potnia Theron* is a deity, a winged figure or suggest she an aspect of Artemis.[2] However, existing scholarship is not consistent in any of these definitions and as will be demonstrated, the actual *Potnia Theron* images do not always meet these vague definitions. There is also a noticeable tendency for over-reliance on the connection of the *Potnia Theron* and Artemis in existing studies. Furthermore, the tendency to overemphasise the connection between *Potnia Theron* and Artemis has led to insufficient attention to iconography as a source.

While many previous studies have focussed on attempting to define the origin or identity of the *Potnia Theron,* conclusions have often been unclear and even contradictory.[3] One example of this is the frequent references to the *Potnia Theron* as a figure associated with "fertility" (see **Section 7.5.1**). The lack of detail and context with which this term is used leads to an incomplete and ultimately inaccurate assessment of the motif. This study gives an in-depth analysis of the iconography and form of the *Potnia Theron.* Exploring the ideas of role and identity separately to develop a more solid definition of the motif, gain a fuller understanding of the image and provide new insights into the variation and nuance of this figure type.

The Image of the *Potnia Theron* displays significant variation in form, iconography, and function. The popularity of the motif can be seen in the variety of media in which it is depicted: vase painting, statuary, figurines, and architectural sculpture. This study proposes that the *Potnia Theron* is a genre of figure rather than a specific identity with a fixed role.

---

[1] Nilsson (1923) p.147; Starr (1961) p.177; Marquardt (1981) p.254; Beazley (1986) p.33; Bevan (1989) p.165; Barclay (2001) p.373; Cohen (2006) p.217; Larson (2007) p.106; Guggisberg (2010) p.223; Langdon (2010) p.6; Simons (2014) p.4; Budin (2016) p.15; Zolotnikova (2017) p.14.

[2] Deity: Nilsson (1923) p.147; Nilsson (1950) p.399; Starr (1961) p.177; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; Vernant (1991a) p.111; Larson (2002) p.189; Budin (2004) p.264; Nosch (2009) p.23; Ogden (2013) p.8; Simons (2014) p.7; Angell (2017) p.77; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.32; Zolotnikova (2017) p.8. Wings: **Section 5.1.** Artemis: Section **7.1.1.**

[3] Origins: Kopaka (2000); Thomas & Wedde (2000); Barclay (2001); Guggisberg (2010). See also **Chapter 2.** Identity: Studniczka (1890); Thompson (1909); Thomas & Wedde (2000); Budin (2016). See also **Section 7.1.**

While there are distinct variations in different *Potnia Theron* figures, they all share specific unifying features (see **Section 1.4** below), allowing us to define this image genre.

This study of the *Potnia Theron* will cover examples from across the Greek world rather than exclusively examples from Greece itself. By including material from all areas of the Greek world, we can observe the similarities and variations in the *Potnia Theron* motif as she appears in different locations.

1.2 Terminology

Given the variety of figures and breadth of scope of this thesis, standard terminology has been developed and is used throughout. As this study focusses on iconography and visual evidence, it is supported by an Image Catalogue (hereafter IC). The IC contains images and descriptions of 263 *Potnia Theron* figures, grouped by medium. The examples from the IC originate from across the Greek world and date from the 9th to the end of the 6th century. Examples falling outside of this scope are addressed in **Chapter 2**, regarding their influence on the Greek *Potnia Theron*.

For all images, "Fig" refers to figures in the IC. In contrast, "Img" refers to images included in the main body of the thesis. All dates within this study are B.C. unless specified.

The following sections will cover the *Potnia Theron* as well as some of the alternative terms used for this motif in scholarship and why these are used. Specific names or identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* are discussed in detail in **Section 7.1**. The following terms are also defined here for clarity:

Identity: a specific name or persona which can be attached to a figure within an image. In the case of the *Potnia Theron,* these are usually goddesses or women from mythology. **Section 7.1** discusses many of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron*.

Role: the function of a figure within an image. This may be indicated by attributes of the figure, indicated elsewhere in the iconography of the image, or demonstrated by an action performed by a figure. For example, the role of the *Potnia Theron* as an apotropaic figure is usually indicated by her iconography (see **Section 7.4**) while the *Potnia Theron* as a hunting figure appears as a hunter herself (See **Section 7.2.1**)

Monstrosity: monstrous figures take on an appearance intended to startle or frighten the viewer. Monstrous figures are sometimes closely linked with the apotropaic role of the *Potnia Theron* and often incorporates elements of hybridity (see below).

Hybridity: Hybrid figures are those which have animal-like features, as opposed to appearing fully human. In the case of the *Potnia Theron*, the most common form of hybridity is a female figure with bird-like wings. Hybrid figures are not necessarily monstrous (see above). However, this is often the case with figures such as gorgons (see **Section 5.5**).

1.2.1 *Potnia Theron*

The *Potnia Theron* is a motif in Greek art, popular in the Archaic period, and a Homeric term for Artemis.[4] The origins of the name *Potnia Theron* will be looked at in greater detail in **Section 1.3** below. Within this study, the term refers to the motif of female figures holding or controlling animals (see **Chapter 6** for how animals are held or controlled).[5] Many of these figures also share other aspects of their appearance, such as wings (see **Section 5.1**) or holding animals with upraised or outstretched arms (see **Section 6.3.1**). Although, as this study will demonstrate, there is significant variation within the motif (see **Section 1.4**). The *Potnia Theron* motif represents a range of identities – including goddesses, mythological figures such as Kirke and monstrous figures such as gorgons.[6] The identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif are explored further in **Chapter 7**.

The *Potnia Theron* is sometimes referred to as a deity or goddess.[7] Others have drawn parallels to other figures, such as gorgons, with strong similarities to the *Potnia Theron*.[8] However, by using the term "*Potnia Theron*" to refer to a motif rather than an identity, a more cohesive genre of figures can be created, and their iconography and functions can be better understood when taken as a collective. This approach provides a more detailed view what various elements (her attributes, pose, clothing, and context) of the *Potnia Theron* motif reveal. Understanding aspects of the motif without attempting to make them fit preconceived ideas of how they should relate to specific identity, we see both the variety within the motif and a more accurate assessment of her role and function.

1.2.2 Mistress of Animals

The term "Mistress of Animals" is often used interchangeably with *Potnia Theron* as it carries roughly the same meaning.[9] Other variations include "Lady of the Beasts" or "Lady of the Wild Things".[10] In this study, the term "Mistress of Animals" is used to refer to one

---

[4] *Potnia Theron* in the Archaic period: Starr (1961) p.285-6; Burkert (1985) p.171; Beazley (1986) p.33; Bevan (1989) p.168; Marinatos (2000) p.71; Budin (2016) p.17; Angell (2017) p.92; Mazet (2017) p.17; Simons (2014) p.5.

[5] *Potnia Theron* as a motif: Bevan (1989) p.168; Cook (1997) p.73; Blakolmer (2016) p.66; Angell (2017) p.91.

[6] Roles of *Potnia Theron* see **Chapter 7**.
Potnia Theron as gorgon see n.8.
Potnia Theron as Kirke: Lawler (1947) p.95; Aston (2011) p.303.

[7] Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.33.

[8] Gorgon-headed *Potnia Theron*: Harrison (1908) p.194; Burkert (1985) p.149; Paspalas (2013) p.92; Budin (2016) p.17; Mazet (2017) p.20.
Gorgons as *Potnia Theron*: Hersom (1952) p.277; Goldberg (1982) p.203; Spier (1988) p.265; Kopaka (2000) p.20; Kolia (2014) p.435.
Gorgons associated with *Potnia Theron*: Howe (1954) p.214; Vernant (1991a) p.115; Childs (2003) p.64; Guggisberg (2010) p.224; Angell (2017) p.66,81.

[9] Examples of "Mistress of Animals" as translation or equivalent of *Potnia Theron*: Harrison (1908)p.194; Nilsson (1950) p.28; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; Burkert (1985) p.171; Vernant (1991a) p.115; Cook (1997) p.72; Marinatos (2000) p.95; Dillon (2002) p.54; Budin (2004) p.235; Prent (2005) p.374; Rehak (2007)p.208; Fischer-Hansen & Poulsen (2009) p.11; Hopman (2012) p.105-6; Waugh (2012) p.2; Paspalas (2013) p.69; Dubcová (2015) p.221; Zolotnikova (2017) p.14; Mazet (2019) p.136.

[10] Lady of the Wild Things: Harrison (1908) p.264.
Mistress of the Wild Animals: Hard (2004) p.187; Rigoglioso (2009) p.84; Rogers (2012) p.182; Budin (2016) p.14.

role of the *Potnia Theron* (see **Chapter 7.2**) and images of female figures holding animals which come from outside the Greek world (see **Chapter 2**). As the term "Mistress of Animals" is often undifferentiated from "*Potnia Theron*", some sources may use either of these terms or one of the many alternatives in the original text. Where a distinction between the terms is required, this will be indicated in the footnotes.

The term "Mistress of Animals" also parallels "Master of Animals", which appears more frequently as a motif in art of the Near East. The possible influence of these figures on the *Potnia Theron* and "Master of Animals" figures contemporary to images in this study are discussed in **Chapter 2.2.3.**

As discussed in the following section, "Mistress of Animals" and other similar terms each convey some of the character of the *Potnia Theron*. The terms "Lady of the Beasts" and "Lady of the Wild Things" better reflect *theron* (see **Section 1.3**). However, for most discussions, "Mistress of Animals" is sufficient to identify the motif or role.

1.2.3 Alternative terms

In some earlier modern scholarship, alternate terms are used to describe the motif referred to in this study as the *Potnia Theron*. They are covered briefly here to acknowledge why they are not used within this study.

The first of these is "The Asiatic or Winged Artemis".[11] This term would prove confusing and incorrect for this study as many of the examples within the IC do not fall within the parameters of this term. While wings are often mentioned as a feature of the *Potnia Theron,* as **Chapter 5.1** will discuss, many *Potniai Theron* are not winged, so this descriptor is not helpful. Similarly, while the identity of Artemis is closely related to the *Potnia Theron* motif, as discussed in **Chapter 7.2**, many other identities are also represented by the image and for whom "Artemis" would be a misidentification. The "Asiatic" title assumes that Asia Minor and Near Eastern art influenced these figures and does not acknowledge any other influence on the motif.[12] As discussed in **Chapter 2**, while parallels are found in Near Eastern art, this is unlikely to be the sole influence for the *Potnia Theron* as she appears within this study. The term "Asiatic" is also outdated and inaccurate – conflating a range of distinct cultures.

Mistress of Wild Beasts: Starr (1961) p.177; Angell (2017) p.66.
Mistress of Wild Nature: Hjerrild (2009) p.42.
Ruler of animals: Persson (1942) p.141.
Lady of Animals: Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.2.
Queen of Wild Beasts: Beazley (1986) p.33.
Mistress of Beasts of Prey: Kopaka (2000).

[11] References to this term: Thompson (1909) p.287; Levi (1945a) p.31.
"Winged Artemis": Al (1944) p.214; Turner (1998) p.70.
"Asiatic Artemis" Walters (1905) p.56.

[12] Al (1944) p.214.

Some studies also use the more specific term "Persian Artemis". However, this is no more accurate or appropriate for the motif.[13] As mentioned above, it does not acknowledge any other influences on the *Potnia Theron* motif and is inaccurate and outdated. As mentioned in **Section 1.5** below, one of the issues in studying the *Potnia Theron* is that many sources are outdated. This study aims to address many of the misconceptions and obsolete scholarship focussing on the *Potnia Theron*.

1.3 Name

The term *Potnia Theron* (Πότνια Θηρῶν) originates in Homer (Il. 21.470), where it is specifically an epithet of Artemis.[14] It is important to note that this mention in Homer does not describe Artemis in a way which corresponds to the *Potnia Theron* motif. This Homeric usage may have contributed to the close identification between Artemis and the *Potnia Theron* motif.[15]

The title of "*Potnia"* comes from the Linear B title of PO-TI-NI-JA, often translated as "Lady" or "Mistress".[16] *Potnia* appears to have been used in the Aegean Bronze Age for goddesses, priestesses, queens, or possibly combinations thereof.[17] The shared usage of the term in this period also suggests an authority extending across both the religious and political spheres.[18] The variation in use of the term also raises the question of whether they represent a single goddess with many aspects or a range of goddesses (see **Section 7.2**).[19] While the *Potnia Theron,* as she appears in this study, does not share all these roles, many of her forms are dressed to reflect women of high status (see **Chapter 4** for clothing and dress of the *Potnia Theron*). Within the IC, 38 examples wear a *polos,* headwear reflective of status and possibly divinity (see **Section 4.2.1**).[20]

---

[13] "Persian Artemis": Rose (1929) p.401; Gordon (1932) p.180; Al (1944) p.214; Nilsson (1950) p.28; Cook (1894) p.111.
[14] Simons (2014) p.4.
[15] Artemis described as *Potnia Theron*: Levi (1945a) p.31; Howe (1954) p.214; Coldstream (1977)p.4; Burkert (1985) p.149; Beazley (1986) p.33; Bevan (1987) p.18; Childs (2003) p.64; Cohen (2006) p.217; Rehak (2007) p.208; Langdon (2008) p.111; Topper (2010) p.110; Barringer (2014) p.165; Simons (2014) p.4; Budin (2016) p.1; Angell (2017) p.2-3; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.35; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.527.
Artemis as "Mistress of Animals" and similar: Harrison (1908) p.266; Lawler (1947) p.89; Schefold (1966) p.12; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; Marinatos (2000) p.64; Wilk (2000) p.99; Nosch (2009) p.24; Neer (2012) p.109; Mazet (2017) p.17; Zolotnikova (2017) p.8; Flognfeldt (2019) p.67.
Artemis descended from *Potnia Theron* / "Mistress of Animals": Dietrich (1969) p.268; Bevan (1989) p.167; West (1990) p.76; Laffineur (2001) p.387; Hard (2004) p.187; Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.11; Larson (2007) p.101; Fischer-Hansen & Poulsen (2009) p.11; Langdon (2010) p.11.
[16] Dietrich (1974) p.142; Burkert (1985) p.54; Morford & Lenardon (1985) p.20; West (1990) p.55; Rehak & Younger (1998) p.165; Pomeroy (1999) p.33; Kopaka (2000) p.15; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.3; Neer (2012) p.60; Simons (2014) p.16; Budin (2016) p.11.
[17] Nikolaïdou (2002) p.41.
[18] Nikolaïdou (2002) p.42.
[19] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.12; Budin (2004) p.236; Blakolmer (2009) p.38; Lupack (2010) p.271.
[20] Hoffmann (1964) p.185; Marinatos (2000) p.82; Budin (2016) p.21; Mazet (2017) p.22.

The term is attested at major Linear B palatial archives across the Aegean region, suggesting it was not specific to a single site.[21] The term is often modified in forms such as *Potnia Siton/Sito Potnia* (grain *Potnia*)*, Potnia Tauron* (*Potnia* of Bulls)*, Potnia Hippon/Hippeia/Potnia Iqueja* (*Potnia* of Horses)*, Potnia Mater* (mother *Potnia*)*, Atana Potnia* (*Potnia* of Atana)*, Potnia Asiwiya* (*Potnia* of Asia).[22] *Potnia* alone (without *Theron*) appears several times elsewhere in Homer, where the term is attached to the goddesses Hera, Leto, Artemis, Athena, Hestia, Aphrodite, Demeter, Persephone, and Enyo.[23] The name "*Potnia"* alone is also used for Hekate in Euripides.[24]

The term "*theron"* derives from the Greek θήρ, which denotes wild animals such as lions but is also used for fantastic animals such as sphinxes.[25] This is reflected in the animals held or controlled by the *Potniai Theron* seen within the IC, who mainly hold or control wild animals such lions, other large felines, water birds, snakes, or deer (see **Chapter 3** for full details of animal attributes). Here, "wild" does not necessarily mean "dangerous", for example, the water birds, which sometimes appear lifeless (e.g., a plate from Rhodes ca.600 **Fig. 200**). It also extends to hybridised creatures such as the transformed pig-men seen in images of Kirke.[26] Hybridity is also an element of some *Potniai Theron* figures, this is an aspect of the motif which has so far received little attention in scholarship. The relevant examples are discussed in further detail in **Chapter 5**. This begins to demonstrate to us that the *Potnia Theron* is not a single figure with a fixed role, but rather a motif with multiple coherent iconographic and functional themes. These themes are explored in greater depth throughout the study. **Chapter 2** looks at examples earlier than the scope of this study, which show significant iconographic parallels. **Chapters 4 and 6** focus on the costume, pose and appearance of the *Potnia Theron,* demonstrating some of the "themes" within the type. **Chapter 7** looks at the roles performed by the *Potnia Theron.* These roles are examined in terms of the extent to which she can be identified as a specific figure as well as functions such as specific types of protection, her role as a liminal figure and her place in cult activity. For the most part, *Potniai Theron* are apotropaic in their function (see **Section 7.4**). In some

[21] Simons (2014) p.7.
[22] *Potnia Siton*: Laffineur (2001) p.389; Cosmopoulos (2014) p.417.
Sito Potnia: Kopaka (2000) p.18; Budin (2004) p.249.
Potnia Tauron: Levi (1945) p.277.
Potnia Hippon: Gadolou (2011) p.259.
Potnia Hippeia: Nosch (2009) p.22; Waugh (2012) p.10.
Potnia Iqueja: Burkert (1985) p.55; Kopaka (2000) p.18; Budin (2004) p.236; Waugh (2012) p.6.
Potnia Mater: Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.4.
Atana Potnia: Sourvinou-Inwood (1990) p.219; Guthrie (1975) p.881; Rehak & Younger (1998) p.165; Kopaka (2000) p.18; Budin (2004) p.235.
Potnia Asiwiya: Budin (2016) p.21.
[23] Identification with Artemis: n.12.
Identification with Hera: Kopaka (2000) p.18; Walker (2004) p.147; Antonaccio (2006) p.383.
Demeter: Guthrie (1975) p.881.
Leto: Bevan (1989) p.166.
Hebe, Artemis, Athena, and Enyo: Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.4.
Hestia, Aphrodite, Demeter, Persephone, and Athena: Kopaka (2000) p.18.
[24] Eur. *Phoen.* 109–110; Manoledakis (2012) p.294.
[25] Liddell (1940) p.799.
[26] Kopaka (2000) p.21.

examples, this is connected to the identity or medium the *Potnia Theron* is depicted in; for example, those *Potniai Theron* shown as gorgons or those in the form of antefixes are inherently more likely to be understood as apotropaic items due to the apotropaic function of the gorgon face or the antefix.[27]

The name "Artemis" is also present in Linear B, as A-TE-MI-TO, suggesting that "Artemis" may have been known alongside "*Potnia Theron"* in some areas.[28] This suggestion has been disputed elsewhere due to discrepancies between the dialect and find location.[29] It is outside the scope of this study to discuss the origins of the name "Artemis"; however, the fact A-TE-MI-TO is listed with other deities seems to suggest the likelihood it is the name of a divine figure, if not the origin of Artemis.[30] The question has also been raised if the *Potnia Theron* motif was initially intended to represent Artemis. I believe that the approach in this study demonstrates that while the *Potnia Theron* certainly develops close connections with the identity of Artemis, this is not exclusive.

In modern scholarship, the term *Potnia Theron* has become synonymous with Artemis.[31] Several sources conflate Artemis with the *Potnia Theron* with no differentiation, while others are more cautious, suggesting that Artemis is a figure commonly represented by the *Potnia Theron* or that this is one of her roles.[32] A similar suggestion is that Artemis is a later development who took on roles or aspects of the earlier *Potnia Theron.*[33] The *Potnia Theron* is also called an "aspect" of Artemis.[34] However, as we move into the Archaic period, we see examples of the *Potnia Theron* depicted alongside Artemis, such as the krater from Chiusi, ca.570, known as the "François Vase" (**Fig. 136** and **137**). In this example, the *Potnia Theron* appears in two variations on the handles – holding two large felines on one side and a large feline and a deer on the other. Meanwhile, Artemis is shown and labelled on the main body of the vase. This inconsistency has led to the conclusion that the *Potniai Theron* depicted on the handles cannot be identified with Artemis. Because these figures are not labelled and are different in appearance, so it seems logical that they are intended to represent different identities.

[27] Gorgon as apotropaic symbol: Harrison (1908) p.193; Wace (1929) p.225; Howe (1954) p.215; Belson (1981) p.31; Burkert (1985) p.104; Segal (1986) p.178; Wilk (2000) p.42; Langdon (2008) p.110; Dexter (2010) p.29; Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1; Ogden (2013) p.93; Kolia (2014) p.435; Angell (2017) p.82.
Antefix as apotropaic location: Faraone (1992) p.38; Ogden (2008) p.37; Kolia (2014) p.435.
[28] PY167 and PY Un 219. Ventris & Chadwick (1973) p.535.
[29] Sourvinou (1970) p.43.
[30] Nosch (2009) p.23-24
[31] Simons (2014) p.23; Angell (2017) p.11.
[32] Artemis represented by *Potnia Theron:* Angell (2017) p.64; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.35.
Role or aspect of Artemis: Cook (1894) p.111; Lawler (1947) p.97; Rehak (2007) p.208; Barringer (2014) p.165.
[33] Smardz (1979) p.22; Marinatos (2000) p.95; Budin (2004) p.264; Lewis & Llewellyn-Jones (2018) p.527.
[34] Prent (2005) p.373; Neer (2012) p.109.

1.4 Definition

It was in the 19th century A.D when the term *Potnia Theron* first became associated with the motif of female figures (usually divine) holding animals.[35] Studniczka was the first to use this Homeric term to describe goddesses, usually winged, which held animals – thus defining the motif. [36] This association has continued throughout modern scholarship, crediting Studniczka with using the Homeric term *Potnia Theron* for the Archaic motif in question.[37] While the term appears in Homer, it is not supported by a description which would match the motif of a female figure holding or controlling animals. There is also nothing to suggest that the term *Potnia Theron* related to this motif in the ancient world.[38] While some studies suggest the *Potnia Theron* is a deity in her own right whose functions were later taken over by Olympian goddesses, the following chapters will demonstrate it is more likely that the *Potnia Theron* is a motif which was used to represent a range of figures.[39]

For this study, the *Potnia Theron* is defined as the motif of a female figure which holds or controls animals. This definition is in keeping with previous scholarship, which often mentions the presence of animals as a defining feature of a *Potnia Theron*.[40] The control of these animals is also often emphasised. [41]As outlined in **Chapter 6,** this control can be physically holding animals or implied control, which may suggest supernatural control over animals.

Within the IC, seven of the *Potniai Theron* control vines, flowers, or other vegetation in addition to (e.g., Relief amphora from Boeotia, ca.675. **Fig. 38**), or in place of, animals (E.g., jewellery plaques from Rhodes, ca.700-600. **Figs. 117-118**). Kopaka suggests that there is little connection between the *Potnia Theron* and plants; however, I have found evidence that there is some connection.[42] Walker mentions a *Potnia Theron kai Phyton* ("Mistress of Wild Animals and Plants"), but I have not found other references to this variation in ancient or modern sources.[43] However, examples holding vegetation are included as they not only closely resemble the appearance of other *Potnia Theron* images but also because the remit of the *Potnia Theron* appears to extend to the wilderness more generally (see **Section 3.4** for *Potniai Theron* holding vegetal attributes).[44] The more general control over the wild may

[35] Beazley (1986) p.33; Barclay (2001) p.373.
[36] Studniczka (1890) p.154; Dietrich (1967) p.408; Mazet (2017) p.17; Budin (2016) p.15-16.
[37] Nilsson (1950) p.506; Christou (1968) p.175; Burkert (1985) p.52.
[38] Budin (2016) p.15.
[39] Olympian deities taking on aspects of *Potnia Theron*: Bevan (1989) p.167; Prent (2005) p.373.
[40] Thompson (1909) p.296; Frothingham (1911) p.357; Nilsson (1949) p.28; Marquardt (1981) p.254; Burkert (1985) p.171; Sourvinou-Inwood (1998) p.83; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.9; Larson (2002) p.83; Rehak (2004) p.92; Waugh (2012) p.10; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.35.
[41] Kantor (1947) p.101; Dillon (2002) p.54; Aston (2011) p.304; Budin (2016) p.15; Zolotnikova (2017) p.14.
[42] Kopaka (2000) p.20.
[43] Walker (2004) p.30.
[44] Control of the wild: Burkert (1985) p.171; Prent (2005) p.377; Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.11; Mazet (2017) p.19. *Potnia Theron* holding plant motifs: Kantor (1947) p.101; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.10.

also be an indication of some of the origins of the *Potnia Theron* – connecting her to earlier Minoan figures.[45]

Although the standard *Potnia Theron* is a standing female figure, there is some variation and other anthropomorphic forms are sometimes used as the centre of the image.[46] The most common are gorgons (see **Chapter 5.5**). However, bee-bodied figures (e.g., jewellery plaques from Rhodes, ca.700-600. **Figs. 117-118**) or sphinxes (e.g., Alabastron from Corinth, ca.630-615. **Fig. 17**) also appear as the central figure of the motif.[47]

1.5 Questions and aims

One of the central aims of this study is to clarify much of the vague terminology used in previous research regarding the *Potnia Theron*.[48] As mentioned above, there has been a tendency to write about the motif as though all examples depict the goddess Artemis. By disentangling the *Potnia Theron* motif from the identity of Artemis, we can undertake an unbiased assessment of the iconography and contexts of *Potnia Theron* images. Although the term *Potnia Theron* is certainly linked to Artemis in Homer, and many examples can be identified this way, a closer investigation reveals a more complex picture.

There also appear to be many misconceptions in scholarship regarding the *Potnia Theron,* which can be addressed by closer study of the motif. For example, the suggestion that the *Potnia Theron* is never shown alongside women, while Artemis can be shown in this way.[49] However, multiple examples conforming to the *Potnia Theron* motif appear with other women.[50] A lead figurine from Sparta, ca.620-560 (**Fig. 152**), shows the *Potnia Theron* accompanied by two female attendants. There are also four *perirrhanteria* (ritual water basins) in the IC (**Figs. 177-180**) where the *Potnia Theron* appears multiple times supporting the basin. A further example appears on a relief amphora from Boeotia, ca.675 (**Fig. 38**), showing a larger central figure flanked by smaller figures (likely female) and large felines; such examples demonstrating that not only can the *Potnia Theron* appear alongside women but that there are different contexts in which this paradigm can exist.

This study aims to provide usable definitions for the *Potnia Theron* motif. These definitions build on previous research, demonstrate visible trends and variations within the motif and give a more accurate definition of the *Potnia Theron,* which can be built upon in future studies. One example is the number of sources that state or imply that the *Potnia Theron* is always winged (see **Section 5.1**).[51]

There has also been a tendency in scholarship to over-simplify the origins of the *Potnia Theron,* stating her origins are “Eastern” or “from the Near East” without sufficient

[45] Coldstream (1977) p.4.
[46] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.9.
[47] Bee-bodied figures: Barnett (1948) p.21.
[48] Lack of definition for *Potnia Theron*: Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.5.
[49] Marinatos (2000) p.93; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.35.
[50] Coldstream (1977) p.14; A Minoan example is also highlighted in Rehak (2007) p.208.
[51] Chittenden (1947) p.101.

exploration or explanation of what this means.[52] While it is outside the scope of this study to provide an in-depth analysis of the origins of the *Potnia Theron*, **Chapter 1** demonstrates some examples from the Near East as well as the Aegean and Etruscan examples which bear strong iconographic similarities to the *Potnia Theron*.

Much of the problem when looking at the *Potnia Theron* comes from the fact that many modern sources directly focusing on the motif are now outdated, and even more recent studies often refer back to much older 19th century AD authors such as Studniczka.[53] The lack of clarity in modern sources has led to over-simplification of the motif and the tendency to view the image through outdated terms such as those in **Section 1.2.3** above. While the following study will build on previous scholarship, it also highlights the lack of in-depth research into the topic in recent years, and the issues presented by viewing the motif through the lens of older studies. While more recent works such as Simons have also looked in some detail at the *Potnia Theron,* this study takes a significantly different and more detailed approach – focussing on new information from the iconography of the motif, exploring the various roles and identities portrayed by the *Potnia Theron* and the scope of her influence across the Greek world up to the 6th century.[54]

One of the questions posed by this study is the range of functions performed by the *Potnia Theron*. While frequently identified as an apotropaic figure, less has been said regarding who may have called on her protection and in what instances.[55] In other sources, the aspect of the *Potnia Theron* as a "fertility goddess" is emphasised; however, this function is rarely elaborated to suggest if this role regards human fertility or that of animals or vegetation.[56] This study aims to explain how and to what extent these functions are visible in the iconography of the *Potnia Theron.* In addition, it will explore the extent to which identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif may have influenced previous assumptions regarding her role and functions.

It has also been noted that, like Artemis, the *Potnia Theron* appears to have a dichotomy in her function between a fertility figure and *kourotrophos* on one hand, and hunter and chthonic figure on the other.[57] With so many varied roles, this raises the question of whether the *Potnia Theron* is one figure or many. To answer this, I separated the motif of the *Potnia Theron* and examined each element of iconography and context to understand what elements of function and identity can be discerned in each image. In addition, the data regarding elements of figures within the IC (e.g., attributes, clothing,

[52] Examples: Burkert (1985) p.171.
[53] Studniczka (1890). Referenced in: Dietrich (1967) p.408; Burkert (1985) p.80; Barclay (2001) p.373; Schuhmann (2009) p.4; Budin (2016) p.14.
[54] Simons (2014).
[55] Marinatos (2000) p.17; Langdon (2010) p.6; Angell (2017) p.38.
[56] Christou (1968) p.119.
[57] *Potnia Theron* as hunter and protector: Christou (1968) p.58; Bevan (1987) p.18.
Chthonic and fertility goddess: Morford & Lenardon (1985) p.20; Mazet (2017) p.18.
Fertility goddess who protects the dead: Coldstream (1977) p.99; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.32.
Also listed as having funerary association: Paspalas (2013) p.78.

pose) are examined to identify any trends to understand better the extent to which the *Potnia Theron* can be seen as a coherent group.

While this study looks at the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron*, this is only done to the extent to which the iconography and context support a specific identification. As with some previous studies, there is no attempt to place a single identity on the *Potnia Theron* nor to identify every figure within the IC.[58] However, efforts are made to distinguish divine, mythological and mortal figures. While there is no consensus on how figures from the Bronze Age can be identified as deities, moving into the period under investigation, there are more clues and context to distinguish between different figure types.[59]

The *Potnia Theron* has been the subject of considerable scholarly attention; however, many earlier studies are now either outdated or heavily reliant on her association with Artemis. While Studniczka is frequently credited with linking the term *Potnia Theron* with Artemis, it is often overlooked that he also notes depictions of other related goddesses comparative way.[60] A more recent study by Budin offers a significant corrective, distinguishing the iconography of the *Potnia Theron* from the identity of Artemis. Budin emphasises that female figures in early Greek art frequently embody multiple, overlapping functions, suggesting that the *Potnia Theron* operates less as a portrait of a specific deity and more as a visual “type” capable of representing Artemis as well as other figures.[61]

Kopaka’s analysis, which presents *Potnia* as a title rather than an individual divine name, has been influential in reframing this discussion.[62] By demonstrating that the title of *Potnia* was applied to multiple female divinities in the Bronze Age, she argues that it more likely denotes status than a personal identity. Although my study is primarily image-focused, this conceptualisation of the title "Potnia" proves valuable for understanding the relationship between image and divine identity.

Bevan situates the *Potnia Theron* within a broader religious context through her study of animal representations in Greek sanctuaries. Focusing on Artemis and animal votive objects, Bevan provides a framework for understanding the interactions and methods of control between the *Potnia Theron* and animals.[63] Her analysis further considers how compositional elements such as frontality, symmetry, and the depiction of animal control convey power.[64]

Barclay similarly emphasizes centrality of animal interaction, focusing on the physical relationships between the central figure and the animals being controlled.[65] The significance of animal control is further elaborated by Schuhmann, who distinguishes between “active”

[58] Not associating names with *Potnia Theron:* Schachter (1994) p.4.
[59] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.5.
[60] Studniczka (1890) p.154.
[61] Budin (2016) p.17-18.
[62] Kopaka (2000) p.16.
[63] Bevan (1986) p.2.
[64] Bevan (1986) p.13.
[65] Barclay (2001) p.378.

and “passive” control types.[66] Building on these frameworks, **Chapter 6** of the present thesis examines not only the type of animals depicted but also the manner in which they are handled – whether physically held, which part of the animal’s body is grasped, their vitality, and whether any superhuman power is required – thereby elucidating the iconographic implication of these interactions.

D’Albiac’s research while not focused directly on the *Potnia Theron,* provides important insights into the role of wings in composite figures.[67] Their study of Bronze Age Aegean wing forms and patterns aids in identifying fantastic or monstrous creatures, highlighting potential Syrian, Phoenician, and Hittite influences.[68] These observations offer a nuanced understanding of the origins of hybridity and the iconography of monstrosity. Although D’Albiac concentrates on hybrids such as sphinxes and griffins, connections between the *Potnia Theron* and gorgons – particularly Medusa – have been noted. Frothingham’s early work draws parallels between the control of animals and protective functions of both the *Potnia Theron* and the Gorgon.[69] Wilk’s subsequent study reframes these similarities within a cognitive and symbolic framework of Medusa, suggesting that monstrous and liminal figures elicit deep-seated psychological responses.[70] While Wilk does not explicitly compare Medusa with the *Potnia Theron,* his findings support the notion of a shared visual vocabulary used to communicate power, danger, and control. Following this trajectory, the present research builds on research by Frothingham and Wilk, my research further continues exploring the way fear and control are closely connected with hybridity and monstrosity in the *Potnia Theron* motif.[71]

Collectively, these studies indicate that the significance of the *Potnia Theron* lies less in her origin or personal name than in her capacity to maintain order and demarcate boundaries between the wild and the civilised. While contemporary literature often overemphasises her connection to Artemis, there is a growing consensus that the *Potnia Theron* functions as a flexible motif whose meaning is renegotiated across shifting artistic and cultural contexts prior to the sixth century BC.

[66] “Aktives Schema /Passives Schema” Schuhmann (2009) p.6.
[67] D’Albiac (1995)p.63.
[68] D’Albiac (1995) p.70-71.
[69] Control of animals: Frothingham (1911) p.358,375. Protective function: ibid. p.349.
[70] Wilk (2000) p.95, 98.
[71] Wolff (2021) p.123-140. See also: **Chapter 5**.

2: Predecessors and possible antecedents of the *Potnia Theron*

2.1: Introduction

This chapter investigates some likely antecedents of the *Potnia Theron* figures detailed in the main body of this thesis. The aim of looking at earlier examples is to identify potential influences for the figures in the IC of this work and possible transmission routes, religious, cultural and artistic traditions that shaped the *Potnia Theron* schema as she appears in the Greek world. It would be outside the remit of this study to attempt a comprehensive survey of all potential influences on both the image and function of the *Potnia Theron*, and there have already been significant in-depth studies of earlier goddess figures.[72] Therefore, this chapter focuses on notable examples from outside the main scope of this study, covering the period from ca.6000-5800 to the 9th-6th centuries, and geographically from modern-day Turkey, the Near East and Southern Italy. This section investigates if these examples share the defining features of the later *Potnia Theron* and to what extent this can be accepted as influencing the Greek examples.

2.2: Earliest examples: Çatal Höyük

The clay female statuette from Çatal Höyük (**Img. 2.1**), dating to ca.6000-5800, has been identified as "Mother goddess" or "grain goddess" and is the earliest artefact to appear in this study.[73] Visually, she conforms to the *Potnia Theron* schema as she seems to be centred in the composition, flanked by two large felines.[74] The Çatal Höyük figure is nude and enthroned, and her pose has led to the suggestion that she is giving birth, with an infant's head emerging between her legs.[75] There have been attempts to trace elements of Greek religion back to finds from Çatal Höyük, possibly via intermediaries such as Crete.[76] However, the evidence lacks continuity due to the chronological gap between the Çatal Höyük finds and the emergence of Greek religion.

[72] Evans (1921) p.43-52; Johnson (1981) *passim*; Lesure (2011) *passim*; Winbladh (2012) *passim*.
[73] Johnson (1981) p.100; Eason (2008) p.3. "Mother Goddess": Belcher & Croucher (2017) p.485. "Grain Mother": Burkert (1986) p.290. For the problematic nature of the terms "Mother Goddess" and "Fertility Goddess" see **Section 7.6**.
[74] Flanked by felines: Johnson (1981) p.100; Burkert (1985) p.184.
[75] York & Schlossman (1981) p.37.
[76] Dietrich (1974) p.19.

In terms of resemblance between the Çatal Höyük figure and the Archaic Greek *Potnia Theron*, the most notable similarity is the flanking of the central figure by large felines. The large felines which flank the Çatal Höyük figure have been referred to as leopards; however, there are no distinguishing marks such as spots that would identify them as such.[77] Other large feline depictions from Çatal Höyük have spots and so are more likely to represent leopards.[78] Therefore, it seems plausible that the similarity of these paired leopards to those depicted alongside the seated Çatal Höyük figure led to this identification.



Img.2.1: Seated figure from Çatal Höyük showing enthroned nude female flanked by large felines. 6th millennium B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museum_of_Anatolian_Civilizations_1320259_nevit.jpg accessed 08/01/25.

While only nine *Potniai Theron* in the IC appear seated (see **Section 6.3**), 60 are flanked by large felines. This number includes figures with large felines on both sides, but not those with only a single animal or two different animals. While the positioning of the animals relative to the human figure aligns with the *Potnia Theron* schema, the way she controls the animals is different from most examples from the IC. The felines of the Çatal Höyük image appear to be part of the decoration of the seat, suggesting they represent carved images rather than living animals. While the poses of many of the animals held by the later *Potnia Theron* figures are unnatural and rigid – such as on a 6th-century krater handle from Chiusi (**Fig. 137**), they seem to depict living animals rather than carved representations of an animal being held. This difference in pose gives us a difference between the Çatal Höyük and the later *Potnia Theron.*

Nine examples of the seated central figure motif appear within the IC. A 6th-century terracotta figure, found in Boeotia but likely from Attica (**Fig. 242**), shows a figure seated between a pair of outward-facing long-necked water birds.[79] As with the example from Çatal Höyük, it is unclear whether the birds form part of the figure's seat or whether they stand

[77] Identification of leopards: Burkert (1986) p.290; Eason (2008) p.3; Belcher & Croucher (2017) p.491.
[78] Todd (1976) p.57-60; Hodder (2006) p.11; Meece (2006) p.5.
[79] https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010280657 accessed 10/09/24.

very close to it. The flanking animals' position is similar, but the pose is not, with the big cats from Çatal Höyük shown facing forwards (towards the viewer) while the birds flanking the Greek figure face outwards (i.e., away from the central figure). This difference creates a different dynamic. The stance of the large felines in the Çatal Höyük example appears confrontational, as if protecting the central figure. In contrast, the water birds in the Greek terracotta image appear to support her and possibly be under her control, but there is no sense that they protect her. The Greek figure also differs as she is fully dressed. Covered head to foot, her limbs and feet are hidden in her dress, giving her body a tube-like appearance with only her face and a small tuft of hair uncovered. This covered body contrasts with the nudity and "open" pose of the Çatal Höyük figure, whose body can be seen clearly. Most figurines of this period (found both in Çatal Höyük and Hacılar – also in central Anatolia) are represented nude, except for a few figures from Hacılar ca.8550-6750 who wear shorts or aprons; therefore, the nudity of the seated woman may not be of great significance beyond the possibility she is shown giving birth (see above).[80]

A figure which appears to be stylistically closer to the seated Çatal Höyük figure is that of Kybele in Phrygia, who is frequently depicted not only with large felines (specifically lions) but is also often shown enthroned, such as in a marble statue from 1-2nd century A.D. (**Img. 2.2**), significantly later in date than the period focused on in this study.[81] Kybele's worship can be traced to the 1st millennium, and she became part of the Greek pantheon in the 7th century.[82] Like the Çatal Höyük figure, Kybele is connected to fertility and children, although she is rarely represented with children.[83] Although some examples exist, depictions of the *Potnia Theron* with children are also rare. One of these is a Boeotian relief pithos ca.675 (**Fig. 38**); some think the more miniature figures are children.[84] They could also be interpreted as suppliants, shown smaller in comparison to the size of the central figure, who may be identified as a goddess based on her height and dress.[85] If these figures represent children, this could indicate that the central figure is portrayed as a *kourotrophos* or nurturer of the young (see **Section 7.6**).[86] Other deities linked to giving birth also have strong links to the *Potnia Theron* schema, including Artemis, Leto and Eileithyia.[87] The central figure of the Boeotian relief pithos (**Fig. 38**) has been identified as both Leto and Eileithyia, and her pose may suggest her arms are raised in the pain of childbirth.[88] While Leto, Eileithyia and Artemis are often associated with childbirth, Kybele is more often associated with motherhood. Although birth and motherhood along with conception and the *kourotrophos* role seem to be similar, in terms of their relation to deity images and identities, each of these roles is distinct (see **Section 7.6**). It is useful to consider here that

[80] Collins (2005) p.38. Date for figures: Belcher & Croucher (2017) p.482.
[81] Roscoe (1996) p.198; Ercan (2013) p.38.
[82] Earliest date for Kybele: Roller (1999) p.1. Kybele in Greek pantheon: Burkert (1985) p.203; Roller (1991) p.135; Bøgh (2007) p.307.
[83] Roller (1999) p.5.
[84] Identification of smaller figures as children: Budin (2016) p.17.
[85] Caskey (1976) p.33.
[86] Kopaka (2000) p.24
[87] Nilsson (1950) p.503; Burkert (1985) p.170; Vernant (1991a) p.120; Prent (2005) p.414.
[88] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.11.

despite visual similarities, Kybele is more frequently associated with the “mother” role while the Çatal Höyük figure – like Leto, Artemis and Eileithyia – have associations with birth.



Img.2.2: Marble statue of Kybele shown enthroned with lion. Roman 1st-2nd century A.D. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/251202?&searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=kybele&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=1 – accessed 08/01/2025.

These stylistic differences are significant; despite the similarities in the animal “seats” used in both examples, their appearance and poses are very different. The differences in clothing, pose, and the animals they are seated on or with suggesting that the Çatal Höyük figure represents a different identity from the later Greek figure (**Fig. 242**). While the Çatal Höyük figure displays strong iconographic parallels to the *Potnia Theron* motif – specifically the composition of a female figure flanked by large felines there is a lack of similarity in other aspects (e.g. clothing, decorative elements) to suggest she is a direct antecedent. The same composition also lacks chronological continuity between the Çatal Höyük example and the *Potnia Theron*. Although the examples covered in this chapter are dated between ca.6000-5800 and the 6th century, they do not provide a coherent lineage which supports the Çatal Höyük image being a direct influence on the *Potnia Theron* motif.

2.3: Mesopotamia

2.3.1: Queen of the Night plaque

The *Potnia Theron* also finds visual parallels in Mesopotamian examples. Previous studies have highlighted the likelihood of Archaic *Potnia Theron* images being directly influenced by Near Eastern material, owing to renewed cultural, artistic and trade contact in

the 8th century.[89] An image with strong visual parallels to the *Potnia Theron* is the Queen of the Night plaque, previously known as the Burney Relief (**Img. 2.3**), a fired clay plaque found in southern Iraq and now in the British Museum.[90] The plaque is thought to be dated to the Old Babylonian period ca. 1792-1750 B.C. and is one of only two major works to be dated within the reign of Hammurabi.[91]



Img.2.3: Queen of the Night plaque showing standing winged figure on the backs of paired lions, flanked by owls. From Babylon ca. 1792-1750 B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Museum_Queen_of_the_Night.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

The plaque's origins are uncertain - its authenticity has been disputed based on the plaque not being excavated, the ring-and-rod motif held by the central figure and the suggestion that the head did not originally belong to the body.[92] However, thermoluminescence dating undertaken by the British Museum in 1975 calculated the date of the plaque to be between 1725 and 25 B.C., meaning that even if the Old Babylonian date above is inaccurate, the plaque is still ancient.[93]

The identity of the Queen of the Night plaque figure is beyond the scope of this study to investigate. However, the image's identity has been connected to the goddesses Lilith, Ishtar, Inanna, Ereshkigal, or a demon.[94] Her headdress or crown of paired horns strongly suggests a divine figure, likely a goddess.[95] Yet it may also represent a female

[89] Reed (1976) p.365; Burkert (1985) p.138; Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.31; Simons (2014) 12; Angell (2017) p.76.
[90] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_2003-0718-1 accessed 12/02/2025.
[91] Albenda (2005) p.171; Collon (2007) p.43.
[92] Plaque not excavated and ring-and-rod motif: Albenda (2005) p.171; Suggestion head did not originally belong to the body: Collon (2007) p.45.
[93] Albenda (2005) p.171.
[94] Identification as Lilith: Frankfort (1937-1939) p.135; Johnson (1981) p.82. Identification as Ishtar/Inanna: Frankfort (1937-1939) p.135. Identification as Ereshkigal: Collon (2007) p.46. Identification as a demon: Albenda (2005) p.177.
[95] Albenda (2005) p.180; Frankfort (1937-1939) p.129.

demon; this latter interpretation would be more difficult to reconcile with the function of the plaque, which may have been a cult object and demons were not worshipped in Mesopotamia during this period.[96] Even more so, as only images of benevolent demons have a place in the Mesopotamian ritual.[97] When malevolent demons - such as Pazuzu and Lamashtu (see **Section 2.3.2**) – are represented in ritual, usually they are destroyed as part of the ritual. Therefore, the images were made of substances such as clay or wax that are easily broken.[98] Consequently, when we find images of these demons in durable materials, they are usually intended to be apotropaic objects but do not have an associated ritual.[99]

The central figure of the Queen of the Night plaque bears clear parallels with the later *Potnia Theron,* including the large wings visible on the figure's back. However, the wings of the Queen of the Night plaque appear to display significant differences from those of the *Potnia Theron* images. While no single wing style is explicitly associated with the Potnia Theron (see **Section 5.2**), upcurving or outstretched wings are more common than lowered wings resembling the plaque figure. The lowered wings of the figure on the Queen of the Night plaque may indicate this is a demon or figure from the underworld.[100] The Queen of the Night plaque also shows additional hybridised elements in addition to her wings. For example, her legs end in bird-like feet. An additional claw, not shown on the owls flanking her, extends from between her knee and ankle like a bird of prey. While none of the later *Potnia Theron* figures are shown explicitly with a human body and bird's legs, this is known later in the classical world. Pausanias describes the sanctuary of Stymphalian Artemis, rumoured to have marble images of maidens with birds' legs behind the temple.[101] Pausanias' account suggests a continuity of bird-legged figures into later antiquity, although this does not attest to an unbroken tradition. While eight figures from the IC have non-human feet, bird-like feet are only seen in examples where the *Potnia Theron* appears as a siren – such as the Corinthian pyxis ca.650-600 (**Fig. 213**). So, while hybridity is a feature of many *Potnia Theron* figures, bird-like feet are uncommon.

Another feature linking the Queen of the Night plaque to the *Potnia Theron* is the presence of animals under her control. First is the pair of recumbent lions on which she stands. Large felines frequently appear as a feature of the *Potnia Theron* images, and while standing on the backs of the lions is not a typical pose for the *Potnia Theron*, there are parallels in the later figures. Specifically, the *perirrhanteria* figures, such as a 7th-century example from Rhodes (**Fig. 179**), these figures would form the stands of large bowls holding water for ritual purification.[102] The lions' bodies appear in profile, with the faces turned towards the viewer.[103] The faces of the lions on the Queen of the Night plaque are unusual for representations in Mesopotamian art in that they have closed mouths. The more usual open-mouth representation could suggest a threat to an approaching worshipper if the

[96] Albenda (2005) p.177.
[97] Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.150.
[98] Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.149.
[99] Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.149.
[100] Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.177.
[101] Paus. 8.22.7.
[102] Angell (2017) p. iv.
[103] Albenda (2005) p.175.

plaque was intended for display in a religious context.[104] In contrast, the closed mouth may depict a lion tamed or otherwise controlled by the central figure. The lions of the IC appear to support this idea. Of the *Potnia Theron* images with lions, 40 have open mouths of 63 examples. Most examples in the IC show the mouth of the lion to be open, supporting the *Potnia Theron* mastering specifically wild animals, as well as the suggestion above that the closed mouth of lions would be less threatening.

Two owls shown frontally are the second set of animals displayed on the Queen of the Night plaque. They have long legs resembling those of the central figure of the relief and are identifiable as owls by their distinctive face shape. The unnatural proportions of the owls have led to a further suggestion that the plaque may be a forgery.[105] The owls flank the central figure, standing on the ground rather than on the backs of the lions. While birds are a common attribute of the *Potnia Theron*, none of the figures within the IC feature birds identifiable as owls. The *Potnia Theron* images of this study are more frequently associated with long-necked water birds, with 38 examples in the IC. Owls tend to become associated with Athena, who does have connections to the *Potnia Theron*, although none of the examples from the IC show figures identifiable as Athena holding or controlling owls.

The third feature shared by the Queen of the Night plaque figure and some *Potnia Theron* images is the presence of mountains. The mountains appear as a scale-like pattern, forming a horizontal band across the lower edge of the plaque on which the scene figures stand (see Img**.2.3**).[106] Only four of the *Potnia Theron* images feature possible mountains. These mountains are discussed further below in the section on Minoan seals.[107] The landscape links the Queen of the Night plaque to both the *Potnia Theron* figures and the Minoan images, such as the "Mother of Mountains" seal. The continuity of images that preserve both animal and mountain elements with a central female figure and appear in the Near East, Minoan Crete, and Archaic Greek art reinforce the suggestion that Crete acted as an intermediary between the Near East and the Greek world in the Early Bronze Age for the transmission of culture and ideas.[108]

The pose of the Queen of the Night plaque figure is also familiar from *Potnia Theron* figures – the position of the arms is visible in later figures such as that on the Boeotian relief amphora (**Fig. 38**). This similarity is emphasised by the pair of symmetrical, identical attributes she holds. While the Queen of the Night plaque figure controls her animals indirectly rather than holding them (see **Section 6.2**), she does hold symbols that may have indicated her role or identity. These are identified as "rod and ring" symbols or coiled rope, symbolic of justice.[109] The raised arms show the similarity in pose between the Queen of the

[104] Frankfort (1937-1939) p.133.
[105] Faces of owls: Albenda (2005) p.184; Possibility of forgery and rendering of owls: Frankfort (1937-1939) p.128.
[106] Albenda (2005) p.176; Collon (2007) p.46.
[107] Of these 5 examples, one may show mountains or waves - a plate from Rhodes ca.600 **Fig. 200.**
[108] Levi (1945) p.3; Dietrich (1967) p.396; Dietrich (1974) p.12.
[109] Identification of symbols: Frankfort (1937-1939) p.132; Albenda (2005) p.175. Justice and identity association of symbol: Collon (2007) p.50.

Night plaque and the later Potnia Theron with right-angled elbows shared with 28 of the figures in the IC.

While the Queen of the Night plaque is unique in many respects, it displays similarities in composition, iconography, and style to later *Potnia Theron* images. These similarities support the theory of influence travelling to the Greek world from the Near East (see **Section 2.4**). The bird-legged, nude, and horn-crowned central figure of the Queen of the Night plaque does not appear in later Greek art. However, based on compositional similarities and the renewal of trade and cultural contact with the Near East in the Archaic period, this could be an early "prototype" that later became the Greek *Potnia Theron* schema.

2.3.2: Lamashtu

The Mesopotamian Lamashtu is represented from the early first millennium to ca.800–650.[110] Lamashtu has been referred to as a "Mistress of Animals", likely referring to depictions where she suckles dogs and pigs.[111] This composition of animals on either side of a central figure resembles specific *Potnia Theron* images, especially two silver Etruscan jewellery plaques from the 7th century (**Figs. 121** and **122**). The animals appear in similar positions relative to the central figure in both examples. However, there are several differences – firstly, the animals appear as being suckled by Lamashtu, something which does not appear with certainty in the *Potnia Theron* examples of the IC. While the examples of the jewellery plaques (**Figs. 121** and **122**) show animals in the same position as the Lamashtu representation, it is uncertain if they represent the animals suckling from the central figure. Secondly, the choice of animals. Pigs do not feature in *Potnia Theron* images, and while dogs are associated with personae linked to the *Potnia Theron,* such as Artemis and Hekate, dogs are rare in these scenes. Dogs appear with Artemis in other contexts, but these representations tend to be from later periods.[112]

[110] Early first millennium date: Harper (1984-1985) p.4. Later date: Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.100.
[111] West (1990) p.193,365; Marinatos (2000) p.49; Ogden (2008) p.38.
[112] Callim. *Hymn 3*.15ff, 3.86ff. Christou (1964) p.201-2.



Img.2.4: Amulet showing Lamashtu with animal features, suckling a pig and a jackal. Lamashtu holds snakes and stands on the back of a donkey. Neo-Assyrian, ca. 800BC-550 B.C. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1925-0715-1 - accessed 08/01/2025.

Lamashtu's face has also been compared to a dog, and in some sources, she is called "puppy".[113] This connection to dogs has led to the suggestion that customs and rituals associated with Lamashtu may have influenced the worship of Hekate. Both Hekate and Lamashtu received sacrifices of black dogs.[114] However, white dogs were also sacrificed to Lamashtu, indicating their worship was not entirely identical, and the written evidence for dog sacrifice to Hekate is later and related to her chthonic aspect.[115]

Other figures identified as Hekate have been interpreted as having canine features, including an Attic black-figure vase painting ca.470, where she appears to have dogs in place of legs.[116] Although the identification of this figure is uncertain, her face remains human, unlike that of Lamashtu.[117] Another representation on an Archaic Greek black stone scaraboid has been interpreted as Hekate-Artemis as a female dog.[118] However, this image has no known parallels, and the argument for this identification relies on Hekate's role as a "birth goddess", an aspect rarely shown in her representations.[119] Overall, the link between Lamashtu and Hekate appears coincidental. Both figures were underworld deities but of very different kinds, and both received sacrifices of dogs, although these sacrifices appear to

[113] West (1990) p.361-2.
[114] Sacrifice of dogs to Hekate: Dillon (2002) p.170.
[115] Warr (1895) p.392; Day (1984) p.27; Burkert (1985) p.196; Eason (2008) p.104.
[116] Karouzou (1972) p.65; Hatzivassiliou (2013) p.1.
[117] Karouzou (1972) p.66; Hatzivassiliou (2013) p.1.
[118] Reitler (1949) p.29-30.
[119] Hekate as a "birth goddess": Reitler (1949) p.30-1.

be to protect against Lamashtu and win the favour of Hekate. In Hekate's case, these underworld associations differ from her appearance in Hesiod's *Theogony* and may connect to her syncretism with Enodia.[120]



Img.2.5: Tondo from Attic alabastron ca.520 B.C. showing gorgoneia with lion-like face, shown frontally. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Terracotta_alabastron_(perfume_vase)_MET_DP124844.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

While most figures discussed in this section are identified as deities, Lamashtu is unusual as she is identified as a demon rather than a goddess.[121] Other figures associated with the *Potnia Theron* are specifically not goddesses – namely the gorgon (see **Section 5.6**). While gorgons are not goddesses, they are semi-divine, the daughters of the gods Phorkys and Keto.[122] Like the gorgons, Lamashtu appears with animalistic features – a lion's head (or possibly a lioness in some cases, as there is no mane) and paws, as well as the taloned feet of the Zu bird, which can be seen on a Neo-Assyrian amulet ca.800-550 (**Img.2.4**).[123] Another significant difference is that while the early gorgon faces are always frontal, as can be seen on a tondo from an Attic alabastron ca.520 (**Img.2.5**), the images of Lamashtu show her face in profile.[124] Some images of Lamashtu depict her holding snakes; later images of gorgons, such as a 5th century Chalcedony scarab (**Img.2.6**), also depict gorgons similarly holding or controlling snakes. This way of holding animals resembles the Ishtar image discussed above and visually parallels the *Potnia Theron* images, demonstrating control of animals.[125] Despite the stylistic parallels, gorgons are visually distinct from representations of Lamashtu. Even in the Archaic period when gorgon representations are more varied and experimental, gorgons are identifiable by their large, exaggerated eyes, frontal faces and sometimes have boar tusks and noses.[126] Aside from the visual aspect, gorgons have a

[120] Chthonic aspect of Hekate not in Hesiod: Warr (1895) p.392-3. Association of Hekate and Enodia: Larson (1995) p.118; Manoledakis (2012) p.293-4.
[121] Harper (1984-1985) p.4.
[122] Hes. *Theog.* 233.
[123] Harper (1984-1985) p.4; West (1990) p.193; Burkert (1992) p.83; Childs (2003) p.51, 64.
[124] Burkert (1992) p.83.
[125] Lamashtu holding snakes: Marinatos (2000) p.49; Schuhmann (2009) p.58.
[126] Experimental gorgons: Langdon (2008) p.113. Eyes: Langdon (2008) p.110; Wilk (2000) p.32. Tusks: Marinatos (2000) p.49; Dexter (2010) p.30.

specific mythological context, which is often expressed in images of Perseus and Medusa and alluded to by gorgoneia -which suggest the beheaded Medusa.



Img.2.6: Chalcedony scarab showing gorgon holding snakes. From Kerch, 5th century LIMC Vol.6.I p.180 fig.261.

Like her rival, Pazuzu, the horrifying appearance of Lamashtu was an apotropaic symbol.[127] This protection is likely to have been used specifically for children and pregnant women, as Lamashtu was said to prey on babies and children.[128] She is often represented standing on the back of an ass or donkey, which stands on a boat, emphasising the idea of carrying Lamashtu away.[129] Some *Potnia Theron* figures may have been *kourotrophos* figures, protecting the young. This function is examined in more detail in **Section 7.6**.

2.3.3: Master of Animals

The Master of Animals schema is thought to have originated in the Near East, most likely Mesopotamia, and is shown in items such as the Bull-headed lyre of Ur, ca. 2550–2450 (**Img. 2.7**).[130] Like the example of Lamashtu discussed above, these images appear to be representative of protection and power, possibly due to the size and strength of the animals they control. Some Master of Animals images are identified with the hero Gilgamesh; this is likely to relate to scenes of Gilgamesh mastering the Bull of Heaven.[131] Like the *Potnia Theron* figures, these Master of Animals figures usually stand but sometimes appear in *Knielauf* (kneeling-running) position with animals.[132] The Masters usually appear human, although some bull-man hybrid forms are known (see **Section 7.2.6**).[133]

[127] Zouzoula (2007) p.67.
[128] Marinatos (2000) p.49; Childs (2003) p.64; Wengrow (2014) p.77.
[129] Burkert (1992) p.83.
[130] Burkert (1985) p.52 Barclay (2001) p.374; Barclay (2013) p.144; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.209. Specifically, Mesopotamia: Marinatos (2000) p.11; Arnold & Counts (2010) p.19; Bonney (2011) p.160; Dubcová (2015) p.221; Angell (2017) p.76.
[131] Barclay (2001) p.377. Bull of Heaven: Costello (2010) p.32; Counts (2010) p.136.
[132] Flognfeldt (2019) p.67
[133] Kantor (1962) p.101,111.



Img.2.7: Bull-headed lyre of Ur showing Master of Animals figure (top panel) with bulls. ca. 2550–2450. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bull_Headed_Lyre_of_Ur.jpg - accessed 08/01/2025.

The "Horse Leader" is a specific Master of Animals type known in Mycenaean and Geometric Greek art.[134] An example of this motif appears on a Mycenaean krater dating to ca.1200, excavated in Ras Shamra (**Img. 2.8**).[135] He stands between a pair of symmetrically arranged horses, showing a strong visual resemblance to many of the later *Potnia Theron* figures (see **Section 6.1.1**). The composition of a central figure between two horses also bears iconographic similarities to terracotta pendant images of a female head between two horseheads (**Figs. 186-187**), found at the sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta.[136] The human figure on the terracotta pendant is identified as the goddess Orthia, as the pendants were found at her sanctuary.[137] Another similarity occurs in the fish that appear in some Master of Animals scenes, such as the Ras Shamra vase (**Img. 2.8**), suggesting that he has control of creatures of the land and sea. A *Potnia Theron* image sharing this feature is a 7th-century amphora

[134] Langdon (1989) p.188; Crouwel (1991) p.65. Geometric: Bouzek (1997) pl.21; Counts (2010) p.136.
[135] Langdon (1989) p.188.
[136] Digital LIMC (2020): Digital LIMC, DaSCH: https://weblimc.org/page/monument/2077652 accessed 10/09/24.
[137] Waugh (2012) p.9.

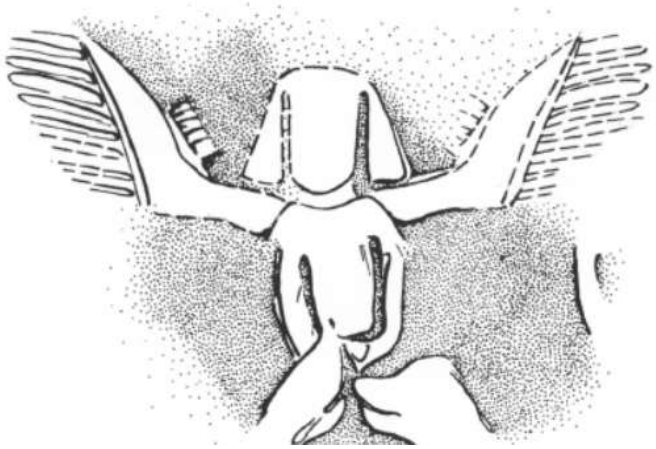
from Boeotia (**Fig. 27**). Like the Ras Shamra example, the Boeotian amphora shows a central figure controlling animals from the land, air and sea.



Img.2.8: Master of Animals figure with horses from Ras Shamra-Ugarit ca.1300-1190 B.C. Crouwel (1991) p.66 fig.2.

Hermes appears as a "Master of Lions" on fragments of a plaque dated ca. 675-650 from Syme, Crete.[138] Hermes was associated with both wild and domestic animals, so it would make sense for him to take this role.[139] Here, he appears as a winged figure with a Daedalic hairstyle, flanked by lions (reconstruction **Img. 2.9**).[140] The wings and position of Hermes between lions show a strong resemblance to the *Potnia Theron* figures, and it would not be out of place for a *Potnia Theron* to have a Daedalic hairstyle (e.g. jewellery plaque from Rhodes - **Fig. 102**). The Syme figure has been identified as male based on the lack of breasts represented.[141] The ambiguity of gender in the Syme figure (**Img. 2.9**) also raises the question of differences between the *Potnia Theron* and "Master of Animals". While this thesis does not allow space to fully explore this comparison, one important area of difference is identity. The Syme figure has been identified as the god Hermes, and while associating figures with a specific identity is not always possible, indicators such as clothing, pose and attributes can suggest something of a specific figure's function.

[138] Lebessi (2010) p.195, 198.
[139] Arnold & Counts (2010) p.9; Langdon (2010) p.2.
[140] Lebessi (2010) p.195.
[141] Lebessi (2010) p.195.



Img.2.9: Winged figure with Daedalic hairstyle, reconstructed from fragments from Syme, Archaic period. Lebessi (2010) p.196 fig.19.2.

However, given the worn and damaged condition of the fragments, it is ambiguous enough to consider that the Syme figure may instead be female. Breasts are also not prominent in the jewellery figure with Daedalic hair mentioned previously (**Fig. 102**). Therefore, it is possible that due to wear and damage, these are no longer visible on the Syme figure. However, this is by no means a specific identification and a better way to differentiate the gender of these figures would be body shape. The figure from Syme does not show a defined waist, while the *Potnia Theron* does – so while it is difficult to make a confident identification, the evidence suggests the Syme plaque represents a male figure, although one which shows strong resemblances to the female figure of the *Potnia Theron*.



Img.2.10: Master of Animals figure, gold pendant from the Aegina treasure ca.1850-1550 B.C. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aegina_treasure_03.jpg - accessed 08/01/25.

The "Master of Animals" schema is also found on some Minoan seal examples, such as a Middle Minoan III (ca.1700-1600) sealing from Hagia Triada, showing the Master of

Animals holding a bow and accompanied by lions. Another Minoan example in a different style is the gold pendant from Aegina (ca.1850-1550), depicting a heraldic scheme of a kilted male figure holding a pair of water birds flanked by giant snakes (**Img. 2.10**).[142] The Aegina figure also shows significant stylistic similarities to later *Potnia Theron* images, for example, the decoration from a bronze hydria from Taranto, ca.570 (**Fig.76**). While the Aegina figure parallels many *Potnia Theron* figures by holding a pair of long-necked birds, it closely resembles the Taranto hydria in the multiple animal composition, the tall headdress and – while the placement is different – the balancing of snakes on either side of the central figure. Again, there are many iconographic parallels between the Aegina and Taranto examples, however details such as gender and clothing suggest these figures are distinct identities with different roles. The Aegina figure appearing more royal, active and powerful, while the Taranto figure seems more protective, with a supernatural control over animals.

Overall, the "Master of Animals" function displays close parallels to the *Potnia Theron*. However, several variations to the "Master of Animals" figure type may reflect their different functions. For example, those holding wild and dangerous animals demonstrate superhuman and heroic strength, while the figures holding birds are more likely to be protective of the wild or associated with domesticated animals.[143] In both figures, there is a suggestion of protective or apotropaic use and maintaining order by demonstrating human mastery over the animal world.[144] However, there are differences between the male and female figures: the "Master of Animals" figure appears to have been more popular in the Near East. This popularity may be due to the association of these figures with the heroic figure of Gilgamesh. Some animals, such as lions, appear with Mistress and Master of Animals figures; other animals, such as bulls, are more typical of Master of Animals figures (such as the lyre above from Ur, **Img. 2.7**).[145]

Bulls appear very rarely in this study – one example is a 7th-century bronze helmet from Delphi (**Fig. 193**), which shows a very different composition type with a single bull where control is shown by riding the bull rather than holding it.[146] The Master of Animals schema certainly appears in Greece as both an influence and contemporary of the *Potnia Theron*.[147] More examples of the figure appear in the areas where Greece had contact with Near Eastern civilisations.[148] The Master of Animals figure may also be the antecedent which sets a precedent for *Potnai Theron* holding lions or similar large felines.[149] However, overall there are few comparable figures to the *Potnia Theron* in Near Eastern art, suggesting that the popularity of the *Potnia Theron* schema was a Greek development.[150]

[142] Hinks (1938) p.263.
[143] Langdon (1989) p.199; Counts (2010) p.140.
[144] Marinatos (2000) p.51; Dubcová (2015) p.221.
[145] Dubcová (2015) p.231
[146] LIMC Aphrodite 899a.
[147] Dubcová (2015) p.221; Flognfeldt (2019) p.67.
[148] Langdon (2010) p.2
[149] Holding lions: Childs (2003) p.61; Counts (2010) p.19
[150] Lack of parallels: Barclay (2001) p.380. Popularity of *Potnia Theron:* Langdon (2010) p.119.

Looking more generally at the Near Eastern examples explored above, many examples demonstrate functional or stylistic parallels with later *Potnia Theron* images. The diversity of these figures helps demonstrate one of the main points of this thesis - that the influences that shaped the *Potnia Theron* as a motif varied in their original roles, appearance, and location. This diversity of influences supports the varied appearances of the later *Potnia Theron* figures.

2.3.4: Ugarit (North Syria)

While the examples discussed above appear to show the first compositional and thematic roots of the *Potnia Theron* schema as she appears in this study, a further example appears to be closer in many stylistic elements: the ivory pyxis lid (**Img. 2.11**) dated to ca.1550-1150 from Minet el Beida Tomb III in Ugarit, now in the Louvre.[151]



Img.2.11: Ivory pyxis lid showing a female figure between two goats that she feeds with bunches of grass. ca.1550-1150, Minet el Beida Tomb III in Ugarit, now in the Louvre. https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010136316# - accessed 08/01/2025.

The composition of elements making up the image corresponds to the *Potnia Theron* schema as she appears in the IC. The Minet el Beida figure is shown centrally, with her face in profile, flanked by symmetrical goats which stand on their hind legs. While visually similar to the *Potnia Theron* motif, the Minet el Beida figure differs in the way that she controls animals. While most *Potniai Theron* demonstrate either active or passive control over animals (see **Section 6.2**), the Minet el Beida figure appears to feed long bunches of grass to

[151] https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010136316 accessed 12/02/2025.

the goats either side of her. Only two examples in the IC show the *Potnia Theron* feeding animals – both are identified as Aphrodite feeding either a goat (**Fig. 239**) or birds (**Fig. 240**).

The dress of the Minet el Beida image also shows parallels with later figures. While the shape of the skirt is different from those found in the IC, the tight belt or waistband, horizontal banded pattern and shaped hem are all seen on examples such as a Corinthian aryballos ca.600-575 (**Fig. 57**). The Minet el Beida figure is shown nude from the waist upwards, giving her costume a resemblance to that of the Minoan "Snake Goddess" figures (see **Section 2.4.2**). There is evidence of trade from Greece to Ugarit with Mycenaean pottery found at Minet el Beida and Ras Shamra, suggesting a transmission route.[152] Although the Minet el Beida hairstyle does not find an exact parallel within the IC, there are similarities, such as an image from a 6th-century black-figure cup from Orvieto (**Fig. 62**). The central character's hair is worn in a narrow headband with small curls around the face and long wavy locks hanging down her back. This hairstyle resembles the Minet el Beida figure except for the high central part – likely to be part of the hairstyle. In shape, this does resemble the tall *polos* worn by many of the *Potnia Theron* figures (see **Section 4.2.1**).

The Minet el Beida woman also appears to stand on top of a rocky landscape – the pyxis lid is damaged, but the shape, texture and the presence of goats make it seem likely to be understood as a mountain. While mountains are rare in the IC, there are examples where they appear, likely in relation to hilltop worship (see **Section 6.6** for fill motifs).[153]

In addition to the resemblance between the Minet el Beida pyxis and the later *Potnia Theron* figures, the similarity to Minoan examples and the presence of Mycenaean pottery at the site help to reinforce a sense of continuity. In looking at these routes of continuity, we can understand the origins of the *Potnia Theron*, and which elements of the image were carried forward and preserved, and which were changed to become the *Potnia Theron* image as she appears in this study.

2.4: Minoan

Previous in-depth studies have covered issues such as possible ways to identify goddesses in Minoan art and whether Minoan religion recognised one or multiple goddesses.[154] This section will focus on those examples from Minoan art which appear to be plausible stylistic or iconographic antecedents of the *Potnia Theron*. The concept of Minoan origins for the *Potnia Theron* is often linked to investigations of the pre-classical origins of Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**).[155]

[152] van Wijngaarden (2002) p.39.
[153] Dietrich (1969) p.269.
[154] Frothingham (1911) p.359; Evans (1935) p.143; Nilsson (1950) p.393; Dietrich (1969) p.272; Dietrich (1974) p.10; Galanakis (1984) p.125; Kopaka (2000) p.17; Nosch (2009) p.24; Lupack (2010) p.258; Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.2; Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.489.
[155] Gordon (1932) p.180; Persson (1942) p.130; Dietrich (1965) p.27; Coldstream (1977) p.3; Budin (2016) p.14.

2.4.1: Seals

One Minoan artefact which closely parallels the *Potnia Theron* motif in its composition and elements is the "Mother of Mountains" seal from Knossos.[156] This seal, dated to the Neopalatial (L.M. IA) (**Img. 2.12**), depicts a female figure, presumed to be the epiphany of a goddess due to her flounced skirt and the setting on top of a stone heap with a tripartite shrine in the background.[157] She is flanked by a pair of felines, identified as lions and a male figure, thought to be a worshipper, stands to the right of the scene in a "salute" pose.[158] The lions are reminiscent of those in the later *Potnia Theron* figures (see **Section 3.1**) The "Mother of Mountains" figure appears to wear a similar costume to the "Snake Goddess" figures (See **Section 2.4.2**), consisting of a long, flounced skirt with the upper body uncovered. She holds one arm outstretched to the right, holding a stick vertically – this could be interpreted as a weapon or attribute of divinity, such as a sceptre.



Img.2.12: "Mother of Mountains" seal from Central Palace at Knossos, now in Heraklion Archaeological Museum, showing female figure on a mountain flanked by lions. A tripartite shrine to the left and male figure to the right. Evans (1930) p.463 fig.323.

The central figure does not hold the lions, but they appear to be under her control, posing with their front paws raised towards the central figure on either side of the mountain. The paired lions of the "Mother of Mountains" seal are like those found in many of the *Potnia Theron* images (see **Section 3.1**), although the *Potnia Theron* figures tend to hold or control animals physically (see **Section 6.2**). Of the 263 examples in the IC, 112 examples represent animals under the "control" of the central figure without being physically held in some way (see **Section 6.2**). So, while the control of animals as shown on the "Mother of Mountains" is not standard for later *Potnia Theron* images, the symmetrical composition and positioning of the animals with the central figure remain the standard.

The mountain on the seal appears to be constructed from many smaller scale-like triangles. This pattern may suggest influence from Mesopotamian examples (discussed in

[156] Guthrie (1961) p.869.
[157] Epiphany of goddess: Nilsson (1950) p.352. Identification of "building" in background: Dietrich (1969) p.262.
[158] "Minoan salute" gesture: Morris (2017) p.713. Identification of lions: Nilsson (1950) p.353; Dietrich (1969) p.262.

Section 2.3.1).[159] An alternate explanation would be that this triangular pattern represents a rocky landscape or stone heap.[160] Smaller numbers of similar triangles on some later *Potnia Theron* figures, such as a 7th-century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**).

2.4.2: Snake Goddess

A series of figurines and fragments likely to belong to the same kind of figurine, found in the Temple Repositories of Knossos dating to the rebuilding in LM I (1700-1580), have come to be referred to as "Snake Goddesses".[161] While the identity of these figures remains uncertain, the find context makes it seem likely they represent figures associated with cult practice – if not a deity, then likely priestesses or votaries.[162] One of the figures was found broken with the torso in the east repository and the lower body in the west, suggesting the figure was deliberately broken and deposited in specific places, as each half was found with a different assemblage of specific items.[163] The difference in the items found in each repository suggests deliberate placement, rather than being discarded randomly, as might be expected from a rubbish deposit. In addition, the location of the figurine fragments may indicate the breakage has significance, possibly as a foundation offering.[164]



Img.2.13: Faience "Snake goddess" Figures from Knossos ca.1700-1580, showing the pose and costume of both figures. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Θεές_των_Όφεων_6391.JPG - accessed 08/01/25.

[159] Barnett (1980) p.169.
[160] Identification as stone heap: Nilsson (1950) p.352.
[161] Date: Bonney (2011) p.173.
[162] As worshipper or priestess: Blakolmer (2009) p.33.
[163] Hatzaki (2009) p.21.
[164] Ritual significance: Hatzaki (2009). Foundation offering: Morris (2017) p.713.

Two of the faience "Snake Goddess" figures (**Img. 2.13**) show several iconographic features that parallel many of the later *Potnia Theron* figures.[165] Firstly, the pose and dress style of the "Snake Goddess" figures find visual parallels in the later *Potnia Theron* images, such as an alabastron from Delos, ca. 620-600 (**Fig. 15**), which replaces the snakes with long-necked birds but shows parallels in the arm position, symmetrical animals, skirt pattern and tall headdress. Second, the skirts worn by both figures show similarities in their shape and pattern. The skirts of the "Snake Goddess" figures are belted at the waist and are bell-shaped with either stripes or checked flounces which alternate dark and light squares.[166] While the medium and style differ, the Delos alabastron figure wears a flared skirt with a similarly defined belt at the waist and a striped pattern. Similarly, the *polos* of the Delos figure is not as tall and lacks the snake of the tiara worn by the Knossos figure, but in combination with the dress, there is a sense of similarity. Thirdly, the arm positions and poses of the "Snake Goddess" figures may indicate their roles or status, differentiating the different figure types and communicating specific actions through their gestures.[167] Finally, the way the Knossos figures hold the snakes finds parallels in the curving necks of the birds held by the Delos figure, further strengthening the resemblance of the figures – through the similarity of their poses.

In addition to the later Greek *Potnia Theron* figures, the Minoan "Snake Goddess" figures may have influenced the appearance of other figures in Greek art, such as Medusa and Athena.[168] In the case of Medusa, the most obvious comparison is found in the snake iconography shared by both figures. However, this is less straightforward as early representations of Medusa (and gorgons) do not have snakes.[169] Snakes appearing in Medusa images are significantly different from the Minoan "Snake Goddess" iconography. Although snakes become part of the iconography of Medusa and gorgons, they rarely hold snakes in their hands. This combination does occur in the IC, such as a 6th-century Etruscan kotyle (**Fig.61**) or a hydria from Cerveteri ca.550 (**Fig. 78**) showing only a single snake. Instead of held, archaic depictions of Medusa show her wearing knotted snakes as a belt or around her neck - such as a 6th-century pediment sculpture from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). "Wearing" snakes in this way shows parallels to the Minoan "Snake Goddess" figures which also appear to wear snakes around their waist (e.g., the figure on the left, **Img. 2.13**). Some Minoan figures also wear distinctive headwear – such as the tall *polos* with a coiling snake or the flat cap with a small feline on top. While some gorgon figures as shown with a band or fillet around the head (in much later examples, wings on the head are frequent), coverings over the head do not appear.[170]

The stylistic resemblance between the "Snake Goddess" figures and the later *Potnia Theron* suggests some transmission of this image. It is harder to evidence the flounced skirts of the "Snake Goddess" in *Potnia Theron* figures; this is partly due to the difference in the

[165] Date: Eason (2008) p.23; Frothingham (1911) p.364.
[166] Frothingham (1911) p.360; Nilsson (1950) p.85; Bonney (2011) p.178.
[167] Bonney (2011) p.178.
[168] Medusa: Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.2; Athena: Coldstream (1977) p.3.
[169] Wilson (1920) p.238.
[170] Serfontein (1991) p.19.

medium where these comparisons occur. For example, the snake goddess figurines are modelled in the round while comparable *Potniai Theron* including an alabastron from Delos (**Fig. 15**) are vase paintings, meaning details such as clothing are interpreted in different ways. However, the "Snake Goddess" figures are not the sole antecedent of the *Potnia Theron*. Instead, they are one of the multiple influences contributing to the Potnia Theron schema in terms of appearance and identity and cultural and religious function.

2.4.3: Goddesses with Upraised Arms

Terracotta statuettes with raised arms appeared in Crete in the Postpalatial (Late Minoan III) period, found with cult equipment in bench sanctuaries.[171] These bell-shaped idols have wheel-made bases and modelled upper bodies. This combination of techniques has led to the suggestion that the statuettes are evidence of the move from aniconic litholatry to the worship of anthropomorphic cult figures. Prior to anthropomorphic images, stalagmites are thought to have been worshipped as goddess representations.[172] There is some evidence to suggest an evolution within the style of the upraised arm figures – an example thought to be one of the earliest of the type is shown in the characteristic pose, but the fillet around the figure's head is plain and does not bear any of the attributes seen on later examples.[173] This evolutionary model assumes that the goal of Greek art is the mimesis of natural form, producing the most realistic and lifelike image possible through the mastery of techniques and materials, reaching its climax in the 5th century B.C.[174] While there may be multiple factors in the move from unworked stone (e.g. stalagmites) to anthropomorphic cult images, Vernant claims that in the 8th century, it was Near Eastern influence that resulted in "brute stone" being replaced with a sculpted "palette of images" in cult contexts.[175] While the *Potnia Theron* poses vary significantly, 28 examples from the IC raise their arms with elbows bent (see **Section 6.3.1**) similar to the pose of the "Upraised Arms" figures (see **Section 2.4.3**). With the Protogeometric house/temple model from Archanes, the "Upraised Arms" pose also demonstrates continuity into the period covered by this study.

[171] Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.489.
[172] Dietrich (1967) p.398.
[173] Tzedakis (1967) p.203.
[174] Gaifman (2010) p.68.
[175] Vernant (1991b) p.151.



Img.2.14 Protogeometric terracotta house or temple model with upraised arm figure inside. From Archanes. Prent (2009) p.236 fig.19.7.

The raised arm pose in Postpalatial figures is similar to that of some of the Minoan "Snake Goddess" figures from Knossos (e.g. the figure on the right in **Img. 2.13**).[176] There are also examples of the "Upraised Arms" figures from Gournia and Prinias with wavy bands around their head and arms, which may represent snakes.[177] In addition to snakes, some of the "Upraised Arms" figures wear tiaras decorated with small birds, suggesting a connection or control over animals.[178] However, none of the "Upraised Arms" figures holds or controls animals in a way we may expect from the later *Potniai Theron*. Usually, the hands of the "Upraised Arms" figures are empty, shown open at head height - they do not hold animals like the *Potnia Theron* nor other attributes like the Queen of the Night plaque figure (see **Section 2.3.1**).

The "Upraised Arms" gesture appears to have been significant as this pose continues to occur into the Protogeometric period in Crete, such as the striped terracotta model from Archanes (**Img. 2.14**).[179] This figure appears standing inside a model house or temple decorated with bands of geometric decoration and figures posed on the roof. One of the roof figures appears to be an animal; however, the central figure below is not held or controlled. Therefore, this figure cannot be considered a *Potnia Theron* as the control of animals is a defining characteristic of the schema (see **Section 1.4**). The appearance of the upraised arms gesture in later periods of art, such as the striped house or temple figure in Crete, suggests a continued significance associated with this pose into the Orientalising

[176] Jones (2001) p.260; Gesell (2004) p.139.
[177] Gesell (2004) p.139; Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.489.
[178] Birds on tiaras: Gesell (2004) p.134; Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.489; Eliopoulos (2018) p.87.
[179] Prent (2009) p.236.

period.[180] The *polos* of the figure in the house or temple model supports the suggestion that the "Upraised Arms" figures represented deities (see **Section 4.2.1**).[181]

An additional point of similarity between the "Upraised Arms" figures and the later *Potnia Theron* images is the appearance of the feet. For comparison, the feet of the *Potnia Theron* figures appear as follows:

Feet of *Potnia Theron* figures	Total
Uncovered	162
Covered	42
Not shown (figures shown as heads/busts)	32
Uncertain/broken	23

Table 2.2: Comparison of covered and uncovered feet of *Potnia Theron* figures.

The data in **Table 2.1** demonstrate that most examples have uncovered feet, where feet are unobstructed. Of the 162 figures with uncovered feet, 29 appear to have the hem of the skirt shaped into an upwards curve or slant, as though deliberately showing the feet. Three examples do not show the feet, suggesting they are either covered or missing. In these examples, the skirt hem has the same shape as the examples where the feet appear to be deliberately shown. This skirt shape may be related to the "Upraised Arms" figures (**Section 2.4.3**) – some have skirts shaped to reveal the feet. In some images, such as the terracotta examples from the LM III period (**Img.2.15**), the feet seem to appear out of holes in the skirt – making it seem more likely that the feet have some significance for them to be made prominent in this way.



Img.2.15: Minoan terracotta figures from LM III period, with upraised arms showing cut-out skirt to reveal feet. Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.516.

[180] Prent (2009) p.237.
[181] Ammerman (1991) p.203; Rogers (2012) p.180; Winbladh (2012) p.51.

While not identical, the similarities between the *Potnia Theron* and the "Upraised Arms" figures strongly suggest either the "Upraised Arms" figures had some influence on the appearance of the *Potnia Theron* or that they both shared an earlier influence on their image and function. The similarity between the *Potnia Theron* and "Upraised Arms" figures is most evident in the presence of animals and their pose – with the former being a defining feature of the *Potnia Theron* schema.

2.4.4: Xeste 3, Akrotiri (Thera)

A Minoan seated goddess appears on a wall fresco of Xeste 3 at Akrotiri, Thera ca.1600 (**Img. 2.16**). She is shown in a field of saffron gatherers and appears to control a griffin and a monkey. This figure can be understood as a goddess since she is shown in a tripartite shrine, accompanied by a griffin – a mythical creature suggesting this is not a mortal figure. She resembles the "Snake Goddess" figures discussed above in her clothing. She wears a long, flounced skirt with a short jacket, with her breasts uncovered. However, her seated pose makes her clothing appear much more flowing than that of the Knossos "Snake Goddess" figurines, where the modelling of the skirts appears more rigid. Unlike the contemporary "Snake Goddess" figures, the Xeste 3 figure does not wear any headwear. Instead, her hair is tied in a loop at the back of her head.

Her command of the griffin and monkey also indicate that she may be treated as an antecedent of the *Potnia Theron* figure – however, there are some notable differences. Firstly, the Xeste 3 figure is shown unwinged. This lack of wings resembles both the Knossos "Snake Goddess" (**Section 2.4.2**) and the figures with "Upraised Arms" (**Section 2.4.3**). Furthermore, while the Minoan goddess (or goddesses) sometimes took the form of a bird-shaped epiphany when appearing to worshippers, none of the figures thought to represent Minoan goddesses appear with wings. Although not all *Potniai Theron* appear winged, this feature is common enough to be included in many descriptions of the type, as discussed in **Section 5.2**. Finally, the Xeste 3 figure is seated, which is unusual for later *Potnia Theron* figures, as discussed relating to the Çatal Höyük seated figure (**Section 2.2**).



Img.2.16: Xeste 3 wall painting from Akrotiri ca.1600-1500, showing seated figure with griffin and monkey. Vlachopoulos (2008) p.498 fig.41.20.

Overall, the Xeste 3 figure appears to visually have the least in common with the *Potnia Theron* of the main body of this study – her pose, dress and composition all differ significantly from the often rigid and symmetrical scenes often associated with the *Potnia Theron* schema. However, this figure's function is in keeping with the *Potnia Theron* as she comes to be known. Her control of animals is evident in the griffin accompanying her and the monkey approaching her. From the plants surrounding her, we can assume that she is in an outdoor setting or has a connection with the wild. This figure also has a religious function, suggested by her scale, position on the tripartite shrine and command of the monkey and griffin.[182] These functions place the Xeste 3 figure in an unusual liminal space, located between human and animal realms and between the real and fantastic - as demonstrated by the creatures of the fresco. There is also a crossover between the mortal and divine worlds, with both the goddess and mortal saffron-gatherers present. The *Potnia Theron* parallels this through her association with liminality and boundaries. This aspect of the *Potnia Theron* comes either from her association with Artemis or through attributes associated with liminal space (see **Section 7.4**).

2.5: Etruscan

While the origins of the *Potnia Theron* have been investigated in previous studies, these have almost exclusively looked to the East and South (i.e., to Crete) for potential cultural connections. However, one area which has received significantly less attention is the material from Greek colonies in South Italy and its influence from Etruscan art. Greek and Etruscan art styles have close connections with elements of Greek myth visible in all phases of Etruscan figural art.[183] Like Greek art, Etruscan art also has an "Orientalising" period, thought to be the product of contact with the Near East.[184] The Etruscan material is unique as there appears to be a mutual exchange of ideas between Greek and Etruscan art. The exchange of ideas is visible in Greek items made for export, Etruscan imitations of Greek work, Greek artists working in Etruria and Etruscan artists influenced by Greek styles.[185] Some distinctly Greek elements are visible, but this chapter will focus on Etruscan contributions to the *Potnia Theron* schema.[186]

As with *Potnia Theron* examples from elsewhere in the Greek world, the Etruscan example conforms to the motif of a central female figure accompanied by animals.[187] The IC contains 27 Etruscan examples and 11 from Magna Graecia –South Italy and Sicily, the location of several Greek colonies.[188] Among the Etruscan examples and those from Magna Graecia, subtypes of *Potnia Theron* images are identifiable by their context features, such as

[182] Budin (2004) p.223.
[183] Richardson (1962) p.160; Simon (2013) p.495.
[184] Richardson (1962) p.173.
[185] Richardson (1962) p.159-160.
[186] Identification of Greek elements: Culican (1971) p.4.
[187] Moore (2018) p.70.
[188] Magna Graecia: Neer (2012) p.9.

10 figures identified as gorgons by the face shape (see **Section 5.6**). Gorgon figures also appear on antefixes, with all but one of the nine antefix examples from the IC originating from Etruria or Magna Graecia. The appearance of gorgons here may also be linked to the previous point, as many of these antefixes focus on gorgons – either identifiable as full-bodied Medusa images (e.g., A limestone metope, Sicily, mid-6th century, **Fig. 2**) or gorgoneia (e.g., a gorgon antefix, Capua, 6th century, **Fig. 4**).

It is suggested that the animals illustrated with Etruscan figures may show some insight into their character.[189] Some of the animals represented in Etruscan examples are less frequently seen, such as horses, wolves, small birds, griffins, and fish (See **Section 3.1** for animals shown with the *Potnia Theron*). An example where more unusual animals appear is a polychrome kotyle dating to the 6th century (**Fig. 61**). The style and composition of this cup are both unusual. It depicts a gorgon (identifiable by her large face and eyes) holding snakes in her hands and accompanied by a wolf, identified by the artist known as the "Bad Wolf Painter".[190] However, the central character is unusually short, with a frontal pose not often seen in gorgons or *Potnia Theron* figures of this period (see **Section 6.3**). Her dress is also unusual, shown as a patterned, almost triangular dress. The dress may be an unbelted chiton, like that worn by the central figure from the Boeotian relief amphora ca.675 (**Fig.38**), which also takes on an unusual, flared shape.[191] In her hands, she holds snakes, which appear in other *Potnia Theron* examples, especially those in the form of gorgons, such as the antefix from East Greece ca.550 (**Fig. 9**).

What is more unusual about the kotyle gorgon is the wolf which sits to her left – this appears to be under her control – it is a wild animal shown seated like a domestic animal. As well as unusual creatures, lions, and large felines – the animals most frequently represented in the IC – are also found in Etruscan examples, such as on the handles of a volute krater from Chiusi ca.570 (**Fig. 136-137**). The Chiusi figure demonstrates the control of animals which defines a *Potnia Theron.* The central figure also displays many secondary features of a *Potnia Theron,* such as wings, symmetrical composition (with two different animals in the example of **Fig. 136**) and standing in profile.

The dress of the Etruscan figures also fits closely with many of the other figures in the IC. For example, a 6th-century antefix from Pyrgi (**Fig. 1**) shows the central figure wearing a short *chiton* which has been compared to that of a charioteer.[192] Although, within the IC, 28 of the figures wear the *chiton* (see **Section 4.4**). There is also an association between the *chiton* and active figures such as running gorgons (e.g. **Fig. 155**, Attic black-figure lekythos, ca. 530). The Pyrgi antefix figure is not running, but her leg position is similar to a figure from a 6th-century cup from Sparta (**Fig. 67**). The central figure controls a pair of winged horses in both examples, although the Pyrgi figure is much taller than the horses under her command. The difference in size may be a stylistic choice or could suggest this is a goddess – especially as she also wears a high diadem or headband (See **Section 4.2.2**).

[189] Moore (2018) p.64.
[190] Marinatos (2000) p.53.
[191] Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.31.
[192] DeGrummond (2008) p.425.

Overall, the Etruscan and South Italian material is thematically and compositionally very similar to the other *Potnia Theron* images found in the IC. Some examples, such as the 6th-century kotyle (**Fig. 61**), show significant differences in style and attributes but still maintain enough familiar elements to recognise the *Potnia Theron* schema and are comparable with multiple examples in the IC. Other examples, such as the figures from the "François vase" krater from Chiusi (**Figs. 136-137**), are often used as the Potnia Theron model as a motif.[193] The strong similarities can be explained by the close geographic and chronological proximity to other examples from the IC. In addition, Greek influence on Etruscan art can be seen from the Late Geometric period and into the Orientalising and Archaic periods, from which most of these examples originate.[194]

2.6: Conclusion

The examples in this chapter cover a significant period, from the 6th millennium B.C. to the Minoan Postpalatial period (LMIII ca. 1400-1100) and range geographically from Mesopotamia and Ugarit in the east, through the Greek world to Italy in the West and Crete in the South. Such a large area and timescale understandably produces varied examples that demonstrate the wide variety of figures that hold or control animals in a way comparable to the later *Potnia Theron*. Furthermore, the variation in figures strongly suggests that rather than evolving from a single source, the *Potnia Theron* figures are influenced by a diverse range of sources and developed over a very long period over which there were many changes and variations.

As the idea of the *Potnia Theron* as a single identity comes from relatively modern scholarship, it is unlikely that there was a point in antiquity where this figure underwent a formal process of codification as a recognisable motif. Nevertheless, we can identify elements of the *Potnia Theron* as she appears in Archaic and Classical art in the earliest example from Çatal Höyük – the parallel animal attributes, control of wild animals, and central female figure are all recognisable in many of the later figures. These are the features that most clearly show the human figure in control of animals, and this motif can be adapted and interpreted in several ways: protection from the wild, control of animals or the natural world, apotropaic protection, votive images, and references to myth are all seen – sometimes in combination. While there is no specific reason why some features of earlier images (e.g., animals or birds perching on the head or headdress) did not remain popular during the period of this study, it seems likely that it was the visual impact of the way animals are held or controlled by a central figure which contributed to the continued use of this motif.

[193] Cook (1894) p.111 (as "Persic Artemis"); Nilsson (1950) p.506; Budin (2016) p.16 (as "Mistress of Animals"); Angell (2017) p.37.
[194] Richardson (1962) p.159-60.

3: Attributes of the Potnia Theron

3.1 Animals

This chapter will examine images of the *Potnia Theron* and the attributes they hold – usually animals. Attributes are usually the objects held by divine figures.[195] A defining feature of the *Potnia Theron* is her control of animals, which are often specifically wild animals—the *Theron* over which she is *Potnia* (See **Section 1.3**).[196] This chapter will mainly focus on the meaning and iconography of these animals and discuss what they tell us about the figure of the *Potnia Theron* and the specific images within this study. The relationship and context between the *Potnia Theron* and her animals is examined in greater detail in **Chapter 6.**

While the name *Potnia Theron* suggests an association with wild animals, the types of animals controlled by the central figure vary significantly within the motif. An overview is given in **Table 3.1** these figures refer to examples where only one animal type is controlled by the *Potnia Theron* apart from the 20 examples which show multiple types.

Attribute type	Total
Lions	61
Long-necked water birds	41
Snakes	40
Fantastic animals (winged lions, sirens, sphinxes, etc.)	22
Mixed attributes (holds or controls two or more animal types)	20
Horse	15
Other large felines (panthers, leopards, etc.)	15
Goats, sheep and deer	13
Other animals (bulls, rabbits, etc.)	8
Other birds (chickens, doves, etc.)	8
Missing, undefined[197] or other (spheres, etc.)	8
Corvid-type birds	5
Plant and natural motifs (flower, sun, etc.)	5
Sea animals	2

Table 3.1: Types of animals within the IC.

Of the 263 examples in the IC, lions are by far the largest category. A significant proportion of *Potnia Theron* images are depicted as holding or controlling a single type of attribute animal. The 20 examples which control multiple animal types, are covered in

[195] Simons (2014) p.16
[196] Liddell (1940) p.799.
[197] Where and animal is present but is too damaged or otherwise obscured and cannot be identified.

Section 3.3. Comparison of the *Potnia Theron* images which hold single animals against those with multiple animals allows further insight into the motif. The *Potniai Theron* which control a single type of animal tend to be more varied in their contexts and as a result are often more recognizable as specific deities or mythological figures – such as Artemis greeting Apollo (**Fig. 28**) or Aphrodite riding on the back of a swan (**Fig. 241**). Multiple animal scenes can be more difficult to interpret, but provide a wider range of attributes, giving insight into the role of a specific *Potnia Theron* image. It is also useful to consider any relationship or interaction between different animal types in multiple animal examples. This is covered further in **Section 6.1.4**. Considering this, single animals will be investigated first in the order of how many examples appear in the IC. The information from this can then be used to demonstrate how we can understand multiple animal *Potnia Theron* images.

3.1.1 Lions

Lions are the most frequently represented animal in the IC, with 61 examples where they are the only animal to be controlled and a further 11 examples where they appear alongside other animals (see **Section 3.3**). Lions appear in Greek art as early as the Middle Minoan III period (ca.1700-1600), for example in the "Mother of Mountains" seal from Knossos which shows strong parallels to the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Section 2.4.1**).[198] Lions remained popular in Greek art through to Late Antiquity, as seen in examples such as the 2-3rd century A.D. statue of Kybele now in the British Museum (see **Img. 3.1**).



Img.3.1: Kybele votive relief showing figure seated between lions, 2nd-3rd century A.D. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1882-1108-1 accessed 12/02/2025.

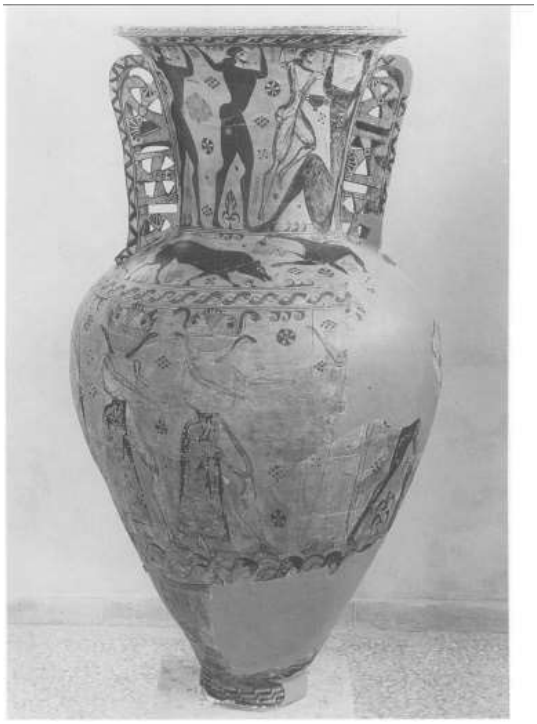
[198] Knossos seal: Chittenden (1947) p.108. Date of lions appearing in Greek art: Budin (2016) p.18.

The appearance of lions in Ancient Greek art is usually explained as coming from contact with Mesopotamia and Syria.[199] Ancient sources also suggest that lions were still present in some parts of Greece during the Archaic period.[200] This is supported by findings of lion bones dating from the Neolithic to the Bronze Age found in Greece and Southeast Europe, although lions are thought to have disappeared from Greece by the Classical era.[201] Herodotus suggests there were still lions present in some parts of Greece as late as the Greco-Persian wars.[202] However, it is doubtful that lions were common enough to become a popular decorative motif due to their presence alone, and unlikely that these depictions were based on actual encounters with living lions.[203]

There is considerable variation in the ways lions were depicted in these images, which can be partly explained by stylistic preferences and the broad chronological scope of the study. Lions were also depicted with the Bronze Age predecessors of the *Potnia Theron* (see **Section 2.4.1**).[204] Another factor which may have contributed to the stylised depiction of lions in the Archaic period is the scarcity of live lions in Greece. Therefore, it is likely that depictions from this period are more likely to have been copied from other images of lions rather than from observations of living animals. This idea would explain the stylised and experimental nature of Archaic lion representations.[205]

The Boeotian amphora from c.680-670 Thebes, now in Athens (**Fig. 27**), is one example of this. While these lions share the angular style of the rest of the scene, they also appear small in comparison to the central figure and have an unusual shape. This has led some to describe these animals as "wolves" rather than lions, even though lions in this period were commonly depicted with forked or tufted tails.[206] The tails of the animals on the Boeotian amphora are not tufted or forked, but end in a spiral. However, the style and body shape of these lions is not unique. Examples such as the amphora from the 7th century by the Polyphemus painter (**Img. 3.2**) show lions with similar wedge-shaped, angular bodies, lending support to the identification of the lions from the Thebes amphora. The lions on the Polyphemus Painter vase also raise their front paws (although not to a human or divine figure in these examples) and have open mouths, sharp teeth and protruding tongues. The bodies of the lions are also shown in black—as with the Theban amphora—although the heads are differentiated using a lighter colour.

[199] Schuhmann (2009) p.70; Blakolmer (2016) p.62. Lions in Near Eastern art: Christou (1968) p.193-4; Markoe (1989) p.87; Cook (1997) p.42; Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.154; Collon (2005) p.34; Dexter (2010) p.38; Neer (2012) p.51. Mesopotamia: Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.154; Collon (2005) p.34. Syria: Neer (2012) p.51.
[200] Ancient sources for lions: Arist. Hist. An. 579b & 606b; Hdt. 7.125; Paus. 6.5.4. Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.322.
[201] Lion bones: Morgan (1995) p.173; Hurwit (2006) p.132; Thomas (2014) p.375. Vanish by Classical period: Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.322.
[202] Hdt. 7.125. Lonsdale (1979) p.146.
[203] Commonness of lions: Cook (1894) p.103. Living lions: Thomas (2014) p.379.
[204] Bevan (1988) p.3.
[205] Nilsson (1950) p.49; Coldstream (1977) p.7; Beazley (1986) p30.
[206] Wolves: Neumann (1963) p.274; Hughes (1990) p.191. Lion tails: Hughes (1990) p.196 n.7.



Img.3.2: Protoattic Amphora by the Polyphemus painter, showing gorgons with "cauldron" shaped heads, second quarter of 7th century, Eleusis. Markoe (1989) pl. 2.

In the example from the Theban amphora (**Fig. 27**), we see a "collar" around the neck with diagonal shading which may be indicative of the lion's mane. A similar "collar" can be seen on the lion from an amphora dated to ca.700 in the British Museum.[207] This lion is again shown raising a paw (this time towards a resting deer it appears to be attacking) with its mouth open to show its teeth and tongue. Unlike the Boeotian amphora example, this lion's collar does not show diagonal shading but appears as a pair of parallel lines around the neck. As with the example mentioned above (**Img. 3.2**), this lion also seems to have a lighter area on its back and neck, although not the whole head.

The inconsistent head and neck detail of these lions seems to suggest they were copied from other images rather than representations of live animals. The artists were aware that lions possessed some detail around the head/neck area which should be included, but it rarely appears to look anything like a real lion's mane. If it were missing altogether, we could assume that the artist intended to show a lioness or different species of large feline. This seems to develop from a "collar" (which may have resembled a mane) to the head of the lion being shown in a different colour from the body—which could be seen as taking us further from the appearance of real lions. The colouring may also have been adapted from earlier images of lions made in the Near East; for example, the "Queen of the Night" plaque (See **Section 2.3.1**) is shown with lions which originally had light-coloured heads and bodies separated by black manes.[208] This pattern is almost identical to that found

[207] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1936-1017-1 accessed 12/02/2025.
[208] Collon (2005) p.35.

in Subgeometric pottery fragments from the temple of Orthia at Sparta, where lions are depicted with light-coloured heads and bodies and red manes.[209]

Other lion depictions from the same period have noticeable differences in style and appearance. For example, the lion on the neck of an amphora from Melos ca.670-640 (**Fig. 49**) is shown with a longer, more lifelike body than those from the Theban amphora, although overall it is still highly stylised. The Melos example also has a mane which more closely resembles hair, which appears to grow along the back, neck and head of the lion, rather than the "collar" shown in the examples above. Finally, the head of the Melos lion is not lighter-coloured; rather, it is a uniform dark colour with incised detail, consistent with the rest of the vase decoration.

These differences between the Melos and Thebes examples could suggest these lion depictions were based on different influences. Both seem to suggest representations based on images of lions rather than living animals, as both feature elements which do not occur on living lions (e.g., the elongated neck of the Melos lion and the "collar" of the Thebes example). However, both representations can be understood as lions. The faces of both lions appear to follow the squared shape thought to be an adaptation of Syrian and Hittite images.[210] Even the Greek word for lion λέων comes from the Egyptian "*rewo*", which refers specifically to statuettes of lions, rather than "*ma*", which refers to living lions.[211] However, there is no way to gauge the extent to which this would have been understood in the ancient world, and the meaning conveyed by the presence of the lion within the scene appears to be more important.

The Greek art of this period often portrays lions as fearsome predators.[212] Their presence usually symbolises physical strength as well as bravery.[213] The connection between heroism and lions can be seen as far back as Homer, who associated them with warriors and similes of greatness, power, and fearfulness.[214] In the Iliad, Hera also refers to Artemis as "a lion to women"— meaning she was free to kill whoever she wished. [215] This not only connects lions and the *Potnia Theron*, but also Artemis as a specific identity associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Section 7.2.1**).[216] The way Homer compares Artemis to a lion is also interesting because elsewhere this kind of comparison appears to have been reserved for masculine warriors. Similarly, Kyrene—who is also associated with the *Potnia Theron* — takes on the "masculine" task of killing lions, and in this way holds power over them.[217]

[209] Boardman (1998) p.108.
[210] Boardman (1998) p.86.
[211] Neer (2012) p.51.
[212] Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.331.
[213] Hildburgh (1947) p.165; Morgan (1995) p.172; Tsiafakis (2003) p.73.
[214] Scott (1974) p.59; Langdon (2008) p.251; Schuhmann (2009) p.106. Similes: Starr (1961) p.282; Lonsdale (1979) p.147.
[215] Lion to women: Hom *Il.*21.483. Burkert (1985) p.173; Cole (2004) p.212; Larson (2007) p.101; Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.35.
[216] Artemis as *Potnia Theron*: Hom *Il.*21.470.
[217] Larson (2002) p.189.

In the Archaic period, lion representations appear to have a protective or apotropaic function. In the same period, gorgon heads were often bearded, giving them a "lion-like" appearance. Examples of this from the IC include **Figs. 8, 45, 219, 220,** and **223**.[218] This function may have been brought from Syria and Asia Minor where lions were often placed at city gates and the entrances to temples.[219] This placement of lions also associated them with leadership and power.[220] The lion-like appearance of the gorgon may also have been influenced by the lion-face of the Mesopotamian figure Lamashtu, who is depicted with a lion's head (see **Section 2.3.2**).[221] The lion can also stand for danger—the lion attack motif develops in Greek art during the archaic period and shows the lion as a threatening force.[222] Lions are shown attacking both humans as well as other powerful animals such as boars, bulls and panthers.[223] This association plays into the role of the *Potnia Theron,* who is shown to be able to control lions and therefore offer protection from this threat.

Lions appear to have become "semi-fantastic" animals, regarded in a similar way to sphinxes and griffins—as an "animal of power".[224] This may have been influenced by images imported from the Near East or Egypt.[225] Like griffins, lions were associated with war, which tells us more about the role they play in the *Potnia Theron* scenes.[226] When lions are shown with a *Potnia Theron* figure, she is shown as holding or controlling them; they function as a symbol of her strength and power.[227] Rather than controlling a smaller animal which could be handled by a mortal figure, the *Potnia Theron* is frequently shown to control animals which are extraordinary in their size or power.[228] There is some variety in the way that lions are held by the *Potnia Theron,* which provides further insight into the relationship between the animal and the central figure (see **Chapter 6**.)

In 64 of the 73 examples of *Potniai Theron* holding lions (including examples where lions are held alongside other animals), she is depicted as much larger than a lion and able to easily lift a lion or pair of lions. This gives an impression of superhuman size and strength, strongly suggesting that this is a goddess or other divine or supernatural figure.[229]

3.1.2 Large felines

As well as lions, other types of large felines are controlled by *Potniai Theron*. It can be difficult in some instances to determine which species of large feline is being depicted, as

[218] Lion-like gorgons: Howe (1954) p.209; West (1990) p.193 Vernant (1991a) p.113; Burkert (1992) p.83; Tsiafakis (2003) p.74 n.6; Ogden (2008) p.35.
[219] Braun-Holzinger (2000) p.157.
[220] Neer (2012) p.51; Simons (2014) p.20.
[221] Burkert (1992) p.83.
[222] Lions as a danger: Marquardt (1981) p.259; Osbourne (1998) p.46.Lion attack: Beazley (1986) p.25; Markoe (1989) p.86.
[223] Beazley (1986) p.25; Cook (1997) p.42.
[224] Hildburgh (1947) p.160; Blakolmer (2016) p.61.
[225] Nilsson (1950) p.49; Blakolmer (2016) p.61.
[226] Morgan (1995) p.173.
[227] Morgan (1995) p.172; Simons (2014) p.60.
[228] Blakolmer (2016) p.61.
[229] Budin (2015) p.15.

many sources settle on terms such as "lion or leopard".[230] It is thus necessary to look at the characteristics of each animal to decide. For the purposes of this study, lions are identified by defining features such as a lighter head or "collar" as discussed in **Section 3.1.1** above. However, it must be acknowledged that there are maneless lions, and lionesses can sometimes have manes—a fact which appears to be overlooked in some observations of lion depictions.[231] For the purposes of this study, lions are differentiated by either a mane or "collar", or by a frontal face – such as on a gold plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 129**).[232] Other large felines serve a similar iconographic function to the lions in the *Potnia Theron* images—they are large, powerful animals which she holds or controls. This control is a sign of her power and divinity.[233]

Of the other types of large felines, most are spotted felines which are most frequently identified as leopards, although this identification cannot be certain from visual evidence alone.[234] While some of the large felines in the IC have spotted coats, little else to differentiate between species of large felines in *Potnia Theron* images. While attempts have been made to categorise the different species of large feline based on their build, there is not enough consistency in size and scale of the large felines depicted with the *Potnia Theron* for this to be viable.[235] This issue can be seen by comparing an aryballos ca.600-575 from Rhodes (**Fig. 58**) with an ivory plaque ca.750-700 from Sparta (**Fig. 83**). These images are in significantly different styles and give a different sense of scale between the animals and central figure, despite appearing to be the same type of large feline. The aryballos felines are larger than the central figure, while the ivory plaque felines are smaller and held by her. Despite these stylistic differences, both examples serve the same iconographic function of demonstrating the protective power of the *Potnia Theron*.

Depictions of leopards begin to appear in Greek art from around the 7th century, as part of the artistic influx from places in the east such as Mesopotamia.[236] However, it has been suggested that images of lions in the Classical period may have been influenced by observations of other large felines, suggesting that they were present in some parts of Greece.[237] Nonetheless, leopards do not appear to have held the same meanings of strength and bravery the Greeks associated with lions. While both were associated with power and threat to an extent, leopards were thought of more in terms of being exotic creatures.[238]

The large spotted felines may also tell us something about the origins of the *Potnia Theron* motif as well as her powers. In prehistoric Anatolia, depictions of leopards and figures wearing leopard skins are found at sites such as Çatal Höyük (see **Section 2.2**), and

[230] Example: (Wace, 1929) p.255; Simons (2014) p.37.
[231] Hurwit (2006) p.133 suggests hybridity as an explanation for a depiction of a maned lioness suckling her cubs. Collon (2005) p.34 depictions of maned lionesses in Near East. Boardman (1978) p.168; Neer (2012) p.130 point out "inaccuracy" of lioness with mane.
[232] Frontal lion faces: Korshak (1987) p.3; Markoe (1989) p.108.
[233] Simons (2014) p.28.
[234] Identification as leopard: Panagiotaki (1991) p.98; Rehak (1998) p.128.
[235] Identifications based on size and build: Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.341.
[236] Simons (2014) p.102; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.341.
[237] Beazley (1986) p.30.
[238] Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.338.

later we see depictions of Dionysos and Maenads with leopards in Classical art.[239] Therefore, these spotted felines may connect the *Potnia Theron* to specific regions or to a different kind of "wildness", specifically those *Potnia Theron* images where the central figure can be identified as a maenad (e.g. **Figs. 47, 60**, and **77**). This also supports the idea of leopards being linked to the east and to the "exotic" as mentioned above.

Over half of the depictions which clearly depict spotted large felines are from jewellery plaques found on Rhodes.[240] These plaques are all very similar in appearance, suggesting they may have been mould-made. For example, **Fig. 119** shows a winged figure holding a pair of large felines by their heads or necks, and two poppy heads or pomegranates are suspended below. This is comparable to **Fig. 109**, which also shows a winged figure, although the wings have a smoother, more curved shape. There also appears to be a larger gap between the hands of the figure and the heads of the large felines. Above is a large rosette motif and below are five poppy heads or pomegranates—this time on longer chains. In these examples, the central motif is very similar, and a range of additional elements could have been added once a plaque was moulded. A third example can be seen in **Fig. 120**. This figure appears closer in appearance to **Fig. 109** but has an additional border. The poppies/pomegranates and border are also decorated in glass paste—something not seen on the previous two examples. As the central figure's pose, clothing, attributes and composition have not been altered, we can safely assume they all represent the same figure, suggesting these changes are stylistic choices.

The jewellery plaques from Rhodes show spotted felines, lions—identifiable by their manes in examples such as **Fig. 106**—and other large felines without spots, all controlled in the same way. In all these examples, the animals function in a similar way to the lions in **Section 3.1.1**. They represent strength and power, and the figure holding them represents a super-human control over the aspects of threat and danger presented by the cats.[241] Large felines without manes or spots also appear, usually alongside gorgons, suggesting gorgons also have a protective or apotropaic function similar to other *Potniai Theron* holding lions placed in the same position.[242]

Overall, there seems to be a large iconographic overlap between lions and the other large felines represented alongside the *Potnia Theron.* Where we do see considerable variation is in the juxtaposition between the *Potnia Theron* and large felines she controls. The large felines vary in size compared to the *Potnia Theron* figure—sometimes they are small enough to be picked up in either hand (e.g. **Fig. 99**), and sometimes they are much larger than her (e.g. **Fig. 58**). However, regardless of size, the function of the *Potnia Theron* is the same: she is a protective force against the threat represented by the animals around her (see **Section 7.5**).

[239] Association with Dionysos & Maenads: Dillon (2002) p.140; Seaford(2006) p.23-4.
[240] Seven examples of this object type out of 11 total images of spotted felines.
[241] Koç & Temür (2014) p.25.
[242] Leopards and gorgons: Marinatos (2000) p.64; Palagia (2013) p.157. However, both refer to the temple pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**) where the animals are referred to elsewhere identified as lions. Markoe (1989) p.87; Burkert (1992) p.84; Ogden (2008) p.38 Ogden (2013) p.95.

3.1.3 Snakes

Snakes are a less frequent attribute of the *Potnia Theron* and appear to be specific to certain contexts. The association between snakes and the *Potnia Theron* can be traced back to Minoan prototypes which are paralleled within this study (see **Section 2.4.2**).[243] Snakes are the main attribute of 41 examples in this study, 17 of which are identifiable as gorgons or as Medusa. Some of these, such as the 6th century Etruscan kotyle (**Fig. 61**) show only the snakes being held, while others such as the antefix from East Greece ca.550 (**Fig. 9**) depict snakes being held as well as emerging from the central figure's neck and hair.[244] By being worn or attached to the central figure, snakes appear to have a closer connection to the central figure and this often overlaps into hybridity (see **Section 5.6**). However, the way in which snakes are held or controlled does not seem to change their meaning within the image. In the two examples given above, the snakes help to both identify the figure as a gorgon and link to her chthonic features. Snakes can also identify other figures which are not gorgons, for example the late Archaic cup from Attica (**Fig. 60**) where the snake helps to identify the central figure as a maenad.[245]

Although snakes are frequently associated with gorgons, most Early Archaic gorgons do not feature snakelike attributes. This association is first seen in later periods—usually around the head and neck of the gorgon, such as the 6th century pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**).[246] These have been called *Ohrschlangen* ("ear-snakes") due to their positioning, and while they are not present on all archaic gorgons, they are a frequent feature.[247] The appearance of snakes on the side of gorgon's heads may have been influenced by protomes (decorative attachments) on cauldrons. [248] This idea is supported by the gorgons by the amphora from Eleusis (**Img. 3.2**) which appear to have "cauldron-shaped" heads with snakes emerging from either side. [249] Other examples of gorgons from the same period show snakes worn around the waist as a belt, as seen in the 6th century marble statue from Paros (**Fig. 228**).[250] This kind of snake-belt may be influenced by earlier Minoan figures, which have been reconstructed with snakes around the waist (see **Section 2.4.2**).[251]

As discussed above, gorgons were sometimes connected with the underworld, and snakes shared this connection as they were known to live under the ground—leading to chthonic associations.[252] While gorgons can also be liminal figures, their liminality is less related to physical spaces and more closely connected to their appearance (see **Sections**

[243] Christou (1968) p.141.
[244] Frothingham (1911) p.358.
[245] Snakes and maenads: Dillon (2002) p.160; Hedreen (2007) p.49.
[246] Wilk (2000) p.235.
[247] Belson (1981) p.15.
[248] Marinatos (2000) p.49.
[249] Tsiafakis (2003) p.88; Langdon (2008) p.7.
[250] Payne (1931) p.84-6; Schefold (1992) p.88; Marinatos (2000) p.54; Wilk (2000) p.235; Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.5.
[251] Neer (2012) p.33.
[252] Chthonic snakes: Frothingham (1911) p.361; Rehak (1998) p.127; Marinatos (2000) p.117; Hurwit (2006) p.128; Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1. Chthonic gorgons: Hom. Od. 11.635; Christou (1968) p.142.

5.6, **7.2.4**, and **7.4**).[253] Early gorgons appear with elements of male and female, both human and animal.[254] Early examples of gorgons wear feminine clothing (in myth, gorgons are always female) often with bearded faces, crossing the boundaries of gender representation.[255] Snakes also have a protective or apotropaic function with gorgons, appearing as household guardians in some contexts.[256] However, this role is thought to date to the Bronze Age and is difficult to evidence without contemporary literature.[257]

While snakes have a significant connection to gorgons, the majority of *Potniai Theron* which hold snakes are not identifiable as gorgons. A 7th century terracotta plaque from Athens (**Fig. 183**) depicts a standing figure with upraised arms, shown with a pair of snakes in relief. While this figure's face and large eyes are shown frontally, her eyes are not as large as might be expected for a gorgon representation, and the rest of her features are not as exaggerated as other depictions. The figure also appears to wear a long dress, which is unusual as most gorgon representations are shown with a shorter *chiton* and bare legs, usually in the *knielauf* pose in the Archaic period. Although there are exceptions to this (e.g. **Img. 3.2**) where two gorgons wear long dresses and run with straightened legs rather than the bent knees of the *knielauf* pose. On the terracotta plaque from Athens, the central figure is shown with her arms raised and with snakes on either side. Where *Potniai Theron* are identifiable as gorgons, the snakes are more commonly held or connected to the figure—here they appear to be commanded into place by her raised-arms gesture.

The protective function of snakes is also expressed in figures identified as Athena. Several examples from Sparta of lead votives are thought to represent Athena in her helmet and spear, with snakes emerging from either side of her body (**Figs. 138-148**).[258] While the snakes are not specifically mentioned in Homer, it is mentioned that Zeus placed the head of the gorgon on Athena's *aegis*—which could be the origin of these snakes.[259] The pattern of the dress is clearly indicated and while damaged, the shape of the body can be discerned. Due to the size, technique and condition, the snakes are not detailed, and it is possible that these are ribbons attached to the figure's dress. The identification as snakes seems more likely due to the s-shape, congruent with other contemporary snake representations such as the 6th century bronze shield from Olympia (**Fig. 220**). The identification of these attachments as snakes is further supported by clearer examples of figures wearing clothing fringed with snakes, for example the archaic amphora from Vulci (**Fig. 32**).[260]

Another example where snakes are shown is the fibula plaque from Sparta (**Fig. 86**), which depicts a figure holding a bird with a snake hanging from her wrist. Again, the

[253] Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.2.
[254] Vernant (1991a) p.137.
[255] Bearded gorgons: Howe (1954) p.213; Tsiafakis (2003) p.74. Female gorgons: Serfontein (1991) p.32.See also: **Section 7.4**.
[256] Snakes sharing aspect with gorgons: Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1. Protective aspect of snakes: Coldstream (1977) p.3; Marinatos (2000) p.129; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.578.
[257] Bevan (1986) p.262.
[258] Pinney (1925) p.157.
[259] Hom. *Il.* 5.741-2. Dexter (2010) p.26.
[260] Snakes on *aegis* of Athena: Schefold (1992) p.88; Eason (2008) p.24.

proportions of the figure's facial features indicate this is not intended to be a gorgon, but instead resembles other ivory depictions thought to represent Orthia from her sanctuary in Sparta.[261] The position of the snake may be informative here, as the bird is shown above the hand of the central figure while the snake hangs below. This image could represent the central figure as commanding both the heavens (the bird) and the underworld (the snake).[262] It could also suggest a strong connection between the central figure and the earth—showing the bird as the sky above and the snake as the world below.

Overall, snakes are an attribute which rely on context to be understood and can suggest both specific identities (e.g. gorgon, Athena) as well as aspects of those identities (e.g. chthonic, protective). Snakes are also significant as there is an overlap with hybridity and the hair and body *Potnia Theron* (see **Chapter 5**). While wings may appear more frequently as a fantastic or hybridised element of the *Potnia Theron* motif, snakes display a different kind of hybridity, with an overlap of attribute and hybridisation. In addition, we see the whole animal becoming part of the *Potnia Theron* rather than parts of animals, as is the case with wings or boar-like tusks.

3.1.4 Fantastic animals

As well as living animals, there are 22 hybrid or fantastic animals which are shown being controlled by the *Potnia Theron*. Here, "fantastic animals" is defined as those existing only in mythology. These include hybrid creatures such as the sphinx as well as transformed humans such as the pig-men appearing in images of Kirke. Fantastic and hybrid animals differ from the animals discussed so far, in that they cannot be compared to real life examples, either in terms of their appearance or their interaction with the *Potnia Theron*. The iconography of these creatures is just as valuable in reconstructing the role and function of the *Potnia Theron* as their appearance and interaction with the central figure reveals useful information. This section will focus only on the animals which accompany or are controlled by the *Potnia Theron*, excluding images where the central figure herself is hybridised—these images are covered in **Chapter 5**.

Animal type	Total
Sphinx	11
Human/animal hybrids	5
Siren	3
Griffin	3
Winged lion	1

Table 3.2: Types of fantastic animals within the IC.

Of the fantastic animals which are controlled by the *Potnia Theron*, the sphinx appears the most frequently (see **Table 3.2**). Sphinxes are usually composed of the body of a winged lion with a feminine human head.[263] Like sirens and gorgons, sphinxes in Greek art

[261] Dawkins (1929) p.207; Barnett (1948) p.14.
[262] Christou (1968) p.145.
[263] Bosana-Kourou (1979) p.2; Bevan (1986) p.293; Tsiafakis (2003) p.78; Neer (2012) p.102.

are generally considered to be female.[264] Sphinxes, like other hybridised creatures frequently appear as apotropaic devices.[265] This role intersects with religion as some sphinxes were placed as sanctuary guardians.[266] While the sphinx appears to have come to Greek art through Crete, it may have both Egyptian and Mesopotamian elements to its origin.[267] However, it seems likely the Greek sphinx owes more to Syrian and Levantine types.[268] This influence can be seen in the style, feminine face and contexts in which Greek sphinxes appear, as discussed below.

All the sphinxes which accompany *Potniai Theron* are shown in profile and either have their heads uncovered, wear headbands or flat tiaras. The only example in the IC where a sphinx wears a *polos* is an alabastron from Corinth ca.630-615 (**Fig. 17**), depicting the sphinx in the role of a *Potnia Theron* and controlling a snake. Sphinxes also occur alongside other fantastic or hybrid figures. Two examples show sphinxes being controlled by a Gorgoneion: an alabastron from Corinth ca. 620-590 (**Fig. 22**), and an amphora from Lakonia ca.540-530 (**Fig. 46**). One Corinthian pyxis ca.650-600 (**Fig. 213**) also depicts a pair of sphinxes controlled by a siren. Overall, this demonstrates the complexity of the sphinx as an attribute and as a *Potnia Theron* figure. The sphinx demonstrates similar apotropaic properties to other forms of *Potnia Theron* in some images, while elsewhere it represents the threat of the unknown being controlled by the *Potnia Theron*.

The animal-headed human hybrids within the IC appear exclusively in images where the central figure is identified as Kirke. The hybridised figures in these scenes are predominantly men with boar or pig heads such as on a 6th century altar from Sicily (**Fig. 255**).[269] Some examples appear to have more boar-like bodies. An amphora from Vulci, ca.530 shows two boar-like hybrids – the left figure having boar-like feet while the right figure appears to have human feet, suggesting different stages of transformation. These hybridised creatures help to identify both Kirke and the narrative of the scene as an episode from the Odyssey.[270] Kirke herself can be identified by her cup and wand, as well as her control and transformation of the figures around her.[271] Kirke's control of these creatures places her in the role of a *Potnia Theron* within these scenes (see **Section 7.2.3**).[272] The power demonstrated by Kirke is unique among *Potnia Theron* figures. Not only does she demonstrate her control over the boar-men but also controls the threat of losing their human identity. As the boar-men are transformed and controlled by Kirke's supernatural powers, this would come under a form of passive control (see **Section 6.2**) as the boar-men are not physically held. In most of these scenes, Kirke is shown with several of these hybrid boar-men. However, one 6th century altar from Sicily (**Fig. 255**) abbreviates the image to

[264] Tsiafakis (2003) p.74.
[265] Kolia (2014) p.435.
[266] Tsiafakis (2003) p.79.
[267] Nilsson (1950) p.245; Christou (1968) p.104; D'Albiac (1995) p.70.
[268] Neer (2012) p.102.
[269] Giuliano (2004) p.88.
[270] Hom.*Od.*10.236-42.
[271] Lawler (1952) p.317; Marinatos (2000) p.43.
[272] Christou (1968) p.179; Marinatos (2000) p.41; Aston (2011) p.304.

show Kirke with just one boar-man, although the same narrative can be understood with only two figures.

Griffins appear in three *Potnia Theron* scenes in the IC, two of which balance the griffins on their shoulders. The first being a Lakonian mirror handle from the late 6th century (**Fig. 166**), and the other being a terracotta statuette from Magna Graecia, also from the 6th century (**Fig. 238**). The latter example is damaged, and only part of the left griffin remains. The final example is an East Greek cauldron handle from the 6th century (**Fig. 79**) depicting the central figure as a gorgon in the *Knielauf* pose with the heads of two griffins as protomes emerging from behind her. Like sphinxes, griffins have lion bodies - although with bird-like heads and wings.[273] The heads and wings of griffins tend to resemble those of birds of prey such as eagles, so they may also take on aspects of power and threat represented by these birds.[274] Lions often convey similar meanings to birds of prey in *Potnia Theron* images, supporting the idea that griffins take on a similar protective role to lions when controlled by a *Potnia Theron*. [275]

Like sphinxes, griffins may also have come to Greek art through Minoan examples—such as the frieze from Xeste 3 Akrotiri, Thera ca.1600 (see **Section 2.4.4**).[276] Griffins begin to appear in Greek art in the 8th century as protomes attached to bronze cauldrons, which may have been inspired by Near Eastern – possibly Assyrian – examples.[277] The Near Eastern origins and date of appearance in Greek art are both comparable to other fantastic animals, such as the sphinx – as discussed above.

Sirens are rarely represented as attributes of the *Potnia Theron* and examples we do have vary greatly in style. The example of a mirror from Hermione ca.540-530 (**Fig. 160**) depicts sirens on the headdress of the central figure, who is shown nude and standing on the back of a lion. A very different style and type of control is demonstrated on an oinochoe from Corinth ca.575-550 (**Fig. 171**). This second example shows two sirens flanking a *Potnia Theron* in *knielauf* pose, running to the right, the latter *Potnia Theron* is clothed, demonstrates a more passive control of the sirens and does not control any other animals or attributes. A third example, a fragment from Athens ca.575-525 (**Fig. 261**), demonstrates another dynamic between the *Potnia Theron* and a siren. While only part of the scene remains, we can see the skirt of a standing female figure, and a siren held by the head or neck. Not only does this contrast with the previous two examples by demonstrating active control, but the way the *Potnia Theron* holds the siren close to her body is also unusual.

Unlike the lion-bodied sphinx and griffin, the bird-like body of the siren conveys a different iconographic meaning. The image of the siren is thought to have been influenced by Near Eastern prototypes.[278] However, the earliest source we have for sirens in Greek

[273] Schuhmann (2009) p.111.
[274] Griffin faces and wings: Reed (1976) p.365; Budin (2004) p.223.
[275] Schuhmann (2009) p.114; Simons (2014) p.20; Blakolmer (2016) p.62.
[276] Schuhmann (2009) p.10.
[277] Near Eastern influence: Reed (1976) p.365; Childs (2003) p.59. Cauldron attachments and Assyrian influence: Gunter (2009) p.22.
[278] Boardman (1998) p.84.

myth is the *Odyssey*, although it contains no description of their appearance.[279] Sirens first appear in Greek art in the 8th century, mainly as attachments to bronze vessels, and by the 6th century they become popular figures on Archaic monuments.[280] While sirens become a popular motif in Archaic art, there are only three examples in the IC where they appear as attributes of the *Potnia Theron* and two further examples where they appear as the central figure. Sirens are an unusual attribute in they are not especially large or threatening, but their danger is apparent in myth.[281] These scenes could thus be showing the *Potnia Theron* protecting against the powers of the siren, again acting in an apotropaic role.

Winged lions only appear in one example in the IC, an Etruscan silver pendant ca.675-650 (**Fig. 97**). The pendant's design has similarities to jewellery plaques from Rhodes (e.g., **Fig. 102**) which also have chain attachments below and a winged female figure controlling lions. These similarities suggest that the Etruscan winged lion can be understood in a similar way to the lion of the Rhodes plaque. As lions were already seen as "semi-fantastic" (see **Section 3.1.1)** and both sphinxes and griffins have lion-like bodies, it seems likely that winged lions would carry comparable meanings of threat and strength.

Looking generally at the hybridised creatures controlled by the *Potnia Theron,* they can be understood in similar terms to her other attributes. Large and fierce animals represent her powers of strength and protection, while other hybridised creatures may represent a more subtle and supernatural threat, such as the song of the siren. With both fantastic and real animals, the *Potnia Theron* can be understood as being in a position of protection and control over her animals.

3.1.5 Horses

One of the most distinct sub-groups of *Potnia Theron* figures are the "*Potnia Hippon*" figures where a central figure is accompanied by a horse or horses.[282] Horses appear early in Greek art and are one of the first recognisable motifs of geometric representation.[283] This may suggest that we are looking at an older identity associated with the *Potnia Theron* image, or one whose influence is more established. The idea this is an earlier form of *Potnia Theron* is based on evidence from Pylos, referencing a Mycenaean "Lady of horses" (*po-ti-ni-ja i-qe-ja*) see **Section 1.3**.[284] Horses were also connected with wealth—due to the cost of keeping them—so we may be looking at a figure associated with prosperity and success.[285] This association with keeping horses can be seen to be carried through in the appearance of the *Potnia Theron* on horse ornaments—two from Samos (**Figs. 189-190**) and one from Cyprus (**Fig. 94**).

The most common composition for these images shows the head of the central figure with opposing horse-heads attached on either side. This composition seems to be an

[279] Hom. *Od.* 12.39. Boardman (1998) p.84; Tsiafakis (2003) p.74.
[280] Tsiafakis (2003) p.74.
[281] Hom. *Od*. 12.39-49.
[282] Levi (1945) p.14.
[283] Benson (1970) p.44; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.136.
[284] Kopaka (2000) p.18; Budin (2004) p.236.
[285] Boardman (1978) p.167; Langdon (2010) p.9; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.115; Flognfeldt (2019) p.70.

abbreviation of other *Potnia Theron* compositions where a standing figure is flanked by animals (see **Section 6.1**). This suggests that the power of the central figure goes beyond that of simply controlling horses, which is something we see in other compositions of riders, chariots and figures leading horses, none of which are supernatural in nature. If the control we see from this figure is not physical (such as leading or riding a horse), it may be implied—such as the figures with animals posed either side of them, for example on the bronze cuirass from Olympia, ca.670-660 (**Fig.191**).

While there are five examples in the IC showing a female figure's head between two horses, only two take the form of hydria handles and both show features typical of Archaic art. A bronze handle from Lakonia (**Fig. 81**) is shown with a tall *polos* (see **Section 4.2.1**) and long braided hair (see **Section 4.3.1**), her facial expression has the large eyes and "Archaic smile" typical of the period. In addition, the upper part of the handle is formed of two opposed lions. Another bronze handle from Athens (**Fig. 262**) wears a headband rather than a *polos*. While the Athens example has a similar "Archaic smile", she has a "Daedalic" hairstyle with stylised horizontal divisions. The comparison of these two examples helps to demonstrate the broad stylistic variety in *Potnia Theron* representations. Even among those examples where the same iconographic elements are combined in the same medium.

The abbreviated form of the *Potnia Theron* between two horses seems to be especially associated with the Spartan goddess Orthia, later associated with Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**). Horses were among the animal shaped votives offered to Artemis.[286] An ivory plaque ca.700-500 (**Fig. 90**) and two terracotta examples ca.700-500 (**Figs. 186-7**) are suggested to represent a goddess and were found at the sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta.[287] In total, there are more terracotta and limestone votives of horses at the Orthia sanctuary than those showing other animals, as well as a large number of lead and ivory examples.[288]

Elsewhere, we also see examples where a central figure is shown to stand and control horses. The example of an 8th century bronze tripod leg from Olympia (**Fig. 247**) lacks detail and so gender and other details of the central figure are difficult to discern. However, the "Master of Animals" figure was also depicted with horses, especially in Early Iron Age Argolid and Crete contemporary with depictions of the *Potnia Theron* with horses.[289]

While there are two examples in the IC of female figures riding a horse, this motif is inconsistent. One is a terracotta statuette from Sparta showing a long-haired female figure riding on horseback (**Fig. 235**). The other is bronze tripod from Olympia where the figure appears to stand on the back of a moving horse (**Fig. 247**). It is more difficult to determine if these figures represent a divine figure, especially in the latter example. This in turn makes it difficult to identify the associations of the horse if the figure is to be taken as a goddess.

[286] Budin (2015) p.55.
[287] Page (1951) p.81; Fitzhardinge (1980) p.49; Waugh (2012) p.9.
[288] Page (1951) p.81.
[289] Master of Animals – Argolid: Langdon (2010) p.9. Crete: Prent (2005) p.415.

The symbolism of the horse does not seem to be unified across the *Potnia Theron* images which feature horses. Horses have been suggested to have associations with death or the underworld; however, this function does not seem apparent in any of the images within this study.[290] There are also no obvious visual connections between status or wealth and the *Potnia Theron* images which control horses. The example from a 6th century Etruscan antefix, where the central figure controls two standing horses, has been suggested to have lunar associations.[291] Instead, it seems more likely that the *Potnia Theron* again stands in her liminal position between states. Horses are powerful animals which can be tamed but still inhabit a space between "wild" and "domesticated".[292] This is a role which would accord with her "control" of large animals, as well as the role played by other *Potnia Theron* which control other animals.

3.1.6 Goats, sheep and deer

Relatively few ruminant animals are controlled by the *Potnia Theron*. For ease of classification these have been grouped together, as they are often difficult to distinguish owing to the style of their depiction. The total number of each type of animal (including multiple animal scenes) can be broken down as follows:

Animal	Total
Deer	8
Goats	6
Sheep	3

Table 3.3: Types of ruminants within the IC.

While there are relatively few of each animal type within the IC, deer (including stags – identifiable by antlers) appear most frequently. However, the stylised nature of some depictions means that the identification of some of these animals must be based on previous studies or comparison with other examples. For example, 7th century gem from Mycenae (**Fig. 70**) which is categorised as a deer based on the longer body, more pointed face and straighter ears or antlers. In this way, the Mycenae gem animal resembles deer such as that on the amphora from Attica ca.540-530 (**Fig. 35**) rather than goats like that of the Syracuse ivory fibula ca.630 (**Fig. 87**). Unlike other farmed animals, sheep and goats can live in higher, more remote areas such as mountainsides, and sheep are often mentioned alongside goats, especially in sacrifice contexts.[293]. This may have connections to the worship of earlier goddesses—hilltop sanctuaries were used in early Greek religion, so sheep and goats may suggest a connection to these locations.[294]

[290] Underworld association of horses: Christou (1968) p.158; Tsiafakis (2003) p.97; Langdon (2010) p.10.
[291] DeGrummond (2008) p.426.
[292] Langdon (2010) p.9.
[293] Burkert (1985) p.19; Osbourne (1998) p.69; Larson (2007) p.104; Nosch (2009) p.33; Langdon (2010) p.4.
[294] Use of hilltop sanctuaries: Nilsson (1950) p.75; Coldstream (1977) p.4. Goats and peak sanctuaries: Blakolmer (2016) p.62.

Goats appear more frequently in Greek art and their appearance can be traced back to Minoan art where wild goats (*agrimi*) appear frequently.[295] The "Wild Goat" style—named for its friezes of wild goats—became popular in Ionia in the 7th century.[296] While this style is not especially associated with the *Potnia Theron,* it is contemporary with the images of this study. Both sheep and goats are kept as livestock, rather than being fully "wild", and the control the *Potnia Theron* exerts over these animals suggests she protects them rather protects from them. This contrasts with examples where the figure controls dangerous animals such as lions. Another interpretation is that of the deity receiving their sacrifice and being seen alongside the animal (see **Section 7.6**).[297] Goats also accompany the figure on the ivory pyxis lid from Minet el Beida, dated to ca.1550-1150, which bears strong visual parallels to the *Potnia Theron* (see **Section 2.3.3**).[298]

Deer and stags appear to serve a different function in *Potnia Theron* scenes. In 7 out of 8 examples, they appear with figures which are identifiable as Artemis.[299] One example of this is the 7th century amphora from Melos, where Artemis holds a stag by the antlers (**Fig. 28**). Here the stag serves to identify Artemis. This is also supported by the presence of her brother Apollo, the quiver on her back, and the arrow in her hand. The association between Artemis and deer appears to be stronger with the later "Olympian Artemis" rather than earlier forms, so deer are less frequently represented in the earlier examples considered in this study.[300] Deer are symbolic of the wild and places outside of civilization, so the interpretation of these images is clear: this is a goddess responsible for controlling the wild and keeping civilized places safe from its dangers.[301] Again, the central figure is in a liminal position away from the civilized world—she is directly in contact with something symbolic of the wild, yet she appears human.[302]

While sheep and goats appear to link to a possibly older form of the *Potnia Theron* and a more pastoral and protective role, deer seem to belong more to the later identity of Artemis and highlight her place as a liminal figure and protector of boundaries. The sheep and goats bring the *Potnia Theron* closer to the domestic realm, as she is shown with more domestic animals, while the "wilder" deer take her back to her position on the boundaries between the wild and the civilized (see **Chapter 7**). Again, this demonstrates the variation in roles of the *Potnia Theron* and the value of a closer reading of her iconography.

3.1.7 Sea animals

While animals from the sea are not commonly associated with the *Potnia Theron,* they do appear in two examples within the IC. The first is an Etruscan amphora ca.520 (**Fig.**

[295] Levi (1945) p.12; Cook & Dupont (1998) p.33; Chapin (2004) p.49; Rehak (2007) p.215; Crowley (2010) p.79; Blakolmer (2016) p.62; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.66.
[296] Wild goat style: Neer (2012) p.106.
[297] Goats as sacrifice: Xen. *Hell.* 4.2.20. Simons (2014) p.33.
[298] Kantor (1947) p.86.
[299] Lawler (1947) p.92; Johnson (1981) p.215; Hjerrild (2009) p.42.
[300] Larson (2007) p.106.
[301] Johnson (1981) p.216; Thomas (2009) p.24.
[302] Budin (2004) p.226; Larson (2007) p.101.

43). In this example, the two figures are both identified as nereids, and hold large fish.[303] These figures are unusual in their identification and the animals they hold, but the control of a pair of animals by a central female figure would appear to fall securely within the definition of a *Potnia Theron* (See **Section 1.4**).

The attributes in this example are likely to relate to the identity of the figures. The dress of the central figures is also unusual for *Potniai Theron* (see **Chapter 4.4**) the nereids wear short chitons, one of which has a sun-like motif on the skirt. They also wear caps or *sakkos* which cover their hair, apart from at the very front of the head and the ears (see **Section 4.2.5**). As nereids are sea nymphs, it would seem to follow that the fish serve to identify them as such. Aside from the attributes they hold, there is little context to identify these figures.

The only other figure in the IC which holds sea creatures is a green steatite seal from Melos dated to the Geometric period (**Fig. 74**). This seal is unusual in several respects: firstly, while it is not unusual for a *Potnia Theron* to appear as a gorgon (see **Section 5.6**) this example has wings in place of arms. There is only one other example of a *Potnia Theron* figure which has wings in place of arms (apart from two examples – **Figs. 80** and **213** which are sirens) possible reasons for this are discussed in **Section 5.2**. The wings are also unusual in that they appear to be "tied" together across the front of the body. This may be an attempt to depict feathers or movement, or it may suggest these are costume wings being worn by a human figure.

While gorgons have associations with animals as both attributes and hybridised elements of their appearance (see **Section 5.6**), these rarely include dolphins. However, examples where gorgons are shown with dolphins may suggest the narrative of their pursuit of Perseus; this may also explain the wheel, shown as the other attribute of this figure, representing movement.[304] While the dolphin is unusual, it may thus serve to provide additional narrative context to the gorgon scene.

As well as the two examples discussed so far, there is also the 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) which shows a fish on the skirt of the central figure (see **Section 3.3**). With all three examples, the theme appears to be that the sea creatures they control help identify and provide context for the central figure—even in cases where they are not commonly associated with that specific identity.

3.1.8 Other Animals

This section will cover any animals which do not appear in enough examples to appear in a separate section, nor fit into any of the existing sections of this chapter. These animals can be broken down as follows:

[303] LIMC Nereides 2 Vol.6.1 p.788.
[304] Boardman (1970) p.137.

Animal	Total
Rabbits/hares	4
Wolf	2
Bull	2

Table 3.4: Other animal types within the IC.

Rabbits and hares are difficult to interpret as they were thought of as prey animals.[305] They were also symbolic of fertility - specifically reproductive fertility.[306] The way rabbits and hares appear within the IC is inconsistent; they sometimes appear in scenes where they are held in pairs and actively controlled, such as an Etruscan amber pendant ca.600-550 (**Fig. 96**). In other images single rabbits are held in a similar way to the pet doves held against the chest (see **Section 3.2.3**)., such as the seated 6th century terracotta figure (**Fig. 236**). There is also the example mentioned in **Section 2.3**, where two rabbits or hares stand, passively controlled either side of the central figure on the hydria attachment from Taranto, ca.570 (**Fig. 76**). It seems that the fertility interpretation is the most likely explanation for the presence of rabbits or hares held or controlled by the *Potnia Theron*. The inconsistency in the way these animals are controlled can be explained by the difference in style, medium and regional preferences.

In contrast, bulls tend to have definite associations in Greek art and mythology as well as strong associations with specific figures such as Europa.[307] While there are only two relevant *Potnia Theron* scenes, only one clearly shows a bull: a 7th century bronze helmet from Delphi (**Fig. 193**). The other is a 7th century copper belt plaque from Ionia (**Fig. 188**), and the animals being controlled are difficult to distinguish due to damage.[308] On the former example, the central figure is identified as Aphrodite, who is not frequently depicted as riding a bull. Aphrodite is more usually depicted riding a large water bird such as a swan (see **Section 3.2.1**). Both bulls and Aphrodite have existing associations with fertility but placing Aphrodite on a bull rather than a swan suggests this may refer to agricultural fertility rather than human reproduction.[309]

Wolves are a very unusual attribute for the *Potnia Theron* and only occur on two examples, both of which appear to be made from the same mould—two Etruscan 7th century jewellery plaques (**Figs. 121-122**). There is another example within the IC where a wolf appears: the 6th century Etruscan kotyle (**Fig. 61**) where a gorgon holds snakes. On the kotyle example, the wolf does not appear to be under the control of the *Potnia Theron,* as it appears to be separated from her by a polychrome striped block. The two jewellery plaques which feature wolves include a central figure identified as Artumes, the Etruscan equivalent to Artemis.[310] The way the wolves are held is also unusual; they appear to hang by their front legs from either side of the central figure's body. The central figure raises her arms, so

[305] Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.372.
[306] Flognfeldt (2019) p.75.
[307] Boardman (1998) p.113.
[308] Identification of animals as bulls: https://harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/304230?position=0 accessed 03/10/2024; LIMC Artemis 16 Vol.2.1 p.625.
[309] Bulls and fertility: Schuhmann (2009) p.37; Posthumus (2011) p.44.
[310] Simon (2006) p.55.

is not actively holding them, and their heads are held slightly away from the body of the central figure, so they do not appear to be suckling from her, like images of Lamashtu (see **Section 2.3.2**) who is depicted suckling dogs or jackals and pigs.[311] As there are few examples to make a comparison, it is difficult to interpret the iconography of wolves in these images. However, they may serve a similar function to dogs in that they are protective and serve to help identify the central figure.

3.2 Birds

The *Potnia Theron* appears holding four main types of birds within the IC. These are broadly divided into long-necked water birds such as swans, geese and ducks (see **Section 3.2.1**), small birds such as doves (see **Section 3.2.2**), corvids such as crows (see **Section 3.2.3**) and three unique examples of other birds (see **Section 3.2.4**). As many of the images within the IC show some degree of stylisation, it is difficult to discern between different species of bird. Therefore, the categories used in **Table 3.5** (which gives totals including multiple animal scenes) will be used in the following sections.

Type of Bird	Total
Long-necked water birds	46
Small birds	7
Corvid-type birds	7
Other birds	3

Table 3.5: Types of birds controlled by the *Potnia Theron* within the IC.

These figures include nine examples where birds are held alongside other animals and one example where both long-necked water birds and corvids are held – an ivory plaque from Sparta, ca.700-650 (**Fig. 85**). **Table 3.5** demonstrates that long-necked water birds are the most frequently represented type within the IC, however, there is significant variation in the way they appear within *Potnia Theron* images (see **Section 3.2.1**).

A closer look at the types of birds represented with the *Potnia Theron* serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it demonstrates the variety of bird species represented within the IC and how these can be understood in relation to the central figure. A better understanding of the role of birds also helps to create a differentiation from stylistically similar but iconographically distinct figures such as sirens (see **Section 3.1.4)** which hold significantly different meaning in *Potnia Theron* images due to their role in Greek mythology. An additional benefit to studying the relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and birds is the context which can be applied to those examples where the *Potnia Theron* is depicted with wings.

3.2.1 Long-necked water birds

After lions, long-necked water birds are most often associated with the *Potnia Theron* as attributes.[312] The term “water birds” encompasses types such as geese, ducks and

[311] Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.100; Burkert (1992) p.83.
[312] Barclay (2013) p.160; Simons (2014) p.24; Moore (2018) p.70.

swans, although there is a lack of differentiation between different species in the visual record.[313] As discussed in **Section 3.1.1**, large felines generally demonstrate strength and force when they are attributes of the *Potnia Theron*, water birds pose little threat and therefore suggest a different aspect of the figure.[314] The composition of the *Potnia Theron* scenes demonstrate a very deliberate kind of control over these birds they are not being "conquered", instead they show a different side to the *Potnia Theron*'s identity. [315] As water birds are not associated with threat, another explanation is needed to understand why water birds appear in *Potnia Theron* images.

Of the 45 long-necked water birds which appear in this study, 31 are held by the neck, and 11 of these appear to be lifeless. Holding birds by the neck, especially when lifeless is a very different pose to holding lions and other large felines. Most birds appear to be alive—either because they stand on their own or because they are shown raising their wings or otherwise appear to be moving, even while being held. There appears to be some iconographic significance to whether birds appear alive or not in *Potnia Theron* images and this detail further highlights the diverse roles of the *Potnia Theron.*

The lifeless birds appear to represent a different function of the *Potnia Theron,* specifically associated with hunting (see **Section 7.3.1**). These birds could represent the spoils of the hunt with the central figure as huntress. While this idea does seem to accord with the association of the *Potnia Theron* figures with Artemis, there is little support this. The figures which hold lifeless birds are not dressed as hunters, are not accompanied by dogs or a hunting party, and do not wear a quiver or hold bows, arrows or other hunting equipment. If any of these attributes were present, identification as Artemis would be more certain. It thus seems unlikely that these birds were intended to have associations with Artemis or hunting.

Another possible explanation is that they represent sacrifices which have been offered to a goddess represented by the *Potnia Theron*. This again supposes that we are looking at a divine figure, and that these are attributes which identify her as such. This may have a parallel with the amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) depicting a cow's head and a long narrow object on either side of her. These have been identified by some scholars as the head and leg of a cow or bull, intended to represent a sacrifice to the central figure.[316] The birds in this scene are not held by the neck, and appear to be living and standing upright, suggesting that the birds serve a different iconographic function to the sacrificed cow or bull.

However, the idea of lifeless birds representing offerings finds support in Geometric funerary scenes such as the Attic vase fragment showing a row of inverted birds (**Img. 3.3**). This funerary context may also suggest that the *Potnia Theron* was sometimes associated with death Usually when we see examples of figures associated with death and the underworld, we see clear indications either in their location or the presence of underworld

[313] Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.230.
[314] Barclay (2013) p.157.
[315] Christou (1968) p.188.
[316] Johnson (1981) p.237.

figures such as eidola[317]. While these are not present in any of the *Potnia Theron* images, the Geometric fragment may suggest a precedent for the depiction of lifeless birds.



Img.3.3: Vase fragment, showing row of inverted birds under funerary bier, Geometric period. Ahlberg (1971) Vol.2.

While lifeless birds may symbolise the end of life, living birds appear to have a very different meaning. Water birds are associated with fertility (through their link to moisture and wetlands) and may symbolise fertility as a sphere of influence of the *Potnia Theron*.[318] Water birds are also associated with fertility in myth. One example of this is the Delian myth of the birth of Apollo and the creation of Helen and her brothers.[319] Having established the function of water birds in *Potnia Theron* images, we can compare these to *Potniai Theron* which hold lions and other dangerous animals. Those *Potniai Theron* which hold lions suggest superhuman strength and protection from danger, while those which hold water birds suggest a more nurturing and generative aspect. These different aspects help to show the diversity in function and roles (see **Chapter 7**) and demonstrate that while the motif is defined, it can encompass a range of identities.

The birds shown with a *Potnia Theron* figure may also indicate a specific identity. The birds shown on the 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) appear alongside fish from the sea and lions from the land. This combination of attributes suggests the identity of Hekate as depicted in Hesiod's *Theogony* (See **Section 7.2.8**).[320] Another identity strongly associated with water birds is Aphrodite, although this association seems to be clearer when they are the only animal shown.[321] This can be seen in the 6th century terracotta statuette from Boeotia (**Fig. 241**) depicting a figure riding on the back of a large water bird. While unique in this study, there are numerous other examples of female figures riding on the back of large birds. The majority of these were excluded from this study on the grounds of their later date—with examples from the 4th century through to the 1st century A.D. such as

[317] Eidola: Harrison (1908) p.235; Nilsson (1950) p.319.
[318] Water and fertility: Christou (1968) p.69; Bevan (1989) p.166; Rousioti (2000) p.310; Birds and fertility: Flognfeldt (2019) p.76. See also **Section 7.6**.
[319] Bevan (1986) p.36.
[320] Hes. *Theog*. 411-52. Berg (1974) p.129; Manoledakis (2012) p.293.
[321] Aphrodite and water birds: Christou (1968) p.126.

such as a lebes dating to ca.350 (**Img.3.4**). These figures are usually identified as representing Aphrodite, and the bird is usually identified as a swan. Where later examples are known to be Aphrodite (due to being shown nude, and the inclusion of Eros in some compositions e.g., **Img. 3.4**) the bird is most likely associated with fertility in this context.[322]



Img.3.4: Lebes painting of Aphrodite riding a swan with Eros (above), ca.350. LIMC Vol.II.2 p.91 Aphrodite 931

In addition to fertility, water birds can be associated with liminality. Wetlands such as swamps were thought to be liminal spaces at the outskirts of civilization, and birds occupy a liminal space between sky and land.[323] As discussed in **Section 7.4,** the *Potnia Theron* often appears as a protector of liminal spaces and specific identities such as Artemis are especially associated with this role.[324] Many of the figures which hold birds can be identified as divine figures by their wings (see **Section 5.2**) or by other features such as wearing a *polos* (see **Section 4.2.1)** or bare feet (see **Section 4.6**).

The examples discussed above demonstrate that water birds, like the *Potnia Theron,* can serve a variety of iconographic roles. The context of these birds can tell us more about the role and identity of the central figure. In some instances, they appear to be lifeless and accepted as a sacrifice, while other examples show control of living birds suggesting generative, protective or liminal qualities. Water birds are one of the more complex attributes of the *Potnia Theron,* and a closer study of their context and relationship to the central figure reveals significant and nuanced detail regarding the various roles of the *Potnia Theron* herself.

3.2.2: Small birds

After water birds, small birds – mostly dove-like in appearance – are the most frequent type to appear in *Potnia Theron* images with eight examples in the IC. Doves were

[322] Dexter (2011) p.185.
[323] Birds: Dexter (2011) p.185. Liminal spaces: Budin (2004) p.266.
[324] Mazet (2017) p.24.

sacred to Aphrodite, although securely identified images of Aphrodite holding doves tend to be later than the scope of this study.[325] There were Minoan and Mycenaean "Dove Goddesses," and it seems likely these would have been influences on the *Potnia Theron* which hold doves, although the extent of this influence is unclear.[326]

Most of the small birds are held by the *Potnia Theron* at chest height, such as on a 6th century alabastron from East Greece (**Fig. 18**). This form of direct control suggests birds kept as a pets and protection by the figures which hold them. There are comparable examples of small animals such as rabbits being held in the same pose. Two marble statues illustrate this similarity well: the first is from Miletus ca.570-560 (**Fig. 229**) which holds a bird, the second is from Samos ca.560 (**Fig. 230**) and holds a rabbit. While the heads of both figures are missing, the dress, pose and style of both figures show significant similarities. Therefore, it is likely that both *Potniai Theron* have similar protective roles with their small animals.

There are only four examples where the birds are not held against the central figure's chest: three of these are cinerary urns. Two urns are 9th century examples from Fortetsa (**Figs. 250-251**), and one is a 7th century example from Crete (**Fig. 249**). All the urns show the small birds are held in the hands of the *Potnia Theron*. In the case of the Fortetsa examples, the identification of the birds is more difficult due to their stylised representation. While they appear comparable in size to other small birds discussed in this section, they appear to have longer necks and the linear shading on their wings is comparable to other examples of water birds – such as those on the 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**). The size of the central figure in these images further complicates the issue – while **Fig. 251** is damaged, both this and the central figure in **Fig. 250** appear to be taller than the trees around them. Again, this highly stylised representation makes it more difficult to understand the intended scale of the figures. The only context in the image which could suggest the type of bird being held is the presence of similar birds sitting in the trees. While not conclusive, this suggests the central figures hold small birds rather than water birds. The birds from the 7th century urn (**Fig. 249**) seem less likely to be mistaken for water birds due to their curved body shape. However, again the scale of the birds again seems confusing when compared to the large spotted felines – likely leopards – also held by the central figure. As these birds are difficult to identify due to style, they will be discussed as small birds due to their comparative size and the context available.

The other image where birds are not held against the chest of the central figure is on an object identified as a "*polos*" from Boeotia (**Fig. 252**) where two small birds swoop towards the central figure, being passively controlled.[327] The appearance of these birds suggest they are being called or otherwise drawn to the central figure – either through supernatural command or as pets. In either case, this suggests the *Potnia Theron* gives some degree of protection to these birds. This is also a unique example as the birds are represented in flight, so their wing shape can be seen. Although one of the birds on the

[325] Doves and Aphrodite: Nilsson (1950) p.336; Johnson (1981) p.28; Bevan (1986) p.37 Bouzek (1997) p.144.
[326] Minoan dove goddess: Nilsson (1950) p.254; Coldstream (1977) p.3; Burkert (1985) p.38. Mycenaean dove goddess: Nosch (2009) p.22.See also **Section 2.4** for other Minoan influences on the *Potnia Theron*.
[327] Identification as *polos*: Boardman (1998) p.123.

Fortetsa urn (**Fig. 251**) raises one wing, the stylised representation means that this detail does not give much additional information about the bird in question. While both the Fortetsa urn birds and those from the Boeotia "*polos*" are stylised to some degree, the Boeotia example appears to show well-observed detail of birds in flight. The wings are open but pulled back to suggest they are swooping; the tail feathers and body shape also seem to indicate the direction of flight. These details again support the idea of control and protection from the *Potnia Theron* as they approach her.

Generally, all small birds seem to have similar associations, regardless of the type of bird or how they are held. Each of the *Potniai Theron* which holds or controls small birds appears to be more closely associated with the generative or fertility role, similar to those figures which hold water birds (see **Section 3.2.1**). In either case, the central figure can be taken to be a divine figure, as each example has additional features which would identify her as being a goddess or other divine figure (e.g. bare feet, jewellery, *polos*, etc.)

3.2.3 Corvid-type birds

Corvid-like birds, resembling crows or ravens appear in eight examples within the IC. Three examples which illustrate this type appear on ivory fibulae from Sparta dated to between 750-650 (**Figs. 83-85**). Two further examples appear on jewellery plaques from Rhodes dated to the 7th century (**Figs. 100** and **127**). The same bird type also appears as a supplementary motif under the bodies of sphinxes on a Lakonian amphora, ca.540-530 (**Fig. 46**).

The ivory examples from Sparta show some variety in the way these birds are controlled. In one example (**Fig. 84**) two identical corvid-type birds are being held by their necks, while another similar plaque (**Fig. 83**) shows a corvid being held in one hand along with a spotted feline in the other. The final example is also an ivory, dated to ca.700-650 (**Fig. 85**). While the previous examples are "first style" ivory plaques, **Fig. 85** is a "second style", showing the central figure frontally rather than in profile and with four birds rather than two.[328] In both examples the central figure wears a patterned dress, belted at the waist. However, the figures of the "first style" wear a *polos* and wings, which are not visible on the figure of the "second style". The central figure in both types is identified as the goddess Orthia, at whose sanctuary the plaques were found.[329]

The visual difference between corvid-type birds, water birds (**Section 3.2.1**) and small birds (**Section 3.2.2**) suggests they were intended to convey different iconographic meanings. The corvid-type birds are distinctive in their shape, usually appearing upright with a shorter neck than water birds and more defined beak and wing shape than small birds. It is interesting to note the parallels between the wing shapes and patterns of both the *Potnia Theron* and the birds she controls in the "first style" ivory images (**Figs. 83-84**). This suggests a strong connection between the central figure and the birds she controls. The reason behind this similarity may be found in the later Lakonian amphora (**Fig. 46**) mentioned

[328] First vs. second style: Dawkins (1929) p.205, 208.
[329]Identification of second style figure: Dawkins (1929) p.208. Identification of first style figure: Dawkins (1929) p.205.

above. While this is a later example and the birds are not being directly controlled in this scene, they do appear in a scene with other fantastic and hybrid creatures such as sphinxes and a gorgoneion. This suggests that the birds may also hold a hybrid or liminal function (see **Chapter 5** for hybridity, **Section 7.3** for Liminality). This would be appropriate for a site associated with transitional rites, such as the Sanctuary of Orthia where the plaques were found.[330]

While the two jewellery plaques from Rhodes depicting corvids (**Figs. 100** and **127**) do not have the same connection to sites of transitional rites, they may still have similar associations. The idea of liminal or boundary protection is one which can be seen in many *Potnia Theron* images (see **Section 7.3**). It seems possible that the figures had similar functions, as the ivory fibulae would likely have been worn on garments in a similar way to the jewellery from Rhodes. Taking all these factors into consideration, this suggests that these birds are protective in nature.

3.2.4 Other birds

In addition to the birds covered in the sections above, there are three unique examples of *Potniai Theron* which control other kinds of birds which do not fit into categories defined in **Section 3.2.** These are an eagle on a Hydria from Taranto, ca.570 (**Fig. 76**), cockerels on a from Boeotia, ca.540 (**Fig. 226**), and a horned bird from a bronze Etruscan bust ca.600-575 (**Fig. 254**).

The eagle from the Taranto hydria (**Fig. 76**) is unusual in several respects. Firstly, it is the only bird of prey in the IC. This is notable as it is the only bird within the IC which hunts and therefore represents a degree of threat. Additionally, the eagle sits on the head of the *Potnia Theron*. This placement is unique as all other birds are held in the hand or passively controlled. The *Potnia Theron* holds rabbits or hares in her hands and is surrounded by four lions and two snakes. This unusual placement for the eagle may be an aesthetic choice, with few other options where it may be included in the crowded composition. It may also simply be a case of placing the only winged animal in the group in the highest position.

The Boeotian skyphos c.540 (**Fig. 226**), depicts the head and shoulders of a central figure thought to depict Aphrodite.[331] She is shown facing left, with a pair of cockerels on either side of her facing the centre. The birds are shown standing and alive, and we see the central figure only from the shoulders upwards. Behind the birds we can see tall flowers growing, suggesting a connection to prosperity and the fertility of the earth. This may support the role of cockerels and chickens in a farming context – providing meat and eggs. The position and the addition of flowers suggests that these birds—although they are shown standing and alive—are likely to be representative of offerings.

The other unique example is found on an Etruscan bronze bust ca.600-575 (**Fig. 254**). The unusual "horns" of the bird have been used to try to identify the female figure as a goddess. Specifically, the Egyptian Isis, leading to her findspot becoming known as the "Isis

[330] Paus. 3.16.10-11; Xen. *Const. Lac*. 2.9. Larson (2007) p.105.
[331] LIMC Aphrodite 1092 Vol.2.1 p.109; https://weblimc.org/page/monument/2111258 accessed 03/10/2024.

tomb".[332] However, the form of the figure also resembles Archaic Greek *kourai* figures, with her braided hair and "Archaic smile" – features which may have been influenced by Egyptian art.[333] What can be seen of the Etruscan bust's clothing is also unusual. While there is no exact parallel to the collar she wears within the IC, there are similarities such as the thick necklace worn by the central figure of the 6th century Etruscan antefix (**Fig. 1**). The closeness in location and date suggests that this necklace may have been an Etruscan style rather than adapted from Egyptian or Greek art. In this example, the bird appears to be a pet or attribute, in much the same way as the small birds discussed in **Section 3.2.2**.

What has been demonstrated in the sections above is the diversity in bird types controlled by the *Potnia Theron*. Looking closer at which birds are depicted and how they interact with the central figure reveals significant information about the roles and identities portrayed by individual *Potnia Theron* figures. In turn, this furthers our understanding of the breadth and complexity of this motif and its meaning.

3.3: Mixed attributes (two or more)

As well as the *Potnia Theron* figures which hold one or a pair of the same kind of animal attributes, there are also 20 examples where the central figure controls multiple animal types. The types of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures in multi-animal scenes are detailed in **Table 3.6** below. This table refers to the number of images in which each animal type appears.

Animal	Total
Lion	11
Water Bird	6
Large feline	4
Horse	4
Deer	3
Snake	3
Corvid-type birds	2
Dog	2
Sheep/ram	2
Rabbit/hare	1
Sheep/ram	1
Eagle	1
Fish	1
Other birds	1

Table 3.6: Types of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures which hold multiple animals in the IC.

Table 3.6 demonstrates that the breakdown of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures which hold multiple animal attributes closely resembles the general distribution of animals in *Potnia Theron* images (see **Table 3.1** above). Within the IC, the only animals which appear

[332] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1850-0227-15 accessed 03/10/2024.
[333] Osbourne (1998) p.77; Neer (2012) p.157.

exclusively within multi-animal scenes are dogs and eagles, which only appear alongside other animal types.

Dogs do not have a strong association with the *Potnia Theron*, despite their later association with related identities such as Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**).[334] Due to the inconsistent style of representation and scale of the *Potnia Theron,* dogs can be difficult to differentiate from wolves (see **Section 3.1.8**). For the purpose of this study, dogs and wolves have been identified based on previous scholarship. When dogs appear with the *Potnia Theron*, they are always supplemental to other animals. For example, the 6th century sarcophagus painting from Clazomenae, dogs accompany the *Potnia Theron* figure at the top of the sarcophagus along with a pair of horses. In this image, both the dogs and horses seem to serve similar iconographic functions of "protecting" the sarcophagus. Other Clazomenae sarcophagi were decorated with gorgons serving a similar function.[335] Dogs are also seen elsewhere in the IC, for example in images with Kirke including a kylix from Athens ca.550-525 (**Fig. 63**). However, the dog appears to be controlled in a different way to the boar-men. The dog is not hybridised and appears more as a companion, looking up at Kirke.

The eagle only appears in one *Potnia Theron* representation—a hydria attachment from Taranto, ca.570 (**Fig. 76**). In this example, the central figure controls multiple animals including snakes, lions and rabbits or hares in addition to the eagle. This demonstrates that she has power over animals above, on, and below the ground, suggesting a figure with wide-reaching powers. The combination of animals includes others less frequently seen in the IC such as hares. This combination of animals suggests they do not have specific associations with this identity, in the same way that Athena is associated with the owl.[336] In this example, the position and iconography of individual animals tell us more about the function of the figure than her identity.

In images where *Potniai Theron* control multiple animals, they can be understood to control multiple spheres of influence, like the hydria above. Another example of this is the 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**). In this example, the central figure is shown to control water birds above her arms or wings (see **Section 5.2**), lions on the ground, and a fish on her dress. These three animals seem representative of the land, sea and air, and from here we can see the role each of them plays. However, unlike the Taranto hydria (**Fig. 76**), this combination of attributes may also indicate the identity of the figure (see **Section 7.2**).

These examples demonstrate further how animal attributes are frequently employed to show the role of the *Potnia Theron*. In multiple-animal examples, these can be understood as figures which are powerful enough to control multiple animal types and often employ both active and passive control. The Taranto Hydria (**Fig. 76**) demonstrates this by actively holding hares in either hand, while the lions and snakes are passively controlled either side of the central figure (see **Section 6.2**). Usually, controlling multiple animals

[334] Artemis and dogs: Callim. *Hymn 3.86.* Levi (1945) p.31; Budin (2016) p.55.
[335] Asăndoae (2016) p.216.
[336] Simons (2014) p.26.

places the *Potnia Theron* in a "protective" or "boundary" role. This is not dissimilar to the role she takes on in many of the scenes where the main figure holds one animal or a pair of identical animals.

3.4 Plant and Natural motifs

There are some figures within this study where either the main or supplementary attributes appear to be vegetation. A 7th century Pyxis from Arkades, (**Fig. 248**) shows a figure with tall water-birds, which are not held. Instead, the central figure holds a pair of branches with curling twigs which Levi identifies as "Trees of life".[337] These branches do bear a strong resemblance to the trees on another Cretan urn from the 9th century (**Fig. 250**). On the latter urn, the scene is paralleled on the opposite side (**Fig. 251**) by a figure with a similar composition but with her arms lowered and trees with straight needle-like branches (such as on pine trees) rather than curling branches.

Most examples where the main attributes of the central figure are plant-like are the jewellery plaques from Rhodes. The most common type of attribute which appears on these images is a flower or sun motif, such as the gold plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 115**). There are also flowers with more spaced-out petals, as can be seen on another gold plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 111**). The same flower type also appears as a supplementary motif on eight examples of the same artefact type where lions or large felines are the main attribute being controlled (**Figs. 101**-**105,107,110, 126**). It is likely that these motifs represent the same thing: the idea of growth and prosperity. This notion is further supported by two examples, where the central figure is represented with the body of a bee (**Figs. 117-118**). As flowers are associated with bees, it may imply their meanings are also closely connected.[338] The flowers could also be an indicator of other aspects of the figure's identity; they can be associated with virginity, suggesting that this may be a figure associated with virginity such as Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**).[339]

There is one other motif that appears in the same position as the sun or flower motifs, but which is unique within this study: a gold plaque from Cyprus ca.800-600 (**Fig. 112**) where the central figure is flanked by pinecone-like objects.[340] As this image is earlier than the other jewellery plaques within the study, it may be that this—or similar versions of the scene—was an inspiration for the later versions. The pinecone stands upright next to the central figure, looking like a small tree, and may have had similar iconographic meanings to the flower motif. However, the evergreen nature of pine trees may also suggest that this is a seasonal variation—perhaps similar in appearance to the contrasting scenes seen on the two sides of the urn from Fortetsa, where spring and winter trees are shown with the central figure (Spring trees **Fig. 250**, Winter trees **Fig. 251**).

[337] Levi (1945) p.22.
[338] Link between flower and bee: Boardman (1998).
[339] Flowers and virginity: Langdon (2008) p.112.
[340] Identification as pinecones: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1891-0630-3 accessed 12/02/2025.

3.5 Missing, undefined or other

In addition to those examples where the *Potnia Theron* holds or controls animals or vegetation, there are four examples where the image is too damaged to discern what is being held. In addition, there is one image where the attribute is neither animal nor natural, but the composition otherwise fits the composition of a *Potnia Theron* image.

The image where the attribute being controlled is neither animal nor natural is a jewellery plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 116**) where the attributes are a pair of spheres or domes. This has been included in the study due to the strong similarities with the other Rhodes jewellery plaques where lions, corvid-like birds and sun or flower motifs are controlled by female figures in the same pose. While the attributes flanking the central figure seem obscure, and may be simply decorative, the large rosette at the top of the plaque may convey the same meaning as the flower motifs on other plaques with similar *Potnia Theron* motifs (see **Section 3.4**).

Where an image is too damaged for attributes to be clearly seen, it is necessary to examine the remaining fragments to determine what information can be gleaned from them. For example, the 7th century plate from Thasos (**Fig. 207**) is unfortunately broken in such a way that the attributes are missing. However, the central figure can be identified as a *Potnia Theron* based on her pose—she has wings, making her comparable to other *Potniai Theron* (see **Section 5.2**) and is standing with her elbows bending outwards, suggesting she is holding something out to her left, possibly a pair of attributes being actively controlled (see **Section 6.2.1**). As well as information about the central figure, many of the fill motifs are clearly visible. A curling-armed cross or swastika is visible on the medium fragment on the left, while dotted crosses and dotted "sun" motifs can be seen on the largest fragment. These are reminiscent of motifs visible on other *Potnia Theron* scenes, such as a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) where the dotted sun motif appears not only as a fill motif but also as "tattoos" on the limbs of the central figure.

More ambiguous are the plate fragments from Sardis (**Fig. 211**). Here it is unclear if the central figure is a human, or if she is in a hybrid form—suggested by the unusual body shape and the presence of what appear to be scales on a central fragment. She seems to have wings with polychrome red and black feathers, a feature familiar from other *Potnia Theron* figures; for example, an alabastra from Corinth ca. 640-625 (**Fig. 11**). Only the left hand of the central figure is visible on a lower fragment of the plate, which appears to grasp what may be the tail of an animal in the lower left part of the scene. It is difficult to interpret what kind of animal this may belong to, as the tail curls in an unusual way. It is also uncertain how many animals are depicted—we can only see one hand controlling the animal, but there appears to be another "tail" on the opposite side of the scene. The face of the central figure is shown in profile, and there is a curl visible in front of the face. This could suggest that she wears a headdress, like that seen on the central figure from an amphora from Melos, ca. 670-660 (**Fig. 29**).

While the lack of a complete picture from these images is frustrating, the fragments we have still provide useful information regarding the image and role of the *Potnia Theron*;

they are comparable to other examples within the study, and the useful details they provide help complete the bigger picture of what roles the *Potnia Theron* played as an image. Similarly, the investigation of the poses, attributes and variation of *Potnia Theron* images in this study may prove helpful in future identification and reconstruction of fragments, such as those discussed in this section.

3.6 Conclusion

Overall, the animal attributes of the *Potnia Theron* serve a range of functions. Within the context of the motif, animals may help to identify the central figure, provide the narrative of the scene, or demonstrate the function or sphere of influence associated with the *Potnia Theron*. Looking at the range of animal attributes, we also see the variety displayed across the *Potnia Theron* motif. While the *Potnia Theron* is defined by her control of animals and the wild (see **Section 1.4**) closer investigation of the animals being controlled and how they interact with the central figure reveals much more information regarding the iconographic roles and functions of the *Potnia Theron.*

While the attributes of the *Potnia Theron* provide significant information, the details and broader context can lead us to different interpretations of images sharing same attributes. Nevertheless, the attributes of the *Potnia Theron* remain seen as one of her defining features. In better understanding the meaning of these attributes – both alone and in the context of the *Potnia Theron* motif – a more complete picture of the *Potnia Theron* emerges. While many of the roles of the *Potnia Theron* can be broadly defined in terms such as “protective” or “generative”, a fuller understanding of her attributes provides nuance to these roles and her function as a motif.

4: Dress and appearance of the *Potnia Theron*

4.1: Introduction

The attire – the dress, headwear, footwear, jewellery, belts or absence of these – forms an integral part of understanding each of the *Potnia Theron* figures in this study. While clothing may seem to form a superficial part of the motif, it can reveal important detail regarding the origin, influences, identity, role and spheres of influence of each image. This chapter focusses on how items of clothing are identified, differences in their depiction and the information that clothing provides when examining the *Potnia Theron* motif.

4.2: Headwear

Within the IC, 113 figures are depicted with some kind of headwear with 129 figures shown with their heads uncovered and 21 figures too damaged to assess. The types of headwear found within the IC include the *polos*, *sakkos,* and several types of headbands and veils (see **Table 4.1**).

Type of headwear	Number
Headband	45
Polos	38
Helmet	13
Sakkos/Cap	10
Other	4
Veil	3

Table 4.1: Types of headwear worn by *Potnia Theron* figures.

A likely explanation for the number of *Potniai Theron* with headwear is status. In the Archaic period, high status women would have veiled their head or face more often than often suggested by the artistic corpus.[341]

There is inconsistency in the terminology applied to headwear types in scholarship. This inconsistency was highlighted by Llewellen-Jones concerning the way veils and head coverings are discussed; however, this also extends to other forms of headwear. As a result of this, the term *polos* can confuse as it has been used to describe both a low outward-flaring hat and the tall, almost conical headwear found on Minoan "Snake Priestess" figures.[342] For this reason, each type of headwear will be defined below as part of their discussion.

[341] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.3.
[342] Frothingham (1911) p.360.

4.2.1: *Poloi*

The *polos* (plur. *poloi*) is a tall headdress which appears frequently throughout the IC – worn by 38 figures. Various kinds of *poloi* are worn by the *Potnia Theron* figures of this study. The *polos* is usually identified by its tall shape and vertical sides which may be straight (e.g. East Greek marble stele ca.525, **Fig. 182**) or flare slightly (e.g. Ivory plaque from Sparta ca.750-700 **Fig. 84**). In this study, many examples depict the *polos* in profile, but it can be understood to have a circular top; evidenced from comparison relief (e.g. Lead figure from Sparta ca.620-560. **Fig. 152**) or in the round (e.g. 6th century terracotta statuette from Boeotia. **Fig. 241**).

Many *poloi* are shown without decoration, although some examples are patterned. A funerary urn from Fortetsa (**Fig. 250**) offers a stylised, square-shaped *polos* that has a distinctive squared pattern. This pattern may reflect popular designs of the time – as seen on the skirt of a figure from a Corinthianizing Aryballos (**Fig. 10**). The squared *polos* of the Fortetsa figure has a row of short vertical lines along the upper edge of the *polos* – they cannot be clearly understood but may represent a band of fringe or tassel decoration. Coldstream suggests another possible explanation, seeing a resemblance to "city gates.".[343] This suggestion may be based on later images of figures such as the Tyche of Antioch who wore a *polos* shaped like city walls. These figures date to the Hellenistic period, ca.3rd century – 600 years later than the Fortetsa example.[344] Due to the chronological gap it is unlikely that there is a direct connection between these examples, but the latter figure may have influenced Coldstream's suggestion for his interpretation on the shape of the *polos* worn by the Fortetsa figure.

Other examples such as two ivory plaques from Sparta (**Figs. 83, 84**) seem to have a border around the base of the *polos*, closer to the head, which sometimes appears braided. The *poloi* displayed on Corinthian aryballoi may also have a braided or decorated base. The wearer appears to have a patterned headband – in some cases such as **Fig. 11** only a headband – with the *polos* shown above or behind the head (e.g. **Fig. 15**). Headbands will be looked at in greater detail below; this section will focus only on the *poloi.* These bands could either show a patterned or braided base of the *polos* or may tell us headbands were worn under the *polos* – perhaps to keep it in place on the head. I would suggest the latter, as there appears to be not only a hairband but also a continuation of the hair of the figure – meaning we see what is under the *polos* in examples such as **Fig. 15**. However, we do not see this in instances such as **Fig. 21**, where I would suggest this depicts a braid or ribbon decoration around the base of the *polos*.

Fluted *poloi* are also seen – these examples suggest a shaped rather than patterned form of decoration. A Boeotian relief amphora ca.675 (**Fig. 38**) shows this, with vertical indentations shown on a flared *polos* while an Archaic bronze hydria handle (**Fig. 81**) features a *polos* with straighter sides and narrower fluting. This shaping may reflect

[343] Coldstream (1984) p.97.
[344] https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010258306 accessed 12/02/2025.

contemporary architecture – while fluted columns are not exclusive to the Archaic period, they appear from the 6th century onwards.[345]

The *polos* appears to be associated with status and may signify divinity.[346] The *polos* may have originated in the East – in Phrygia, goddess images, usually identified as Matar or Kybele, wear a flared *polos* and veil in depictions beginning in the 8th century.[347] Human and divine Neo-Hittite relief figures from the 9th century onwards also display a similar *polos* and veil.[348] This influence may have transferred to Greece via Crete in figures identified as goddesses.[349] *Polos*-like headwear is visible in Minoan art dated from 1700-1580. Reconstructions of these figures have been disputed; however, the headwear is visible in the fragments before reconstruction.[350]

The *polos* is not necessarily an indicator of divinity – some images are interpreted as representations of mortal women wearing *poloi* in emulation of deities.[351] An example where this is a likely interpretation is in groups of three figures shown together, wearing *poloi* – the central image of these groups is usually identified as divine; in contrast, those either side are identified as attendants or nymphs.[352] An example of this paradigm is the lead plaque from Sparta (**Fig. 152**) where the "attendants" pose sideways, looking towards the frontal figure – usually interpreted as a goddess. Here, all three figures wear *poloi*, but the positioning of the figures indicates their roles and status. Similar compositions are seen elsewhere, such as on a Boeotian relief amphora (**Fig. 38**) where the attendant figures are more clearly distinguished from the central "divine" image as they do not wear *poloi* and are smaller in size. Even when the *polos* does not signify divinity, it is likely to be a sign of status or a religious role, mainly when the *polos* is elaborately decorated.[353]

From this, it seems that the *polos* generally conveys a sense of status, which is usually – but not exclusively – divine in nature. Where a *Potnia Theron* figure wears it, it can go some way to illuminate her role – we can tell she has some status, either in the sense of wealth, social hierarchy, or divinity. The *polos* alone does not provide the full character or identity of a *Potnia Theron* figure – we need to look at other aspects of her appearance to gain a fuller understanding. However, it does provide a good starting point for an analysis of these figures, and clues to their antecedents.

[345] Pfaff (2003) p.96.
[346] Levi (1945) p.19; Hoffmann (1964) p.186; Burkert (1985) p. 149; Ammerman (1991) p.226; Marinatos (2000) p.82; Ulbrich (2010) p.173; Winbladh (2012) p.51; Budin (2016) p.21.
[347] Dillon (2002) p.154; Berndt-Ersöz (2006) p.51. As symbol of Phrygian divinity: Rogers (2012).
[348] Roller (1999) p.71.
[349] Christou (1968) p.206.
[350] *Polos*-like headwear: Blakolmer (2009) p.33. Issues with reconstruction: Bonney (2011) p.176. Date for Minoan figures: Bonney (2011) p.177.
[351] Lebessi (2010) p.199.
[352] Karouzou (1972) p.73; Larson (2002) p.114.
[353] Cavanagh & Mee (1995) p.47; Mazet (2017) p.22.

4.2.2: Headband

In scholarship, different names appear for headbands including a "stephane" (short crown or wreath), ribbon, diadem or fillet.[354] As discussed above, there can be disagreement between "divine headdress" (i.e. the *polos*) and a "thick fillet" or "diadem" which would be worn by mortal women.[355] Others have drawn close comparisons between the "stephane" and the *polos* – while the former definition suggests a stephane is nearer to a headband, the comparison with the *polos* suggests the "stephane" was more like a hat.[356] Due to this ambiguity in terms, I will be approaching this from a visual perspective; this section will focus on bands of cloth or metal worn around the head. Headbands or fillets can also be challenging to discern from cap-like head coverings (see **Section 4.2.5**).[357]

Of the 45 figures with headbands in the IC, there are a few sub-types which can be seen:

Type of headband	Total
Around crown of head	34
Around crown of the head and ponytail	8
Across front of the head	3

Table 4.2: Types of headband worn by *Potniai Theron* divided by how they are worn on the head.

A type seen on Corinthian alabastra is a simple band rendered as two white or reserved bands against the hair shown in black. These bands usually appear around the crown of the head (e.g. **Fig. 11**) with a more complex example also holding the hair in a kind of ponytail at the back of the head (e.g. **Fig. 12**). For the latter type, it is unclear if this is a single band worn around the top of the head and containing the hair, or if they are two separate bands worn together. The single band around the crown of the head seems to be the most frequently represented in vase painting – either as a thick white band, two white bands marking the edges of the headband (e.g. **Fig. 62**), or a band of red (e.g. **Fig. 226**) – against a background of black hair.

[354] Ulbrich (2010) p.179.
[355] Fillet: Langdon (2008) p.284. Diadem: Lee (2015) p.142.
[356] Dawkins (1920) p.150; Stillwell (1952) p.28; Christou (1968) p.38.
[357] Lee (2015) p.159.



Img. 4.1: "Necklace Swinger" figure from the Lustral Basin frieze, Xeste 3, Thera. Rehak (2004) p.88

When looking at possible antecedents for these headbands, one example is the figures of the Lustral Basin frieze from Xeste 3 on Santorini. Another frieze at the same site bears thematic similarities to later *Potnia Theron* images (see **Section 2.3.2**). Figures from the Xeste 3 frieze such as the "necklace swinger" and the "wounded woman" (**Img. 4.1** and **Img. 4.2**) wear headbands which bear visual similarities to those of Corinthian Alabastron figures (e.g. **Fig. 12**).[358] It is also likely that a cloth or metal band is the simplest way of keeping long hair out of the face. Here it is useful to look at possible influence from the Xeste 3 figures seen elsewhere in the clothing of the *Potnia Theron.* Perhaps most evidenced in the dress worn by the "Necklace swinger" figure. The "necklace swinger" shows parallels with dresses worn by several of the *Potnai* of the IC. Her skirt pattern is reminiscent of that worn by the figure from an amphora from Melos (**Fig. 29**). Taken in combination with the thematic similarity of the "Enthroned Goddess" frieze, who also controls animals like the later *Potnia Theron* figures, this suggests a likelihood of the Xeste 3 figures being part of an artistic style that influenced some of the later images.

[358] Minoan figure names: Rehak (2004) p.88.



Img. 4.2: Wounded woman" figure from the Lustral Basin frieze, Xeste 3, Thera. Rehak (2004) p.88.

One example where a *Potnia Theron* is shown with a headband across the forehead is a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**). This headband appears to be made of strips of contrasting cloth which are twisted or braised together. A less likely suggestion would be a metal band with a twisted shape or engraving. The latter suggestion seems less likely as it may be uncomfortable to wear and difficult to keep in place. Other examples show figures more likely to wear metal headbands based on the shape and placement of the band on the head. A bronze handle from Athens (**Fig. 262**) and 6th century olpe from Corinth (**Fig. 175**) both appear to show a figure wearing a solid headband. The difference in headband material does not seems to have a significance, although the headband of the Rhodes figure may serve an additional function (see **Section 5.5.6**).

The crown-like "stephane" headband seems to have been related to status and associated with goddesses or associated figures such as priestesses or votaries.[359] The example from Melos (**Fig. 28**) shows Artemis (identified by the stag she holds and the presence of Apollo) wearing this kind of headband, which is characterised by a raised front. A similar headband is that shown on an olpe from Corinth (**Fig. 175**) – again, this figure is shown in profile - making the raised front of the headband visible. The shape of these bands strongly suggests a solid material such as metal.

In addition to fabric and metal headbands, 13 examples wear snakes around the head, all of which are gorgons. While gorgons are often associated with snakes in place of hair, these are a later addition and do not appear in the earliest examples.[360] When snakes

[359] Crown-like: Ulbrich (2010) p.179. Association with goddess, priestess, or votary: Christou (1968) p.38.
[360] Dexter (2010) p.26. Snake-hair not until 7th century: Ogden (2013) p.93.

first appear with gorgons, they are worn as headbands, or belts or appear as a row or "halo" around the head of the gorgon.

While Maenads are also depicted wearing snakes around their heads, these depictions tend to be later such as a white-ground kylix from Athens dated ca.480-70 (**Img. 4.3**).[361] In this image, the maenad displays direct control of animals by not only wearing a snake around her head but also holds a panther by its hind leg and wears a panther skin over her back. In this way, she resembles many of the earlier *Potnia Theron* figures which hold dangerous animals such as lions. Her pose is reminiscent of images such as the amphoras from Melos (**Fig. 29**) and Athens (**Fig. 34**) where large felines are held off the ground by their hind legs. As both examples are earlier, influence from these images to the later depiction of the maenad seems possible. The maenads which do appear within the IC do not wear snakes around their heads but hold them in their hands (e.g. **Fig. 60** and **77**).



Img. 4.3: Maenad from white-ground kylix from Athens dated ca.480-70. Dillon (2002) p.140

Unlike the *polos* (see **Section 4.2.1**), it is not suggested that a fillet or headband could be seen as a sign of divinity and conversely may suggest a figure is mortal.[362] However, there are clear examples where the figure wearing a headband is divine, such as a lekythos from Athens (**Fig. 155**); this figure is winged and holds a pair of large felines resembling lions, both of which strongly suggest a deity or divine figure. Of the types of headwear looked at in this section, headbands are the most difficult to distinguish from one another, which makes the issue of discerning any possible meaning more difficult. Of the types discussed above, the more crown-like *stephane* seem likely to have some association of status – we see them associated with goddesses (e.g. the 7th century amphora from

[361] Dillon (2002) p.140.
[362] Langdon (2008) p.484.

Melos (**Fig. 28**) however, the connection to status is more likely to come from the material and manufacture of the band itself. The shape, when shown to rise at the front, suggests a solid material such as metal which would make these more valuable items requiring skill to manufacture.

4.2.3: Headdress

Among the figures within the IC, there is a group which features unusual headdresses which would not fall under any other group. In this section, I will look at headdresses supporting attachments extending upwards or outwards from the head. As will be shown, there is some variation in these examples, and I will look at what this can tell us about the individual figures.

The first headdress example is a relief amphora from Boeotia ca.675 (**Fig. 38**). While the figure style and headdress are unusual, there is a comparable fragment from Tenos (**Img. 4.4**). Both share the same composition: a larger central female figure with two smaller figures extending their arms around the central figure. In both examples, large felines flank the middle group, although only the upper part of the right-hand feline survives from the Tenos fragment. The dress worn by the central figures also bears the same diamond pattern and stylised shape. These parallels all strongly suggest the same figure represented on both examples. The one difference we can notice is that while the Boeotia fragment appears to wear a fluted *polos,* the Tenos figure does not – however, both figures have horizontal, vine-like additions extending from either side of their head. These "vines" also appear to bear small bunches of grapes or similar fruit, suggesting they are growing or part of the figures. When viewing the Boeotia figure, it is unclear if the vines are attached to the figure herself or part of her *polos,* but considered in combination with the Tenos figure, it seems more likely to be the former. On the Tenos figure, the "vine" crosses the front of the head and extends either side of the head. Another possible interpretation could be this is an actual vine being worn around the head, under the *polos* in the case of the Boeotia figure. In either case, we see a strong association with the natural world indicated by the vine. We already see these figures as *Potnai Theron* due to the control of the large felines – the vegetal motif broadens the spectrum of this influence, from the control of animals to control of nature more generally (see **Section 3.4**). The vines appear symmetrical and controlled rather than growing uncontrollably. This suggests the same kind of power that keeps the lions in these reliefs held in unnatural poses.



Img. 4.4: Relief fragment from Tenos showing vine-like headdress. Simantoni-Bournia, E. (2017) p.32.

There is comparable headdress on an amphora from Melos (**Fig. 29**). While the pose and style of this figure are different, there are some notable similarities to those discussed above. Firstly, the skirt of the Melos figure displays a remarkably similar diamond pattern to the dresses of the Boeotia and Tenos figures. The Melos figure also controls large felines; unlike the passive control of the Boeotia and Tenos figures, the Melos figure shows active control, holding the felines by their hind legs (See **Section 6.2**). The Melos figure also has wings, which the Boeotia and Tenos figures do not. The headdress of the Melos figure also differs in shape from the relief amphora figures – the "vines" – sometimes referred to as antennae - are more curled and appear to be attached to the low *polos* she wears rather than being separate or part of the figure herself.[363] This headwear is similar to the Boeotia and Tenos figures in that the attachments are vine-like and seem to have small leaves or budding flowers at the end. A bronze mirror handle from Hermione (**Fig. 160**) has more apparent examples of a headdress ending in budding flowers – in this case with small figures of sirens perching on the flowers.

Comparable to the Melos example is a figure on a plate fragment from Paros (**Fig. 202**) which has been reconstructed with a similar headdress, using a band around the head in place of a *polos*. As this plate is reconstructed, more caution is required. While the Melos and Paros figures display stylistic differences, the resemblance between their headdresses suggests they may represent similar roles of the *Potnia Theron*. This similarity suggests that these figures control not only wild animals but also the natural world more generally. However, unlike the Tenos and Boeotia figures discussed at the beginning of this section, there is nothing to suggest the protection of children. So, while these figures are likely to have had similar functions, it is unlikely they were the same. A more plausible interpretation

[363] Simons (2014) p.96.

would be that these are local forms of similar figures taking artistic influence from a common source.

Minoan art provides a possible source of inspiration for these headdresses. There are figures which appear in Minoan glyptic art which wear a "snake-frame" headdress (**Img. 4.5**). These figures are mainly from the Neopalatial period, with none appearing before the Late Minoan period.[364] This comparison is more convincing as the "snake frame" figures are often depicted as *Potnai Theron* – in symmetrical compositions where they hold an animal in either hand.[365] These "snake-frame" headdresses also resemble those of Syrian goddesses, which would again support the suggestion of Crete as an intermediary between Near Eastern and Greek culture.[366] While these "snake-frames" appear similar to the vine-like headdresses, there is nothing beyond their shape to suggest if these Minoan headdresses represent vines, snakes or something else such as large animal horns.[367] The shape of these headdresses can also be compared to the snakes found on gorgon representations such as the Black figure olpe from Attica ca.550-530 (**Fig. 176**). However, the headdresses covered in this section generally appear more plant-like and do not have any features to identify them as snake-like.



Img.4.5: Sealstone with goddess holding sacred symbol (snake frame) between griffins, Knossos, Neopalatial period (1700-1450 BC) Sakellarakis (1984) p.85

The unusual and inconsistent style of this group of headdresses means that collectively, they provide little information. The Tenos and Boeotia images are likely to be related to each other due to their close similarity but do not show such close resemblance

[364] Rehak & Younger (1998) p.146; Krzyszkowska (2005) p.253 n.79.
[365] Evans (1935) p.168; Nilsson (1950) p.365-6; Barclay (2001) p.378; Schuhmann (2009) p.33.
[366] Dubcová (2015) p.229.
[367] Similarity to horns: Nilsson (1950) p.365; Krzyszkowska (2005) p.204.

to other examples. While the Melos and Paros figures have similar headdress shapes, the overall style is quite different. It seems likely there is a common antecedent to these figures, as they seem to share a common function in their control of both animals and plant life. While it cannot be said that this antecedent was the Minoan "snake frame" figures with any certainty, it does seem to suggest a similar image which would lend itself to being adapted into a *Potnia Theron* in a range of local styles.

4.2.4: Veils

Veiling refers to cloth head coverings which are worn either alone or with another kind of headwear discussed in this section. There seems to be some variation in the length of veils shown in the images from the study. This variation includes those covering the body, such as the Amphora from Cerveteri (**Fig. 42**) to those which only cover the hair like the Athenian Lekythos (**Fig. 157**). Some depictions of veils appear to show them to be decorated, such as the Cerveteri amphora figure who seems to wear a long veil with a dotted pattern.

Some examples show the veil worn with the *polos* – such as on a Stele from East Greece (**Fig. 181**). These examples suggest that like the *polos*, the veil has Eastern origins, possibly in Anatolia. Supporting this suggestion are Phrygian goddess figures such as Kybele which wear a veil and *polos*. [368] Kybele later appears in Greek art and retains the same recognisable costume.[369] The origins may be earlier than Kybele; suggested antecedents include the women of Sumer, the Hittites, and Neo-Hittites, the Hebrews, the Persians, and the Assyrians.[370] Unlike the *polos*, the veil has been suggested to be so ubiquitous in the dress of ordinary Greek women that it was rarely necessary for it to be mentioned or depicted.[371] Therefore, it is necessary to consider why women are shown with headwear other than veils or with their heads uncovered. From looking at the evidence presented so far, the most straightforward explanation would be that this allows a greater expression of identity. For example, hair styles can suggest age, status or regional influence (see **Section 4.3**).

As with headbands (see **Section 4.2.2**), there is a possibility that veils may be a typical feminine head covering and unlike the *polos*, do not give us any information regarding if a figure is divine. However, the type of veil and how it is worn may provide insight into a figure's status and possible routes of influence – for both the costume and the style of artistic representation. Looking specifically at the *Potnia Theron,* veiled examples seem likely to be a general indicator of femininity. They may also give some suggestion of geographic influence where the veil is worn with a *polos.*

[368] Phrygian: Roller (1999) p.47; Vassileva (2005) p.95; Roller (2011) p.569.
[369] Bøgh (2007) p.307.
[370] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.6.
[371] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.1

4.2.5: Caps

There are two distinct cap types within this study, a third possible type is found on a Sarcophagus painting from Clazomenae covered in the following section on hair, but as it does not cover all the hair, I have not included it here.

The first kind of cap found in the IC is the *sakkos,* thought to have been a sack-like hair-net or snood which contained the hair.[372] The *sakkos* was of Semitic origin – worn initially by foreign-born courtesans and labourers but becoming appropriate wear for women of higher status.[373] This may be the kind of headwear worn by the two figures identified as Nereids on an Etruscan amphora ca.520 (**Fig. 43**).[374] These caps are made of dotted fabric or may represent netting; they are fitted over the top of the head and cover the hair at the back of the head. A maenad from a Late Archaic cup from Attica (**Fig. 60**) wears a cap which appears similar. Aside from the cap, there is little in common in the clothing of the Nereid and Maenad figures – the former wearing short chitons while the latter has a long dress with the left leg exposed. The role of these figures also differs significantly, with nereids being sea goddesses and maenads being the human followers of Dionysos.

The second type of cap seen in the IC is the Etruscan cap. The only example of this type in the IC is seen on an Etruscan cup ca.520-510 (**Fig. 64**). The cup shows a tall *polos*-like cap which covers the hair but is distinct from the *polos* by its shape. The same type of head covering appears elsewhere in Etruscan art (see **Image 4.6**) and is also recorded in Homer.[375] This headwear helps to communicate aspects of the figure on the cup (**Fig. 64**). This cap style was associated with noblewomen as is specifically Etruscan. This figure is shown hunting with a bow, which would not be expected of a woman of high status, so it is likely that this figure is a goddess or mythological figure.



Img.4.6: Etruscan headwear from tomb art. Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.32.

As few caps appear in the IC, they highlight specific details in those examples where they appear. The *sakkos* appears on quite diverse figures, so it is not easy to draw a direct comparison between the two. The diverse nature suggests a diverse range of women wore

[372] Lee (2015) p.159.
[373] Lee (2015) p.159.
[374] LIMC Vol.6.2 p.456.
[375] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.31-2.

the *sakkos;* which can be expected from headwear which originated on courtesans and labourers and was later adopted by women of higher status. The Etruscan cap is more specific in meaning – it gives us an idea of the origin and status of the wearer.

4.3: Hair

Minimal hair styling is visible in the *Potnia Theron* figures. A Lydian intaglio gem image shows the hair worn in a bun at the back of the head (**Fig. 72**). This gem is unique within this study for the hairstyle, as well as appearing topless and wearing curling shoes. This unique appearance may be due to the Lydian origin of the gem, borrowing from influences further east than those found elsewhere in the Greek world.[376] There is also a Sarcophagus painting from Clazomenae (**Fig. 216**) with a figure wearing their hair in a ponytail. This style seems to combine a hairstyle with a head covering and appears to have local connections as it appears on other examples of Clazomenian sarcophagi (e.g. **Img. 4.7** and **4.8**).



Img. 4.7: Clazomenian sarcophagus showing figures with ponytail and cap. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_Antikensammlung_Berlin_30030#/media/File:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_Antikensammlung_Berlin_30030_06.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

[376] Curling shoes in Lydian art: Walters (1905) p.332. Greeks in Asia Minor with Lydians: Marinatos (2000) p.50. Hittite and Mesopotamian influence: Dietrich (1965) p.25.



Img. 4.8: Clazomenian sarcophagus showing figure with ponytail and cap. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Klazomenian_sarcophagi_in_the_British_Museum#/media/File:Klazomenian_sarcophagus_-_Albertinum_Group_-_battle_scenes_-_chariot_race_-_horsemen_-_animals_-_London_BM_1896-0615-1_-_05.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

Many examples show hair worn long; I have divided these figures into four main groupings as follows – the remaining 68 examples are either too damaged to assess or have no hair visible:

Type of hair	Total
Straight	70
Braided	54
Curly	41
Daedalic	30

Table 4.3: Types of long hair worn by Potnia Theron figures in the IC.

Straight hair is usually worn as an undifferentiated mass or with linear divisions suggesting strands or locks of hair. Occasionally there are zig-zagged divisions in the hair (e.g. **Figs. 27, 128** and **183**) which could be representative of either straight or curly hair. As the three examples mentioned are the only instances of these zig-zag divisions, I have included them with straight hair but mention them here as an alternative interpretation is possible. Braided hair is represented in several ways which are covered in greater detail in **Section 4.3.1**. The Daedalic style of hair is perhaps the most clearly defined of the types discussed in this section; the style where the hair is worn long, with visible horizontal divisions (e.g. **Figs. 76, 117** and **129**). Usually, the faces of these figures have an "Archaic smile" with angled features.[377] The majority of the images with Daedalic-style hair are from

[377] Fitzhardinge (1980) p.47; Ammerman (1991) p.209.

the jewellery plaques from Rhodes workshops.[378] Curly hair is shown in several ways – most frequently as being similar to straight hair, as a mass, but with curved edges to suggest curls such as on an alabastron from Corinth (**Fig. 12**) or with a linear definition such as on a Boeotian Pyxis (**Fig. 212**). There are also more stylised representations of curls such as the plate from Ionia (**Fig .210**) where they are shown almost square spirals around the face of the figure. These curls reflect the shape of fill motifs to the left of the figure; so, the rendering of the hair seems to reflect the artistic style.

4.3.1: Braids

Braided hair appears on 54 figures within the IC The most common representation of this is long rope-like strands of hair with individual modelled sections (e.g. **Fig. 7**). These braids appear on gorgons where they tend to appear thicker and more exaggerated (e.g. **Figs. 3 and 22**) this may have acted as a kind of "stepping stone" towards the later snake-haired images. On images in the round or high relief, the hair on the top of the head appears in braided rows – this tends to be more common on figures which appear human (e.g. 6th century terracotta alabastron from East Greece, **Fig. 18**) but is also seen on gorgon images (e.g. bronze krater handle from Western Greece ca.500, **Fig. 135**). However, gorgon depictions more often show "snail-shell curls" visible across the top of the head. In some examples, these "snail shell" curls continue into the beard of the gorgon (e.g. 6th century antefix from Capua, **Fig. 5**), other examples show smaller curls used in the beard of the gorgon (e.g. 6th century metope from Sicily, **Fig. 2**). These are usually rendered as small circles, some of which have painted or modelled detail making the curls appear more like seashells (e.g. Antefix from Sicily, ca.620-610 **Fig. 3**). Usually, the rest of the hair is worn in braids, although in some examples the small curls continue either side of the head – generally as short hair but occasionally worn long (e.g. Alabastron from Corinth ca.625-600 **Fig. 13**).

A range of different braid styles appear in the *Potnia Theron* figures. The first of these are the locks of hair such as those from the Bronze Etruscan bust ca.600-575 (**Fig. 254**).[379] These are rope-like modelled locks of hair with inscribed detail giving them the texture of braided hair. The modelled shape of these locks of hair is smoother and more reminiscent of dreadlocks. The braided hairstyle of some *kouroi* thought to be inspired by Egyptian art has also been described as "dreadlocks".[380] This possible Egyptian inspiration would be in keeping with the Etruscan bust, which may represent the Egyptian goddess Isis or at least be influenced by her image.[381] Other figures with this hair type are shown as *korai* – the female equivalent of the *kouros* figures mentioned above, or bear a strong resemblance to the *korai* type in their upright pose and "Archaic smile".[382] These figures include a *Perirrhanterion* from Corinth (**Fig. 177**) and a bronze hydria handle (**Fig. 82**).

[378] Turner (1998) p.73.
[379] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1850-0227-15 accessed 12/02/2025.
[380] Jenkins (2001) p.168.
[381] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1850-0227-15 accessed 12/02/2025. Carpino (2013) p.1011.
[382] Korai and Kouros: Osborne (1998) p.70.

Other examples appear more likely to be strands of hair plaited or similarly gathered. Unlike the smooth "dreadlocks" mentioned above, these seem to have more defined sections which are either rounded or square in shape. The 6th-century marble gorgon statue from Paros (**Fig. 228**) is an example where the hair of each braid is divided into a row of small squares ending in a small triangular section. Other examples show rounded - rather than square - sections making up each braid, such as a 7th-century ivory plaque from Sparta (**Fig. 89**). This style also appears on a lead figure from Sparta (**Fig. 153**) and jewellery plaques from Rhodes (**Figs. 119, 120** and **123**). There are also examples which seem to show long individual curled locks. One example is on the small altar from Sicily (**Fig. 255**). This type of hair appears more like individual ringlets of hair rather than braided or dreadlocked hair – the curls around the face seem to support the idea of curled hair that may fall in long ringlets. However, the artistic style leaves this open for some interpretation.

Looking at the different styles of braids and locks of hair worn by the various *Potnia Theron* figures, it seems that these show us more of the place where each image originated, and the style employed than about the character of the *Potnia Theron* herself. The comparisons to *korai* figures could suggest a virginal aspect of the *Potnia Theron*, but this style is limited to a few images. Looking at these hairstyles goes further to support the hypothesis that the variation of *Potnia Theron* types shows their various places of origin through the artistic styles employed and the difference of hairstyles worn. Generally, the type of hair shown does not seem to provide any additional information on any aspect of the *Potnia Theron.* The long hair appears to be a generally feminine attribute but how it looks seems to only link to the artistic style employed in the depiction in question.

4.4: Dress

The clothing of the *Potnia Theron* figures primarily involves types of dresses. These are differentiated by their length, style, and decoration – which are covered in greater detail below. In most instances, the dress is visible. However, there are examples where the dress of the *Potnai Theron* is unclear. This obscuring can be due to additional items of clothing, such as a *himation* or *aegis* (see **Section 4.5**). Visibility also depends on the pose or composition; for example, where the lower body is obfuscated, and details such as the length of the garment cannot be discerned.

4.4.1: Type

Within the *Potnia Theron* figures of this study, there are two main kinds of dress depicted – the *peplos* and the *chiton* (both short and long). The *peplos* type is a dress made of two layers which fold over at the top, often worn tightly belted at the waist.[383] The belt of the peplos may be visible such as on a Corinthian aryballos (**Fig. 53**), or the upper fold of the dress covers it, as on an Attic black-figure Amphora (**Fig. 34**).[384] While the *chiton* is a straighter garment, usually looser, but may also be belted. The division of these types of dresses within the IC is as follows:

[383] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.50.
[384] Lee (2015) p.103.

Types of dress	Total
Peplos	142
Chiton	30
Nude	25
Damaged	14
Unclear due to style or pose	11
Other clothing	5
Skirt only	4

Table 4.4 Number of times each dress type is found worn by a *Potnia Theron* figure within the IC.

Table 4.4 gives a breakdown of the types of clothing which appear in the IC. This demonstrates that the *peplos* is the most common garment. There are also 24 examples not included in the table as only the head is shown and eight examples with a non-human body – these examples were not included in the table as they are unable to wear clothes in the same way as human-bodied figures. Only clothed figures will be discussed in this section; nude figures are covered in **Section 4.8**.

Generally, the *peplos* is associated with virgin goddesses such as Athena and Artemis.[385] Although as will be discussed, Artemis also wears the *chiton*.[386] This association for the *peplos* is strengthened by the fact that the monumental garment dedicated to Athena at the Panathenaea festival at Athens was a woven *peplos.*[387] The over-belted style of *peplos* is primarily associated with *parthenoi* – belts would be untied and dedicated to Artemis before marriage and women who died before marriage appear dressed in this way as an eternal *Parthenos.*[388] As the *peplos* has associations with Artemis this may explain why it is the most frequently represented dress type in the IC (see **Table 4.4**).

The other type of dress we see is the *chiton*. Usually, this is the shorter version. This type of dress tends to be worn by figures shown running or in the *knielaufen* (kneeling-running) pose as shown on a pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). These *chiton* dresses often have patterned belts and decorated hems such as on an alabastron from Corinth (**Fig. 13**). While the short length of the *chiton* suggests an association with active or outdoor pursuits, the decoration references the status of these figures.

The *chiton* is often unbelted. This may account for the unusual, almost square shape of the central figure from the amphora from Boeotia (**Fig. 38**).[389] Artemis often wears shorter *chitons* as a huntress; Atalante and the Amazons also wear them.[390] This association suggests that when figures appear in a short *chiton*, they are more likely to be involved with active pursuits such as hunting or fighting. They are figures whose appearance indicates that they stand outside the proper social order, where women's bodies are generally covered.[391]

[385] Lee (2015) p.103.
[386] Lee (2015) p.103.
[387] Romano (1988) p.131; Rehak (2004) p.93; Lee (2015) p.44.
[388] Lee (2015) p.136.
[389] Simantoni-Bournia (2017) p.31.
[390] Lee (2015) p.111.
[391] Lee (2015) p.111.

Where figures appear winged, there is some variation in the way dresses are worn. Greater detail of different types of wings and their meanings are covered in **Section 5.2,** so this section will look only at the diverse ways dresses are worn by winged *Potnai Theron*. There are four main ways that dresses are worn by winged figures and a few unique examples. The main categories within the IC can be broken down as follows:

Dress configuration	Total
Wings attached to back, not contained by dress	79
Wings shown inside the dress, over the arms	18
Wings shown across the front of the body	15
Wings shown inside dress, under arms	3

Table 4.5: Number of times each configuration of wings and dress occurs on *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Most winged examples show the wings attached to the back of the figure. The viewer can understand it as the wings attaching to the back or shoulders of the *Potnia Theron* figure, and the back of the dress can be imagined as allowing the wings to emerge and move. Some figures make this more challenging to understand by the perspective used. For example, an Attic black-figure amphora (**Fig. 37**) shows the central *Potnia Theron* figure standing with her upper body in profile, but wings extended as though she is standing frontally. This makes it confusing to understand how the wings attach to the body and how they emerge from the dress. The most obvious solution is that this was the easiest way for the artist to depict wings emerging from the back of the figure while her body is turning. The viewer can see that the figure is winged, and although the depiction lacks realism, the viewer can still understand the composition.

The second most frequently depicted configuration, although much less often, is wings shown attached to the front of the body, over the dress such as on an amphora fragment from Melos (**Fig. 50**). The benefit of figures rendered in this way is that the viewer can see the whole of the wings. What is sometimes less clear is how to understand the wings, in relation to the dress of these figures. In many cases, the wings appear to hover in front of the figure such as the Melos fragment. On some ivory figures from Sparta (**Figs. 83** and **84**), the wings appear to be part of the dress. A remarkably similar triangular pattern appears on both the wings and the skirt of the figure's dress. From the context of other contemporary ivory figures (e.g. **Fig. 86**), it seems likely that this is a stylistic choice and does not suggest anything unusual about either the wings or the dress.

Wings appearing to emerge from inside the dress divide into two categories. The first type is where wings are in front of the arms, such as the alabastron from Corinth (**Fig. 14**). The other is those where the arms are in front, such as the Athenian Lekythos (**Fig. 155**). These can be more difficult to understand how the dress works in combination with the wings of these figures. For example, the Athenian lekythos (**Fig. 155**) which shows a *Potnia Theron* with her arms extending downwards at right-angles to hold large felines, they appear to be almost reaching over her wings to do so. It is not easy to discern dress from wings - the wings appearing to start at the front of the body at the belt and extending under the arms to the back of the shoulders. The dress almost appears to be tucked under the wings at the front of the body. Again, a viewer would understand the style of dress and that

the figure is intended to be winged. However, close viewing of the relationship between the dress and wings suggests some difficulty in depicting this.

Overall, while there are notable exceptions, the *Potnia Theron* motif is most frequently represented in the *peplos* dress. This detail not only helps to define the motif and identify unusual examples but also connects the motif to specific identities such as Artemis and Athena.

4.4.2: Decoration

Most of the visible decoration on the dresses of the *Potnia Theron* comes from the patterns of fabric used. The significance of this is that it provides insight into possible contemporary textiles and their contexts which do not survive.

One of the patterns seen is a black and white pattern of alternating squares – this perhaps the most geographically and chronologically diverse pattern we have, appearing in Fortetsa (**Fig.250**) as well as in Corinth (**Fig. 14**), Samos (**Fig. 133**), Paros (**Fig. 202**). The same textile pattern is also frequently found on Geometric funerary vases displaying *prothesis* (laying out of the deceased) scenes. In the latter context, the pattern appears on burial cloth, displayed above the deceased (see **Img. 4.9**). This similarity suggests a possible connection with status; the Geometric funerary vases were symbols of high status in both their size and their decoration.[392] It may also indicate that a figure wearing this pattern should not be thought of as mortal. On the funerary vases it is associated with the deceased in the liminal state between death and burial, in the *Potnia Theron* examples, it may also suggest the figure is to be understood as "different".



Img. 4.9: Geometric krater with prothesis scene utilizing black and white check cloth. Attic Greek ca. 750–735. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/248904 accessed 12/02/2025.

There are also similar squared patterns which could be based on the black-and-white squares. The François vase figures wear *peploi* decorated with a squared pattern alternating blank squares with decoration in white (**Fig. 136-137**), a Corinthian alabastron figure wears a *peplos* with a skirt decorated with black squares outlined in white (**Fig. 14**). These are likely

[392] Neer (2012) p.79.

to be regional variations on a similar theme – there is little to suggest there is any additional significance to the variation in these squared patterns.

A more common pattern is horizontal bands of decoration, usually on the skirt of the dress. On the Corinthian Alabastra (**Figs. 15**, **19**, **21**, **24** and **26**), these patterns are rendered in polychrome, alternating black and white patterned bands usually on a red dress. Horizontal bands are also popular on the jewellery plaques from Rhodes (**Figs. 99** and **109**), where they appear as bands of lines and dotted decoration. There is also a variation of zigzagged bands (**Fig. 106**) which appear to show the same technique and dress shape. The shape of these dresses resembles those on the Corinthian Alabastra, suggesting they depict a similar kind of peplos dress with a patterned skirt. The Rhodian examples may also mimic bee's stripes – the jewellery plaques which display horizontally banded skirts are in the same style as plaques depicting figures which have a bee-like lower body with horizontal stripes (**Figs. 117** and **118**).

Vertical striped patterns also appear, but less frequently such as on a Corinthian alabastron (**Fig. 16**). This pattern may reflect contemporary textile production, suggesting horizontal patterns were more straightforward or more commonly produced. It may also represent something of the imagination of the painter – the figures which wear these garments appear with wings, so it is not inconceivable for their dress patterns to be constructed rather than faithful depictions of actual garments and textiles.

These decorative bands most frequently appear on the skirt of peplos dresses; however, some dresses also have similar bands of decoration of the upper part of the dress this is visible on some Corinthian alabastra figures (e.g. **Figs. 14**, **15, 19** and **21**). These dresses display both horizontal and vertical bands of decoration. Usually, these bands form a T-shape across the shoulders and down the front of the dress (e.g. **Figs. 15** and **19**). In the case of these alabastra, it seems to be an artistic preference which determines the appearance and placement of these bands of decoration. Two examples from the same period and both from Corinth (**Fig. 16** and **21**) demonstrate this. The vase shape, composition, technique, and fill motifs all bear strong similarities; however, the central figure of **Fig. 16** looks clumsy by comparison. Her eye is larger and less proportional to the rest of her face, the upper part of her dress extends horizontally over part of her wings, and her hands emerge in a strange position. There is a pattern on the skirt, but less so than **Fig. 21**. This example seems to show two artists working in roughly the same time and area, producing works of the same kind, but in unique styles.

Floral motifs appear on some of the dresses – one example is the gorgon from an Alabastron, Corinth, (**Fig. 13**). These floral motifs could suggest clothing styles at the time but are more likely to tell us something about the character of the figures wearing them. Contemporary art generally shows clothing which is plain or has a basic pattern such as the bands or square patterns mentioned above. This may be due to the difficulty of weaving this kind of pattern into textile – although patterns could also be added in embroidered or beaded form. However, the lack of figures with patterned garments suggests that if these techniques were used to decorate clothes, this was not usually reflected in artistic representations. However, the floral motifs seen on the dresses mentioned above also

appear elsewhere in contemporary vase painting, such as the fill motifs on other Corinthian Alabastra (**Figs. 12, 14** and **15**). In Boeotian art, two figurines have wheels or swastikas decorating their dresses (**Figs. 231** and **234**) these motifs are also found as fill motifs on an amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) and a Pyxis (**Fig. 212**). The same fill motif is also seen on a fragment from Melos (**Fig. 49**) and a plate from Paros (**Fig. 228**). These motifs are discussed further in **Section 6.6**.

The parallels between fill motifs and dress decoration can be seen clearly on an alabastron from Corinth ca.625-600 (**Fig. 13**). This vase is decorated with a gorgon in *knielauf* pose surrounded by closely placed rosettes. The same rosette type is seen on the dress and face of the gorgon. In the example of the Corinthian alabastron, the position of the floral motif on the dress of this gorgon is also interesting in that it echoes the later placement of the gorgoneion often depicted on the *aegis* of Athena (e.g. **Img. 4.9**). However, this appears in sculpture in the 6th and 5th centuries and in the *Iliad;* it does not appear in vase painting until the 5th Century.[393] The placement may also be a subtle reminder of the fate of Medusa and her role as an apotropaic power.



Img. 4.10: Athena (right) wearing an *aegis* with gorgoneion. Red-figured cup by Douris, c. 480-470 BC. From Cerveteri. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Jason,_Dragon,_and_Athena_(Douris)#/media/File:Douris_cup_Jason_Vatican_16545.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

There are some examples where it is unclear if what is depicted is part of a dress decoration or a separate item. An example is a 7th-century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) where it is unclear if a figure has a fish pattern on her dress or a large fish in front of her.[394] In this instance, the meaning would not change much if it was a real fish or a depiction. However, given that all other animals represented in the scene are "real", it would be unusual the exclude fish from this. It seems more likely to be the equivalent to the other

[393] Hom. *Il.* 5.740-2; Wilson (1920) p.238-9; Wilk (2000) p.58.
[394] Real fish: Christou (1968) p.14; Budin (2016) p.52. Decoration: Harrison (1908) p.266.

animals depicted – representing creatures of the water, as the lions depict creatures of the land and birds depict creatures of the air.

Further examples include three terracotta figurines from Boeotia (**Figs. 231, 234** and **237**). All three of these figures have stylised bell-shaped bodies with elongated necks, modelled breasts and painted faces and details.[395] Two of these have modelled arms (**Figs. 231** and **234**) while **Fig. 237** has painted arms. All also have modelled ears and noses, but only **Fig. 231** appears to have the modelling of the eyes and mouth as well, although this is earlier than **Fig. 234**. Therefore, it is unlikely to be a chronological development. Concerning the dress designs themselves, both **Fig. 234** and **237** appear to show painted pendant necklaces worn by the figures. The neck of **Fig. 237** shows nine black bands around the neck with a series of small s-shaped lines below this, which could represent a fringed collar or could be painted decoration. This figure is also unusual as there appear to be two left arms indicated. The figure has undergone reconstruction, but the section with two left arms is from an unbroken section. The common theme among the dress decoration of these three figures is the presence of water birds. All of these appear in the same way, with head and neck in black and lined or crosshatched bodies, shown standing. The long neck suggests they are water birds such as Geese or Swans (see **Section 3.2.1**). The inclusion of these figures as *Potnai Theron* focusses on their perceived control of the birds; **Figs. 231** and **234** both have birds shown in a symmetrical pair. This positioning is not as we would expect them to appear in nature and their appearance in this way suggests they are being held or controlled by the figure. Because of this control, it seems more likely they, represent "real" birds held or in front of the figure. In the case of **Fig. 237**, there are three birds – one larger bird raising its wing on the left, a small bird in the middle and a medium-sized bird on the right. Although I have not been able to find any attempts to interpret the way these birds are grouped, the relative sizes could suggest this is a family group of two parents and an offspring. This "family" appears to reinforce the fertility association of water birds and taken into consideration with the modelled breasts of the figure, may indicate that this figure was associated with fertility, childbirth or the care of the young (see **Section 7.6**). In this instance, it can be assumed that the bird on her dress should be understood as real birds, although here they appear more under her protection than under her control.

Dress decorations, in general, appear to have a range of functions within the images of this study. Repetitive patterns such as black and white squares seem to be reflective of contemporary trends in textiles, but specifically textiles outside those used for day-to-day clothing. The appearance of floral motifs may reflect contemporary fashions but could also link back to the idea of the *Potnia Theron* being a figure in control not only of the animal world but of nature in general. This control of nature is expressed elsewhere such as some styles of headwear which appear to show vines or flowers.

[395] Thompson (1909) p.295; Grace (1969) p.87; Boardman (1998) p.68; Simons (2014) p.98.

4.4.3: Belts

Belts are often visible on the peplos style dress, where they frequently appear as a small plain (e.g. **Figs. 21, 24** and **49**) or decorated (**Figs. 13, 15** and **20**) band. We do not see any knot, buckle or other fastening shown for these belts. This may be due to the style of belt, the way they were worn, or the perspective of the figure shown.

Gorgons sometimes wear snakes as a belt such as on the pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). This section will look only at how these images compare to other *Potniai Theron* in terms of dress. Snakes worn as a belt do not seem to be specific to a dress type, appearing with short chiton on the Corfu pediment (**Fig. 51**) and possibly nude figures, including a metal shield from Olympia (**Fig. 219**) where the central figure appears to have a scaly body and tail. Not all gorgons wear snakes in place of belts – some wear regular belts such as on the alabastron from Corinth (e.g. **Fig. 13**). This variation shows the rapidly evolving image of the gorgon through the Archaic period, which not only featured stylistic changes in clothing but more significant changes in her body. Examples include those with quadruped body as on a Scaraboid gem (**Fig. 75**), a fish-like tail as seen on the metal shield from Olympia (**Fig. 219**), or snakes in place of legs as on a bronze krater handle (**Fig. 135**). Because of these frequent and significant changes to the physical appearance of the gorgon at this time – with the large face and exaggerated features, especially eyes, often being the defining recognisable feature – these changes in the dress of the gorgon are unlikely to have had any significance beyond artistic preference.

Crossbands usually appear as bands across the chest in an x-shape and tend to be associated with later depictions, especially of figures such as Artemis.[396] They do appear within the IC on a Corinthian aryballos (**Fig. 12**), but this appears to be an isolated example, suggesting it was not strongly associated with the *Potnia Theron* in the period under review. However, as crossbands were worn by young women, their appearance on *Potniai Theron* would support a connection to identities such as Artemis, as well as suggesting her identity as a *parthenos*.

4.4.4: Split skirts

Split skirts are not commonly seen, with only 18 of the figures in the IC having split skirts – 8 of which are short *chitons*. Long, split skirts tend to be associated with gorgons, such as a plate from Rhodes c.600 (**Fig. 200**), which is usually identified as a gorgon. Split skirts also appear in other representations of gorgons from the Archaic period such as the Eleusis Amphora (**Img. 3.2**) where both of the standing gorgons have a split on the right side of their skirt allowing the leg to emerge.[397] However, short *chitons* tend to be the more usual garment for gorgons, as they often appear the *knielaufen* pose.[398] Split skirts also feature on short chitons such as a Terracotta antefix from Sicily (**Fig. 3**) which shows Medusa - identified by the presence of her sons - in *knielaufen* pose with the skirt split visible on the left side. In both long and short examples, the legs of the gorgons are emphasised. This

[396] Lee (2015) p.138.
[397] Homann-Wedeking (1966) p.41; Serfontein (1991) p.18 n.12.
[398] Hersom (1952) p.276.

emphasis may link to the idea of their swiftness and the *knielaufen* pose of some gorgons.[399] A short *chiton* also displays the *knielaufen* pose of the central figure of an oinochoe from Corinth (**Fig. 171**). This figure is not a gorgon but appears to be a running female figure between two sphinxes.[400] Therefore using a short chiton to show the position of the legs in this pose is not something exclusive to gorgons but rather is likely to emphasise speed. It is also useful to note that not all gorgons wear split skirts when shown in movement. For example, two gorgon figures on an amphora from Caere, ca.530-510 (**Fig. 40**) wear long dresses down to their ankles but still appear to be moving swiftly and appear winged, which may again emphasise the swiftness of their movement.[401]

Similarly, the other figures with split skirts seem to appear in movement. An Etruscan amphora (**Fig. 43**) shows two figures usually identified as Nereids holding fish or dolphins.[402] Both figures shown in running or dancing pose moving to the right and looking backwards, they wear short chitons with decorated hems, one with a sun-like motif on the skirt. These split skirts appear to be a deliberate choice to show the movement of their legs. Visibility of the legs seems to be the same reason for the skirt design from a marble stele from East Greece (**Fig. 181**).[403] In this example, the figure walks forwards in profile, facing right. This perspective means that she raises her left arm to enable us to see that she is holding a lion, and her wings appear attached to her left side when from their shape it seems that the artist intended them to be understood as emerging from the figure's back. We see this figure hold her skirt up to reveal her right leg, while the skirt covers the left leg. This pose may enable the viewer to see that the figure is walking, rather than standing, as it may be unclear in a long skirt which covers the legs. A similar kind of skirt split is seen on a Late Archaic Attic kylix (**Fig. 60**) where the central figure – identified as a maenad by her thyrsus and snake – is shown wearing a long pleated dress with her left leg uncovered.[404] Again, the reason for the leg shown uncovered seems to be to clarify the pose of the maenad. She turns back to look at a satyr but walks or dances forwards towards a figure extending a hand to her. The satyr holds the hem of her skirt, allowing the left leg to be seen better, but in being able to see the maenad's leg uncovered, we can better understand her pose and movement. The way her knee bends shows us that she is moving to the right, something which may have been unclear if both legs were covered.

From looking at the split skirts in both long and short garments, it appears that this shows the movement of the legs to understand the movement of figures better. This additional information can allow us to understand better what is happening in the scene and creates a sense of narrative in these *Potnia Theron* scenes. In making them active figures, we see they do not only hold animals or control them in static positions but carry them while walking or move between the animals under her control. In turn, this reveals more about the nature of the relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and her animals.

[399] Burkert (1992) p.83.
[400] Amyx & Lawrence (1975) pl.97.
[401] Tsiafakis (2003) p.97; Konstantinou (2016) p.11. See also **Section 5.2**.
[402] LIMC Vol.6.2 p.456.
[403] LIMC Vol.2.2 p.446.
[404] Hedreen (2007) pl. IV.

4.5: Outerwear

In addition to dresses, several figures wear forms out outerwear such as an *aegis* (a protective cape, worn across the chest, often made of animal skin) or *himation* (a heavy wool or linen cloak). Within the IC, 14 figures appear to wear some kind of outerwear. Some of the examples which wear outerwear can be difficult to understand, such as the outfit worn by the figure holding a snake on a 6th century Hydria from Caere (**Fig. 77**). The snake and the bearded figure being identifiable as Dionysos means the figure holding the snake can reasonably be identified as a maenad. Therefore, the outer garment can is likely to represent a leopard skin such as that worn by the maenad on a later Athenian white-ground cup (**Img. 4.3**).[405] Panther or leopard skins are a regular part of maenad costumes, so this would make sense, although they are usually worn tied around the back, as on the white-ground cup from Athens or worn like a shawl with the dress visible below.[406] The Caere example, however, seems to show something like a dress made from leopard skin – making it unclear if this is a patterned dress or separate outer garment worn over a dress.

More apparent examples are also found within the IC, such as the 7th century Oinochoe from Eretria (**Fig. 174**). While the representation is stylised, it appears to be a *himation* worn around the shoulders. The *himation* would usually be worn in this way or could be draped over the lower torso or pulled over the head.[407] The purple colour of the *himation* may also be significant, suggesting this figure is a member of the elite, as purple was a more expensive colour to produce and therefore conveys high status in ancient sources.[408]

Other relevant examples of outerwear in this study can be found in those figures which wear an *aegis.* The *aegis* is most frequently associated with Athena, often in connection with the myth of Medusa's head worn on Athena's *aegis*. However, none of the examples within this study show a gorgon's head.[409] In the examples shown in this study, the *aegis* is depicted frequently as being fringed with snakes.[410] These include two Chalcidian neck amphoras (**Fig. 32** and **33**) – in these examples, Athena is shown on the battlefield, standing in profile, holding a spear.[411] The *aegis* is visible across her shoulders and chest, with snakes on both sides. The snakes are identifiable by their open mouths. On these examples, the shape of the *aegis* supports the suggestion that this garment was originally a goat-skin.[412] Later depictions of the *aegis* of Athena show a garment of more regular shape, usually forming a semi-circle across the chest, such as the Douris cup c. 480-

[405] Dillon (2002) p.140; Budin (2004) p.272.
[406] Dillon (2002) p.140.
[407] Llewellyn-Jones (2003) p.54
[408] Lee (2015) Himation: p.217.
[409] Hom*. Il.* 5.741; Vernant (1991a) p.120; Osborne (1998) p.120; Wilk (2000) p.43.
[410] Schefold (1992) p.88.
[411] Boardman (1998) p.236.
[412] Frothingham (1911) p.353; Howe (1954) p.209.

470 (**Img. 4.10**).[413] This later example seems to show a more refined form of the *aegis,* with a more tailored shape, smaller serpents and the addition of the gorgoneion.

The same *aegis* type shown on the Chalcidian amphoras may also appear on the lead figurines from Sparta, also shown with spears, and some with a bow.[414] The stylised depiction and lack of detail in the Spartan figures makes it more difficult to discern the details. However, some figures appear to wear an *aegis*-like garment, fringed with snakes (e.g. **Figs. 140**, **142**, and **145**). These appear to be worn over the shoulders, back or neck like a scarf or shawl. In this way, they differ from those above, which are worn in front of the body. As both the lead figures and the Chalcidian figures are shown in profile, this difference in the depiction of the *aegis* could represent two separate ways of depicting the same garment.

Looking at these types of overgarment, they can tell us something about the identity of individual *Potnia Theron* figures, such as links to wealth or the identity of Athena. However, as these figures are only a small percentage of the IC and are dispersed both geographically and chronologically, it is difficult to draw connections. The one exception is the series of lead figurines from Sparta (**Figs. 138-148**). These figurines come from the same region and in some cases appear to be made from the same mould. These figures – with both bow and spear – are likely to wear the same *aegis*-like outer garment.

4.6: Feet and footwear

Of the *Potnia Theron* figures in this study, the majority have their feet shown uncovered by their clothing. Of 263 total figures, 147 have their feet visible, including figures depicted nude and in all forms of clothing where at least one foot is shown. 41 have both feet covered by skirts, 31 are too damage to discern and the remaining 44 do not have feet – this includes those shown only as a head or bust or those with hybridised bodies that do not have human legs. Of the 147 figures with at least one foot visible, only 21 wear shoes of any kind - these will be discussed below.

In many examples, the feet are explicitly shown uncovered. These examples include an East Greek alabastron (**Fig. 18**) where the skirt reaches the floor, but the hem rests on top of the feet, so they are visible. One suggestion for the visibility of feet uncovered by skirts on these figures is that it links to the idea of heroic nudity and is another way of demonstrating that these are representations of divine figures.[415] A possible antecedent of this may be the terracotta "Goddess with upraised arms" figures, which appear in the Postpalatial (Late Minoan III) period, found with cult equipment in Cretan bench sanctuaries (see **Section 2.4.3**).[416] Some of these upraised arm figures appear with skirts shaped to allow the feet to show through (**Img. 4.11**). There are also examples of *Potnia Theron* figures

413 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Douriscup_83d40m_Athene_aegisWingedLionessOwl_pythonVomitsJason_fleeceInTree_Vatican.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.
414 Dawkins (1929) p.283.
415 Barrow (2018) p.91.
416 Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.489.

where the hem of the skirt seems to be shaped to allow the feet to be seen deliberately. These examples include two lead figures from Sparta, one of which shows the figure frontally with the skirt resting over the tops of her feet (**Fig. 152**) and the other shows the figure with her body in profile, the hem of the skirt raised at the front to show her feet (**Fig. 153**).



Img.4.11: "Goddess with upraised arms" figures from Karphi, showing skirt shaped to display feet. LM IIIb-c Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.516 fig.1.

Figures with bare legs but wearing footwear tend to be identified as gorgons. For example, a Terracotta antefix from Syracuse ca.620-610 (**Fig. 3**), or an Attic black-figure lekythos ca.530, (**Fig. 155**). The footwear worn by gorgons tends to be boots with curling tops, but they are not exclusive to gorgons as they also appear on other figures such as on a 7th-6th century Lydian gem (**Fig. 72)** and a terracotta plaque from Sardis ca.600 (**Fig. 256**).[417]. As these latter examples are both from the Eastern edge of the Greek world and may suggest this type of footwear was associated with Eastern influence, which would be in keeping with gorgon representations, viewed as "outsider" figures.[418]

While bare feet are commonly seen in the *Potnia Theron* figures, there are exceptions shown with footwear, such as the boots worn by gorgon figures as discussed above, or sandals as seen on a bronze mirror stand from Hermione ca.540-530, (**Fig. 160**). Two Boeotian bell-shaped figurines from between 750 and 700 (**Figs. 231** and **234**) also appear to wear sandals with straps wound up the leg. Unlike the sandals of the mirror stand, the Boeotian figures have the details of their footwear painted onto their feet, so the details are more difficult to discern.

Where the feet are not explicitly shown to be bare, frequently they are covered by the skirt - such as in some examples of 7th century jewellery plaques from Rhodes (e.g. **Fig. 127**). In these examples, the skirt flares out at the hem as if deliberately covering the feet. In painted examples such as an alabastron from Corinth ca.640-625 (**Fig. 11**), the skirt is also flared. However, in this example, it appears to be due to the skirt shape rather than the feet below. There are also figures where the skirt shape suggests it is revealing the feet, but

[417] Wilk (2000) p.33.
[418] Angell (2017) p.82.

there are no feet shown. One example of this type is a lead figurine from Sparta ca.620-560 (**Fig. 150**). There is a possibility the feet were included initially but have since broken off. Another example, a 7th century oinochoe from Eretria (**Fig. 174**), there is no trace of feet ever having been present as the figure is painted. However, the skirt resembles that of figures such as the lead image from Sparta ca.620-560 (**Fig. 153**). In these images, the hem of the skirt is shaped as though showing the feet.

4.7: Jewellery

A relatively small proportion of the *Potnia Theron* representations within the IC are depicted wearing jewellery. This includes 6 figures wearing earrings and 11 figures wearing necklaces. The form and appearance of these jewellery items vary, as does the quantity, with 6 figures wearing multiple items. This section focusses on types of jewellery represented and what this tells us about the character of the *Potnia Theron* in the representations considered.

Pendant necklaces – with one main decoration in the centre of the necklace – make up 8 of the figures which wear necklaces, the remaining five wear beaded necklaces or those which do not have a central pendant. The pendant type can be seen on a 6th century bronze mirror handle from Hermione (**Fig. 161**). It is a moulded decoration with a pointed pendant on a string around the neck. The same necklace type appears on a 6th century mirror handle from Sparta (**Fig. 166**). The latter figure also wears a band across her body which has pendant decorations hanging from it, these are modelled in a similar way to the necklace and are described as "amulets" suggesting they have a protective function.[419]

Pendant-style necklaces also appear on a series of bell-shaped figurines from Boeotia, where they are painted onto the body of the figure (**Figs. 231** and **234**). The painted, stylised rendering of these necklaces make them different in appearance to the examples above, and somewhat more challenging to understand due to the lack of detail available. The pendants of these necklaces appear to be bell-shaped with beads or tassels below, possibly similar to the pomegranate-shaped decorations hanging from the Jewellery plaques from Rhodes ca.700-600 (e.g. **Fig. 99**) or to the beaded decorations worn by the terracotta figure from Cyprus ca.600-500 (**Fig. 232**).The other main kind of necklace is those shown as a string of roughly equal sized beads or other decorative elements (e.g. Skyphos from Boeotia ca.540, **Fig. 226**). Many necklaces in the Archaic and Classical periods are thought to have been this kind - made up of multiple beads, which could be removed and sold in times of financial need.[420] Therefore the beaded necklaces seem to be more reflective of necklaces which would have been worn by mortal women who were not of high status, suggesting pendants may be more indicative of status and/or divinity.

Earrings appear as either studs or hoops, worn in the earlobe. Of the three examples which wear hoop earrings, a 7th century vase fragment from Lemnos (**Fig. 263**) is unusual in

[419] Pomeroy (2002) p.166.
[420] Lee (2015) p.148.

that the figure depicted wears a spiral-shaped earring; this does not appear in other *Potnia Theron* representations. Later examples of spiral earrings have been found such as a gold and copper alloy pair from Cyprus dating to the 5th century (**Img. 4.12**).[421] The other hoop-shaped earrings both appear on figures which appear as a face in profile (**Figs. 157** and **226**). The first of these is an Athenian Lekythos, and the figure depicted is identified as Medea.[422] The latter figure is a Boeotian skyphos depicting a woman between two cockerels, wearing earrings, a beaded necklace and a headband. The jewellery and birds may suggest higher status – this could suggest that hoop earrings are a marker of status. However, it seems more likely that it is jewellery in general rather than specific earring shapes which indicate wealth and status.



Img. 4.12: Gold and copper alloy spiral-shaped earrings, Cyprus, 5th century. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/242779 accessed 12/02/2025.

Earrings are also visible in some gorgon depictions – usually appearing as large decorated or blank circular studs worn in the lobe of the ear (e.g. **Figs. 8** and **9**). The round shape of these earrings may be a deliberate choice to emphasise and distort the shape of the ear by seeming to enlarge the earlobe. This would be in keeping with depictions of gorgon faces where the facial features are often enlarged or exaggerated to give their monstrous appearance.[423]

Bracelets can be challenging to discern in the *Potnia Theron* images, for example, the 7th century pyxis from Arkades (**Fig. 248**) where it is unclear if the bands around the arms are bracelets, tattooed bands on the arms or meant to be part of the dress. The figures from a 9th century urn from Fortetsa (**Figs. 250** and **251**) also have multiple stripes which could represent bracelets. However, the style of these lines makes them more likely to represent shading, like that of the figure's platform and dress.

[421] https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/242779 accessed 12/02/2025.
[422] LIMC Vol. 6.2 p.194.
[423] Serfontein (1991) p.26; Vernant (1991a) p.113; Mack (2002) p.572.

4.8: Nudity

Within the IC, there are 19 figures which appear nude. Two further figures are shown as stick figures, so no clothing can be discerned, and five examples appear topless – these are discussed separately. Not discussed in this section are 21 examples shown only as a head, seven examples which are too damaged to assess or eight examples with non-human bodies – the latter are covered in **Chapter 5**.

The amphora from Vulci ca.530 (**Fig. 44**) shows a nude female figure confronting a male figure. The gender of the figure is discerned by the white colouring of her skin, contrasted with the black used for male figures. The female figure is identified as Kirke by the pig-man figures which flank the central pair – the figure on the right appears to have a more human body while the figure on the left appears more pig or boar-like. These figures appear to be in the process of transformation, which would indicate this is a scene from the *Odyssey*.[424] This narrative would then not only identify the female figure as Kirke but also identify the male figure with the sword as Odysseus.[425] Kirke appears nude apart from a headband. Her appearance has been interpreted as symbolic of her sexuality and danger to Odysseus.[426] However, this nudity could also be perceived as vulnerability or referencing the narrative of the *Odyssey*. Hermes advises Odysseus to draw his sword and rush at Kirke before laying with her, in order to convince her to free his shipmates; as we see Odysseus about to draw his sword, this may be the same scene.[427]

Kirke also appears on a Kylix from Athens (**Fig. 63**) where she is also shown nude. Here she is again shown with men transforming into pigs, but Odysseus is visible on the left. Elsewhere in the IC, there are images of Kirke transforming Odysseus' men into animals but showing Kirke to be dressed and usually seated (e.g. **Figs. 158** and **159**). Regardless of if she is dressed or not, Kirke's control of the animal-men defines her as a *Potnia Theron*.[428] In one passage of the *Odyssey*, she is referred to as "*Potnia Kirke*", which reflects the title of *Potnia Theron*.[429]

Nude figures appear as mirror stands, often standing on the backs of lions or sphinxes (e.g. **Figs. 160**, **161-165** and **166**). Five of these mirrors (**Figs. 161-165**) are from the North Pontic region, originating in Greek colonies on northern shores of the Black Sea.[430] The close similarity of these mirror handles suggests they are stamped designs and produced in larger quantities. The nude figure from these North Pontic mirrors is identified as Aphrodite.[431] Aphrodite was associated with mirrors, especially concerning the myth of the Judgement of Paris, so this would be an appropriate identification.[432] Similarly, the nude

[424] Hom. *Od.* 10.239-41; Marinatos (2000) p.43.
[425] Giuliano (2004) p.87.
[426] Marinatos (2000) p.44.
[427] Hom. *Od.* 10.294-96.
[428] Christou (1968) p.180.
[429] Hom. *Od*. 10.549; Lawler (1947) p.95.
[430] Treister (2005) p.110.
[431] Treister (2005) p.115.
[432] Lee (2012a) p.165.

figure from the Bronze mirror stand from Hermione is also thought to be Aphrodite.[433] These identifications may be due to the figure's nudity, her pose with her arms raised, or the animals that accompany her.

A 6th century bronze mirror comparable to the Hermione example is also identified as an athlete rather than a divine figure (**Fig. 166**). This identification is based on her athlete's cap, necklace, chest strap and sickle, which may be a prize.[434] This identification seems unusual in a few ways. The first being that she is standing on top of a lion – a position we see taken by figures identified as Aphrodite above as well as other *Potnia Theron* figures which do not have anything to suggest they may be athletes (e.g. **Figs. 95, 177 -180, 189-190**). This identification also does not explain the paired griffins on the shoulder of the figure, which suggest an eastern influence.[435] She also holds something in her right hand, which may be a pomegranate.[436] In this example, the nudity of the figure combined with the specific animals and attributes suggests a divine figure rather than an athlete.

As well as fully nude figures, figures with uncovered breasts appear within the IC. A gold plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 129**) shows the upper half of a female figure holding her breasts, above her are the faces of two large felines. Her pose is reminiscent of figures from 9th century metal horse dressings from Samos (**Figs. 189-190**) which show full-length figures holding their breasts. In both examples the figures are associated with large felines, suggesting they have a common origin, which is likely to be Astarte, who appeared in Bronze Age Ugarit and the Levant in poses holding her breasts and with lions.[437] There is also a comparable electrum jewellery plaque from Rhodes, which again shows a nude figure and feline face, but in a different style (**Fig. 95**). This plaque is a more elaborate shape but shows many of the same elements. There are also two human heads above the nude figure, shown with Daedalic-style hairstyles. This grouping may reflect images similar to those depicted on the Samian horse accessories (**Figs. 189-190**) which show a single figure supporting three nude figures and two feline faces. Two gold jewellery plaques from Cyprus (**Figs. 93 and 112**) are contemporary to those from Rhodes. They are in a visually similar style, showing a nude figure, one standing on or riding a large feline (**Fig. 93**) and the other standing between two trees or pinecones (**Fig. 112**). The main difference in the Cyprus plaques seems to be the style of the hair – while the Rhodes plaques tend to show hair in Daedalic style with horizontal divisions, the Cyprus plaques show more naturalistic strands of hair worn behind the ears. The positioning of the hair behind the ears may reflect the "Hathor" style; images of Hathor are found in Cyprus towards the end of the 6th century, but the style may have arrived in Cyprus earlier.[438] The "Astarte" images are also thought to have come to Cyprus before arriving in Greece.[439] This seems to be reflected in other nude

[433] Cook (1940) p.1016.
[434] Pomeroy (2002) p.166.
[435] Barnett (1948) p.10; Childs (2003) p.59; Breitenberger (2007) p.79.
[436] https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/253556 accessed 07/02/2025.
[437] Budin (2002) p.317.
[438] Hathor in Cyprus: Ulbrich (2010) p.184.
[439] Christou (1968) p.26; Coldstream (1977) p.11; Winbladh (2012) p.52.

figures depicted controlling large felines, such as a bronze pendant (**Fig. 95**) which shows a figure controlling various animals, including large felines.

Nudity appears in very different contexts concerning the *Potnia Theron*. Their context clearly identifies the Kirke figures, and here her nudity is connected to her femininity and sexuality.[440] In the IC, she appears in the context of her role within the *Odyssey*, and against the transformed members of Odysseus' crew and Odysseus himself. Other figures depicted nude do not have such a strong mythological context to provide clues to their identity, role, or spheres of influence.

4.9: Conclusion

This chapter has identified the information which can be provided by elements of dress and appearance of the *Potnia Theron* figures. There are very few unifying themes in clothing running through all the figures, therefore, it is necessary to look closer at individual features of each figure. This provides useful information which supports the idea that the *Potnia Theron* is a recognisable paradigm used to portray a variety of identities. One notable theme in the dress of the *Potnia Theron* is the association of status – the clothing worn by the *Potnia Theron* is frequently that associated with higher socioeconomic status. In this way, the *Potnia Theron* is distinguished from average women by her dress and becomes further distanced by her context and features such as wings, which mark her out as being non-human or divine. With nude figures, other factors such as pose, and context become more important – although the nudity of the figure itself can often prove useful in gaining a more complete understanding of individual images.

While the clothing of the *Potnia Theron* on its own may only provide certain details regarding the character of each figure, it is a detail which is worthwhile considering in order to gain a fuller and more complete understanding of each *Potnia Theron* image.

[440] Marinatos (2000) p.43.

5: Hybridity and Monstrosity

5.1: Introduction

Previous scholarship has looked at the accompanying animal figures of the *Potnia Theron*, and the possible origins of the *Potnia Theron* as an artistic motif.[441] One element which has received less attention is the hybridised or monstrous elements of the *Potnia Theron.* Aston refers to hybridity in connection with the *Potnia Theron,* however, this only covers the animal attributes of *Potnia Theron* images (see **Section 3.1.4**) and not the central figure herself.[442] Looking more closely at hybridised central figures provides a different perspective on the relationships between the *Potnia Theron* and animals. Not only do hybridised *Potniai Theron* control animals, but in having animal elements as part of their bodies, they display a different relationship with the animal world and a more liminal character (see **Section 7.4**).

For this study, "hybridity" will refer to images where the central figure takes on animalistic elements such as wings, bird-like feet, or an insect body, while retaining a mostly human appearance. "Monstrosity" in this study will refer specifically to those forms of hybridity which are presented as potentially threatening. This includes body parts resembling those of wild, dangerous animals, as well as figures such as gorgons which are not only hybridised, but also threatening in their pose and context.

This chapter will focus on forms of hybridity and monstrosity in *Potnia Theron* figures with the aim of examining the information obtained from such depictions and the new insights they may provide into the origin, functions, and appearance of the *Potnia Theron* figures of the IC.

5.2: Wings

Wings are the most common of all the forms of hybridity visible in the *Potnia Theron* figures. In my study of 263 *Potnia Theron* figures in various media, 117 of these are shown to have wings as well as arms, five examples have wings in place of arms, and the remaining 12 images are uncertain as to whether they display wings due to damage or style of depiction. The winged *Potnia Theron* type appears to become more popular in the Archaic period.[443] Winged figures are thought to have been brought into Greek art from the Near East via Ionia, as wings frequently appear on figures in earlier Mesopotamian and Syrian art including examples resembling the *Potnia Theron* motif such as the "Queen of the Night" plaque (see **Section 2.3.1**).[444] It is these Near Eastern examples, rather than figures from the

[441] For animal associations see **Chapter 3**. For possible origins of the *Potnia Theron* see **Chapter 2**.
[442] Aston (2011) p.303-304.
[443] Sourvinou-Inwood (1998) p.83; Waldstein & Hoppin (1898) p.178.
[444] Budin (2016) p.15-6; Nilsson (1950) p.507.

Aegean Bronze Age which are thought to have influenced the winged appearance of the *Potnia Theron,* as the Near Eastern figures tend to be shown winged, while the Bronze Age figures are unwinged.

To help illustrate the difference between these Near Eastern and Aegean figures an example of an Aegean Bronze Age figure is the seated goddess figure from the Xeste 3 fresco at Akrotiri, ca.1600-1500 (**Img. 2.16**), who is shown to have command of a griffin and a monkey but is depicted without wings – it is noted elsewhere that the Minoan goddess is shown unwinged.[445] We understand this figure is intended to be seen as a goddess as she is shown in a tripartite shrine, and accompanied by a griffin – a mythical creature which suggests this is not a mortal figure.[446] Her command of these animals could indicate that she was an antecedent of the *Potnia Theron* type, but she is shown unwinged (see **Section 2.4.4**).

It has been suggested that the appearance of wings in early Greek art are a valuable source of information on the cultures which were the sources of artistic influence.[447] These also begin to appear as an element of hybridised or fantastic creatures such as sphinxes or griffins .[448] Hybrid creatures such as sphinxes and griffins are thought to have been borrowings from Anatolian and Mesopotamian art and to have arrived in Greece around the same time as images of winged deities.[449] Wings in Greek art have an association with mobility, flying, speed, or supernatural movement.[450] They can also be symbolic of divine status.[451] There is some suggestion that the winged goddess in Greece is derived from bird-epiphanies.[452] This would explain the winged appearance of the *Potnia Theron* who usually represents a divine figure (See **Chapter 7**).

Both archaeology and literature suggest a rapid rise in the popularity of hybridised figures between the 9th and 7th centuries, as well as of rituals to protect thresholds from demonic influence and other threats.[453] The *Potnia Theron* is part of this tradition of protective figures, such as the example from the Temple of Artemis on Corfu (**Fig. 51**). Earlier isolated examples of similar guardian images as statues are known – these are usually Hittite or Assyrian – such as the colossal stone figures at the palace of the Assyrian king Assurbanipal II (883-859 BC) in Nimrud.[454] However, it is less clear to see exactly where the winged goddess figure may have originated.

The Near Eastern influence is also evident in the choice of wing shapes, especially the "upcurving" wing type thought to have Near Eastern – specifically Hittite – origins.[455]

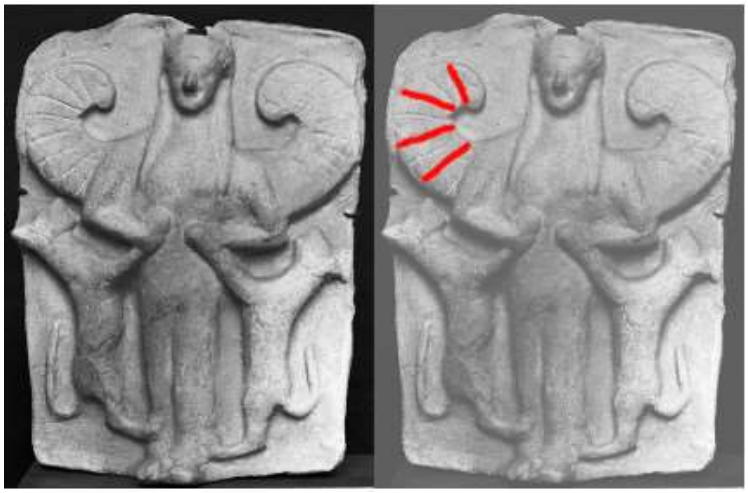
---

[445] Nilsson (1950) p.507 – Nilsson refers to this goddess in the singular.
[446] Budin (2004) p.223.
[447] D'Albiac (1995) p.63.
[448] Paspalas (2013) p.73.
[449] Fitzhardinge (1980) p.61.
[450] Tsiafakis (2003) p.97; Konstantinou (2016) p.11.
[451] Lebessi (2010) p.195.
[452] Chittenden (1947) p.101; Nilsson (1950) p.496.
[453] Faraone (1992) p.21.
[454] Faraone (1992) p.21-2.
[455] Frothingham (1911) p.367; Thompson (1909) p.303; Akurgal (1966) p.203.

This wing shape is not unique to the *Potnia Theron* and is also shown on other deities such as Hermes and Iris.[456] The same wing shape is also seen as part of other fantastic creatures such as sphinxes and griffins (e.g. the alabastron from Corinth, ca.630-615 **Fig. 17**).[457]

Previous studies have also noted that the majority – although not all – of the *Potnia Theron* figures are winged.[458] Existing studies do not give any suggestion of the ratio of winged to unwinged examples, so while unwinged examples are acknowledged, the focus is often only on those with wings. Opinions differ regarding whether wings can be used to identify a figure as Artemis or if they differentiate the *Potnia Theron* from the identity of Artemis.[459]

While there is certainly a strong connection between Artemis and the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Section 7.2.1**), it is unlikely that an identification can be made on the presence of wings alone. An example of this is the figure on the handles of the so-called François vase, an Attic volute krater from Chiusi, ca.570 (**Figs. 136-137**); this figure is winged and identifiable as a *Potnia Theron* but the presence of winged figure is unlikely to be Artemis, as another figure – shown without wings, riding in a chariot with Athena – has been identified as Artemis based on comparison with the Sophilos vase, which is roughly contemporary to the François vase.[460]



Img 5.1: Relief of winged figure shown with long feathers extending across wings (indicated in red). Original image in Dexter (2011) p.193.

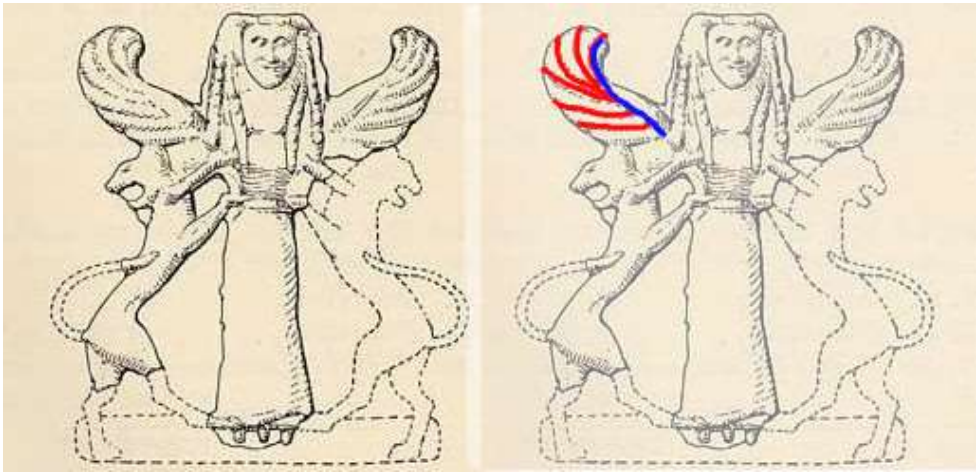
Having established the importance of wings in general and their artistic influence within the *Potnia Theron* schema, we can begin to investigate the different wing types represented. Within the group of winged figures, there is considerable variation. I have identified five separate sub-groups, divided by wing-shape summarised in **Table 5.1.**

[456] Hermes and Iris: Chittenden (1947) p. 101; Nilsson (1950) p.437.
[457] Smith (1884) p.230; Tsiafakis (2003) p.97.
[458] Rose (1929) p.401; Chittenden (1947) p.101; Nilsson (1950) p.507; Beazley (1986) p.33; Bevan (1986) p.40; Sourvinou-Inwood (1998) p.83; Budin (2004) p.264; Vassileva (2005) p.95; Cohen (2006) p.217.
[459] Artemis identification: Beazley (1986) p.33. Separate from *Potnia Theron*: Budin (2004) p.264.
[460] Marinatos (2000) p.97.

Wing type	Number
Upcurving wings	85
“Scythe-shaped” wings	23
Wings present but damaged	19
“Bird-like” wings	5
Circular	4

Table 5.1: Sub-groups of winged *Potniai Theron* in the IC, divided by wing type.

Of the 263 figures in the IC, upcurving wings (i.e. wings which are extended with upcurving tips) are the most common with 85 examples. The François vase provides an excellent example where the *Potnia Theron* appears with upcurving wings and in the same realm as hybrid figures – being shown at the same level as sphinxes and griffins; elsewhere she is shown to master these creatures.[461] Sphinxes and griffins often share this upcurving wing shape, so while the *Potnia Theron* is shown with similar wings and is placed at the same level as other hybrids, she maintains her position of mastery.



Img 5.2: Detail of winged figure showing upper part of wing (shown in blue) unfeathered with long feathers on lower wing (shown in red). Original image: Wace (1929) p.261.

These types can be further divided by the rows of long feathers shown – I will be focusing on the long feathers as these provide the basis for the wing shapes. Within the IC, 21 examples show long feathers extending across the width of the wing (e.g. a relief plaque from Magna Graeca, ca.550 **Fig. 182** - detail **Img. 5.1**). Single rows of long feathers are the most numerous with 69 examples. Even within this, there is variation. This includes 60 examples where the upper part of the wing is not feathered, and the long feathers are shown below (e.g. lead plaque, Sparta, ca.620-560 **Fig.151** – detail **Img. 5.2**), and nine images where short feathers appear on the upper part of the wing with long feathers below (e.g. metal shield, Olympia, second half of 6th century **Fig. 218** – detail **Img. 5.3**). In addition to these, there are eight examples with double rows of long feathers (e.g. plate from Rhodes, ca.600 **Fig. 200** – detail **Img. 5.4**) and 11 examples with a triple row of long feathers

[461] François Vase: Beazley (1986) p.33. Accompanied by hybrid creatures: Mazet (2017) p.19; Prent (2005) p.141; Nilsson (1949) p.19; Marinatos (2000) p.50.

(terracotta antefix from Sicily ca.620-610 **Fig. 3 –** detail **Img. 5.5**). Seven examples had no feathers shown or were too damaged to determine the number of rows of feathers shown. There are several reasons for the broad variation displayed here – chronological and regional styles would account for some of the differences. The Archaic period of Greek art saw considerable development and variation leading to experimental images and new influences coming in from renewed Near Eastern contacts.[462]



Img.5.3: Bronze shield from Olympia showing short feathers/scales on upper wing (blue) and longer feathers on the lower wing (red). Original image: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Escudo_olimpia.jpg accessed 02/01/25.

The category of "bird-like" wings (see **Table 5.1**) can be subdivided into three further categories, defined by the shape of the upper edge of the wing, those with peaked upper edges, those with v-shaped edges and those which have a straight upper edge. The peaked examples are most frequent within the IC (three examples) and more closely resemble the wings of real birds, such as on the 6th century Black Figure tondo from Orvieto (**Fig. 62** detail – **Img. 5.6**). The remaining two categories have only one example each in the IC. The first is the v-shaped edges shown on the wings of the figure on a 7th century amphora from Thebes, (**Fig. 27**). The v-shaped wings also resemble the wings of real birds, especially given their placement in place of the central figure's arms, however the v-shaped wings point the centre of the wing downwards, while the peaked type points upwards. The final type of bird-like wing is the straight upper edge, seen on an Etruscan silver pendant, ca.675-650 (**Fig. 97**). The straight edged type suggests a different position to the wings, with the upper end extending from the shoulders of the central figure. Comparing the differences in these bird-like wings suggests the observation of real birds by artists, but no consensus on how these should attach to the central figure. However, the geographical and chronological ranges of these examples suggest the wings of the *Potnia Theron* are specifically bird's wings.

[462] Experimentation in images: Langdon (2008) p.110; Fitzhardinge (1980) p.26. Renewed contact with Near East: Reed (1976) p.365.



Img. 5.4: Plate from Rhodes showing *Potnia Theron* figure with wings which have two rows of small feathers. Original image: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1860-0404-2 accessed 02/02/25.

Where double sets of wings are shown, both sets are usually attached to the figure's back. Out of the 10 double-winged examples from this study, six images have upcurving edges on both sets of wings (e.g. plate from Rhodes, ca.600. **Fig. 200**). A further four images have upcurving wings as the upper set and straighter wings as the lower set (e.g. black figure olpe, Attica, ca.550-530. **Fig. 176**). Also included in this group is a 6th century bronze shield from Olympia (**Fig. 220**). The shield is damaged and appears likely to have originally had three bird-like wings surrounding the central gorgoneion. The shield figure is an example of figures which are difficult to classify – in this instance because the central figure does not have a body but has more than a single pair of wings. Double sets of wings decline in popularity in the late 7th and 6th century B.C. as they "complicated an organic rendering of the human body".[463] Of the double-winged figures, six examples can be identified as gorgons or gorgoneia, while the remaining four images are more likely to be goddesses due to their more human appearance.



Img.5.5: Gorgon antefix from Sicily, ca.620-10 showing triple row of long feathers (shown in red, blue and green) on wings. Original image: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgoneion_Syrakus.jpg accessed 02/01/25.

[463] Mertens (2002) p.25.

Wings alone are not a defining feature of gorgons – this is similar to the discussion above demonstrating that wings alone cannot be taken as a defining feature of Artemis. Images contemporary to the winged examples mentioned above show gorgons without wings (e.g. the 6th century metope from Sicily, **Fig. 2**). However, in modern scholarship wings are often mentioned as a recognisable attribute for gorgons.[464] Not all winged gorgons are shown with double sets of wings. Corinthian gorgons are noted to have a single set of sickle-shaped wings, rather than the double wings used in other Greek gorgon representations.[465] This demonstrates that neither wings nor specific wing types are enough to confirm a certain identification – and additional information must be considered in analysing *Potnia Theron* images.

The role of the wing positions of the *Potnia Theron* is especially relevant when looking at the extent to which some figures appear hybridised. An example of this is a figure from a 7th Century Boeotian amphora (**Fig. 27**) where we see wings in place of the figure's arms, rather than in addition to them – interpreted by some as her arms "becoming" wings.[466] Having wings in place of arms means that this figure appears somewhat closer to birds and further from human figures.

Wing position	Number
Back	49
Sides	27
Front/chest	18
Back/sides	14
Front/sides	8
Unclear due to pose or damage	5
Non-human body	5

Table 5.2: Positioning of wings on *Potnia Theron* figures

Table 5.2 shows that most *Potniai Theron* have wings which attach to their backs. A further 14 examples also appear to have wings attached to the back, although these images show the upper body in profile (e.g. volute krater handle, Chiusi, ca.570 **Fig. 136-137**). The result of this perspective is wings shown horizontally behind the central figure. Fewer figures have wings attached to the front or sides of the body. In some examples, this may be a stylistic choice, while in other cases it may suggest the wings are part of a costume rather than attached to the body (see **Section 5.6**). I have differentiated figures where the wings appear to be at least partly attached to the sides, from those which could be attached to either the back or the side, as it is unclear from the pose (the back/sides figures). Where wings are attached to the back, it is easy to imagine these being used for flight, while it is more difficult to picture the movement of wings attached to the sides or front of the

[464] Koç & Temür (2014) p.20; Catling & Robertson (1966) p.198; Mertens (2002) p.26 (notes a gorgon is "unusual" for lack of wings); Serfontein (1991) p.19; Topper (2010) p.113; Marinatos (2000) p.49, 56; Goldberg (1982) p.208; Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.3-5; Hopkins (1934) p.358; Dexter (2010) p.34; Harrison (1908) p.194; Schefold (1992) p.87; Wilk (2000) p.21.
[465] Hersom (1952) p.277.
[466] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.10.

body.[467] Figures with wings attached across the front of the body are even less common, with only 8 examples in this study. In contrast, one example has wings in place of arms (7th century amphora from Thebes, **Fig. 27**) which seem well suited for flight due to their size, shape and position on the central figure.



Img. 5.6: Plate showing winged figure with pointed upper edge of wings (shown in red). Original image: LIMC Vol.VIII.2 p.678 Potnia 17.

It may be the case that some of the less realistic wing depictions could be part of costumes (for specific example, see **Section 5.6**). A comparison could also be made with the sleeves of Maenads, shown covering the hands (**Img. 5.7**).[468] This motif appears in scenes of Maenads in ecstatic dance or frenzy and shows the figures wearing voluminous sleeves which cover the hands. The reason for this is usually thought to be that maenads are unable to approach or touch the god with "unclean" hands, and so cover them with their long sleeves – giving a wing-like appearance.[469] Although the shape and linear decoration of these sleeves resemble the wings of the figure from the Boeotian amphora (**Fig. 27**), the maenads are identified by their position relative to Dionysos and the frenzied murder of Pentheus.[470] By contrast, the Boeotia amphora figure does not appear to share these characteristics of maenads. The Maenad scenes are also much later than the Boeotian amphora, appearing in the 5th Century BC in the red figure style, such as the Death of Pentheus cup (**Img. 5.7**). While we cannot rule out the suggestion of the amphora figure as a dancer or other celebrant covering her hands or "wearing" wings, the comparison otherwise does not lead to a link between these figures. This is another instance where superficial similarities may lead to comparisons however, the role of Maenads in Greek art is significantly different and so they remain distinct from the *Potnia Theron*.

[467] Von Bothmer (1985) p.120.
[468] Wolff (2021) p.128-129.
[469] Avaramidou (2012) p.52.
[470] Eur. *Bacch.* 30-35; Paus. 9.5.4.



Img. 5.7: Red figure cup showing maenads with hands covered by their sleeves. https://www.kimbellart.org/collection-object/red-figure-cup-showing-death-pentheus-exterior-and-maenad-interior accessed 04/01/25.

A final category comprises those figures where the wings are very unusual in appearance or very damaged – and so are difficult to identify as wings. The figures on the 9th century Fortetsa urn (see **Fig. 250**) are good examples of this; their overall appearance is strange and the downward-curving attachments on either side of these figures have been identified previously as being wings.[471] Elsewhere, these have been interpreted as snakes.[472] If these are taken to be snakes, we could consider possible connections to figures such as gorgons, or the likelihood of chthonic symbolism. Apart from the shape of these attachments, there is little to suggest they represent snakes.[473] Due to the stylised representation of the figure on the Fortetsa urn, it is difficult to say with certainty if the striped attachments are wings, snakes or ribbons attached to the dress. It is, however, useful to look at this example to demonstrate some of the difficulties in interpreting the iconography of the *Potnia Theron.* Highly stylised or damaged examples can be more challenging to interpret and, in these cases, comparisons to other *Potnia Theron* images can be useful. Comparing other *Potnia Theron* images, in combination with data outlining the frequency of iconographic elements, provides more information to inform our understanding of the motif and how incomplete examples may be restored.

If the attachments on the Fortetsa figures are intended to be wings, we could assume that the linear decoration can be taken as an indication of feathers. However, it is difficult to find comparable examples to support this hypothesis. The shape of the attachments on the Fortetsa urn figures is reminiscent of the more circular wings of some of the Rhodian plaques (e.g. **Figs. 115-116 and 125**). Here the wings are also thinner and curved, but they are more clearly wings – they are given a tapered shape which is easier to associate with wings, and the feathers are shown in relief. While the "wings" on the Fortetsa figure and the circular wings of the Rhodes examples cannot be said to be identical, they have a resemblance in their shape and placement on the central figure. It seems more likely

[471] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.11.
[472] Burkert (1988) p.81.
[473] Coldstream (1984) p.94.

that the difference in wing shape between these examples could be explained by local artistic style and preference.

Another point is the possible lack of function for these wings. As Burkert points out, the Fortetsa figure is shown to be standing on a wheeled platform or chariot, so why would she also need wings?[474] Burkert suggests that both indicate swiftness and energy - another possible explanation is that this figure is intended to depict a kind of idol and so the wings may be deliberately unrealistic. The highly stylised features may indicate this represents a plank-like xoanon – her size in comparison to the trees and the presence of the wheeled platform may imply this was an image which was brought out of its sanctuary at specific times of the year, but whose size required a wheeled platform to move the xoanon.

Overall, the wings of the *Potnia Theron* figures demonstrate the variation which can be seen across this study. Some of these examples function to bring the figure closer to the animal world, while others divide her from it by showing her to be a supernatural or divine figure above all else. A closer examination is required to differentiate what may be meant by the appearance of a winged figure, as a single explanation is inadequate for such a varied group of figures.

5.3: Bee/insect

Bees are a prominent theme across a 7th century series of gold and electrum jewellery plaques from Kamirus in Rhodes. Overall, this series of plaques (**Figs. 98-111**,**113-120**) shows a great deal of homogeneity, suggesting they were made from moulds, resulting in near-identical reproductions. This can be seen in an example now in the British Museum, where several identical plaques were found, as though strung together (**Fig. 99**). This series includes depictions of a *Potnia Theron* as a standing, winged female figure holding large felines. In some examples, the animals are replaced with flowers (**Fig. 111**) or orbs (**Fig. 116**). The plaques which relate to bee-imagery usually show a female figure with a human upper body in the same pose as the standing figures mentioned above, and an insect-like body from the waist down (**Figs. 117-118**).[475] The shape and horizontal stripes of the lower body of these figures resembles that of a bee and strongly suggests this is the insect represented.

This half-bee body is one of the more complex hybrid *Potnia Theron* figures. An additional dimension of hybridization is found in the wings – we might expect a figure whose body is half-insect to also have insect-like wings, but the wings of these figures appear more like the upcurving wings discussed above, the same type seen on hybridised figures such as the sphinx or griffin. These wings are clearly shown to be feathered like birds' wings, suggesting hybridity between human, insect, and bird.[476]

[474] Burkert (1988) p.81.
[475] Rigoglioso (2010) p.63.
[476] Wolff (2021) p.134.

It is thought that the bee-bodied figures were linked to the worship of Ephesian Artemis, whose image was also decorated with bees.[477] Some other aspects of Ephesian Artemis should be considered here - while this figure is not specifically shown with a bee-body, her lower body is wrapped in a tight skirt decorated in horizontal bands of animals shown in relief, giving a comparable appearance to the bee-bodied Rhodian figures. The better-known cult figures are considerably later than the rest of this study, dating to the 2nd century A.D. (**Img. 5.8**), although these are thought to be based on earlier wooden images from the 7th century B.C. which do not survive.[478] The cult itself is much older, there is evidence for an Artemision at Ephesus from the Bronze Age onwards.[479] Little is known of the cult in the Archaic and early Classical periods, and can only be reconstructed from later sources.[480]



Img.5.8: Cult figure of Ephesian Artemis, showing skirt carved with rows of animals. 2nd century A.D. Rogers (2012) Pl.1.

We can see in the later statues of Ephesian Artemis, that there are beehives flanking the central figure and bees appear on her chest as well as on the sides of her skirt.[481] Bees feature prominently alongside other animals in this image and these animals are thought to be connected to her role as a fertility goddess (see **Section 7.6**).[482] The bee motif is known to have been associated with the goddess from an earlier period than the later cult images mentioned above. The 6th century coins from Ephesus featured bees as a motif alongside an

[477] Elderkin (1939) p.203; Rigoglioso (2010) p.63.
[478] Rogers (2012) p.180.
[479] Greaves (2010) p.101; Budin (2016) p.20.
[480] Larson (2007) p.111.
[481] Rogers (2012) p.182.
[482] Persson (1942) p.141.

image of Ephesian Artemis, as well as depictions of stags.[483] Two gold decorative pin-heads, in the form of bees with flowers, were also found at the site of the Artemision at Ephesus and are thought to date to the 8th or 7th Century.[484]

The Priestesses of Ephesian Artemis were thought to have been known as *Melissai* ("Bees"), although there is little evidence to support this.[485] In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, the "bee-wards" (*melissonomoi*) may refer to the priestesses who open the temple of Artemis, although this is not made clear.[486] This may be in reference to the "bee" (*mélissa*) mentioned in *Hippolytus*, also in relation to Artemis, although I have noted that here it is not in relation to any kind of cult personnel.[487] Some have taken this idea further, suggesting in addition to priestesses being referred to as *Melissai*, priests of her cult were referred to as *essênes* ("drones") and that the organization of the sanctuary – at least in the classical period – resembled that of a beehive. This title of *Melissai* is certainly known in the priesthoods of other deities. Later sources claim that Priestesses of Kybele were also known as "Melissai".[488]

This evidence certainly supports a strong connection between Ephesian Artemis and bees – both in the appearance of her cult image and its attributes and possibly in her cult practices. However, this demonstrates a significantly different relationship to the way the *Potnia Theron* is shown to hold or control animals (see **Section 6.2**). The iconography of Ephesian Artemis does not feature any half-bee figures and suggesting her shape resembles the half-bee figures from Rhodes is tenuous, but the comparison is useful in demonstrating the role of bees in the iconography of the *Potnia Theron*.

Both half-bee figures from Rhodes (**Figs. 117-118**) have flowers either side of them as their attributes. While this is unusual for *Potnia Theron* images, which are usually flanked by animals - further examples are discussed in **Section 3.4.** The Rhodes figures are also unusual in combining both bird and insect-like elements in the hybrid *Potnia Theron* figures. However, the wing shape (see **Section 5.2**), composition (see **Section 6.1.1**) and pose (see **Section 6.3**) also appear in the majority of *Potnia Theron* images within the IC. These points of similarity demonstrate the usefulness of data regarding iconographic elements in identifying figures – by illustrating which elements are integral or common in *Potnia Theron* images.

[483] Elderkin (1939) p.203; Persson (1942) p.143; Lewis & Llewellyn-Jones (2018) p.291.
[484] Rigoglioso (2010) p.63.
[485] Priestesses: Elderkin (1939) p.203; Mellaart (1978) p.104.
[486] Ar. *Ran* 1273-4; Sommerstein (1996) p.270.
[487] Eur. *Hipp.* 76 – in this scene Hippolytus is bringing gifts to Artemis. For link to *Frogs*: Sommerstein (1996) p.270.
[488] Lactant. *Div. inst.*1.22; Porph. *De antr. nymph.*18; Rigoglioso (2010) p.63.

5.4: Bird-like faces

In addition to the wings discussed above, I have identified several instances within the IC where the central figure is shown with other bird-like features such as bird-like faces. These features provide another type of hybridity – connected to the wings discussed above, but offering another dimension for interpretation. The faces of the *Potnia Theron* figures are interesting as 116 are shown in profile while 131 are shown frontally (16 examples have no head or are too damaged to identify). There are also 72 examples which appear to be shown with gorgoneia or gorgon-like faces (see **Section 5.6**). These are important considerations in the study of *Potnia Theron* figures – as gorgons and non-human faces are rarely thought of as part of her appearance but provide significant visual evidence of her character and function.



Img.5.9: Boeotian terracotta figure with elongated profile. https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=465439&partId=1&searchText=boeotian+terracotta&page=1 accessed 05/01/2025.

The face of the figure on the Boeotian amphora (**Fig. 27**) is unique in that it shows a strangely shaped face, described as "leaf-like" although this has never been adequately explained.[489] My original impression was that this may represent a bird-like face in frontal perspective, with the beak forming a point at the front of the face.[490] However, there is a series of terracotta figures from Boeotia, roughly contemporary to this image, which may offer a better explanation. These figures also have pointed and elongated profiles, suggesting a beak-like nose (e.g. **Img. 5.9**) – viewed from the front, this would appear similar in shape to the face of the figure from the Boeotian amphora. This "beak-like" or "mouse-like" face shape differentiates these terracottas from other Boeotian figurines.[491] Many of these terracotta figurines are also shown with circular eyes, hair painted in zigzags and dresses decorated in bands of geometric design. These figures are also shown with flattened

[489] "Leaf-like" face: Johnson (1981) p.236.
[490] Wolff (2021) p.130.
[491] Grace (1969) p.23.

bodies with abbreviated arms – the arms are often shown as triangular stumps – like smaller versions of the wings on the amphora figure. The faces of these terracotta figures also seem to have been made deliberately elongated and bird-like. There are contemporary figurines which show more realistic human faces on the flattened body type (e.g. **Img. 5.10**) which suggests that the bird-like faces were a stylistic choice rather than a limitation of artistic ability or medium. These bird-faced figures also appear to have divine connections as seen on the first Boeotian terracotta figure (**Img. 5.9**) – some pointed-face terracotta figures wear *poloi* which may denote divinity or status (see **Section 4.2.1**). The flattened bodies of the terracotta figures (**Img. 5.9** and **5.10**) may also suggest they were based on plank-like *xoana* representing goddesses.[492]



Img. 5.10: Terracotta figure from Boeotia with stylised body. https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=462886&partId=1&searchText=boeotian+terracotta&page=1 accessed 05/01/25.

The pointed-face terracotta figures (**Img. 5.9**) could represent masked figures – however, there is little evidence to support this. We have examples of votive masks dating back to the 7th century, mainly from the Orthia sanctuary at Sparta but also from Tiryns, none of which appear beaked or bird-like.[493] While the votive masks may only represent certain types of mask, we are left with an absence of evidence for bird-like masks and the lack of an apparent edge around the face supports these not being masked figures.

While there appears to be a link in the face shapes of the terracotta figures and the figure from the amphora, there may be two reasons why the wings have been omitted from the terracotta examples. Firstly, for practical concerns, large wings would have become fragile and likely to have broken over time. Secondly, the body shape of the terracotta figures is flattened with no visible feet and abbreviated arms giving the body a plank-like appearance. It may be that these figurines are intended to be copies of actual wooden

[492] Another possible *xoana* in the IC is discussed in **Section 7.7.**
[493] Masks from Sparta: Dickens (1929) p.163; Budin (2016) p.28; Angell (2017) p.84. Masks found at Tiryns: Wilk (2000) p.36; Langdon (2008) p.57.

plank-like *xoana* which do not survive, while the amphora figure is a representation of the deity honoured by these *xoana*. Like the *Potnia Theron*, a precise identity for these figures is not immediately obvious, although we can interpret her iconography to gain insight into her role and function.

5.5: Animal feet

In addition to bird-like faces, there are also examples within this study of figures with bird-like and otherwise hybridised feet and legs. Before looking at these, it is useful to look more generally at the feet and legs of these figures as these are often overlooked. The feet of the *Potnia Theron* are often shown, although several examples with covered feet are found. Where feet are uncovered, it seems to be specifically the feet and there are some examples where this appears to be more deliberate. This section will focus only of examples where the feet and legs of the figure are hybridised while the upper body appears human.

Detail of feet	Number
Feet uncovered	106
Feet and legs uncovered	47
Feet and legs covered	41
No feet or legs	32
Too damaged to discern	24
Hybrid figures	9
One leg uncovered	4

Table 5.3: Covering of feet and legs of *Potnia Theron* figures.

Table 5.3 demonstrates that while 106 images from the IC have their feet uncovered, only 47 have both their legs and feet uncovered. There are also 19 examples out of the 41 examples with covered feet and legs, where the shape of the feet is deliberately shown (see **Section 4.6**). Of the hybridised figures, six out of nine examples have a human body with visible animal legs or lower bodies. The remaining hybrid figures also have animal bodies (e.g. the sphinx on an alabastron from Corinth, ca.630-615 **Fig. 17**).

Pausanias notes the presence of white marble maiden figures with bird legs behind the Stymphalian temple of Artemis, which has been presented as evidence that an early goddess was worshipped there in the form of a bird.[494] This is a much later source (2nd c. AD), but Pausanias notes that the temple was an old one in his time. The proximity of these bird-legged figures to the temple of Artemis may again provide a link between Artemis and hybrid figures – the Rhodian figures with bee-bodies in place of legs (see **Section 5.3**) are thought to be connected to the cult of Ephesian Artemis.[495]

[494] Paus. 8.22.7; Bevan (1986) p.32.
[495] Rigoglioso (2010) p.63.



Img.5.11: Eurasian Collared Dove showing the shape of the tail feathers. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eurasian_Collared_Dove,_Chittagong,_Bangladesh_%E0%A6%95%E0%A6%A8%E0%A7%8D%E0%A6%A0%E0%A7%80_%E0%A6%98%E0%A7%81%E0%A6%98%E0%A7%81.jpg accessed 05/01/2025.

Like the Stymphalian birds and wings of the Rhodes plaques, sirens show another form of human-bird hybridity in *Potnia Theron* figures. There is significant variation in the way sirens appear in the IC. A Corinthian pyxis, ca.650-600 (**Fig. 213**), depicts a siren with a bird-like body, including bird's legs. While a 6th century Etruscan bronze handle (**Fig. 80**) is in the form of a siren with a more human body, with no apparent legs but with a bird-like tail in their place. Both sirens appear to be hybridised with small birds such as doves; this is supported by the shape of the tail on the bronze handle example, which resembles that of a dove. However, the wing shape of the pyxis example suggests hybridity with small water birds such as ducks.



Img.5.12: Mallard duck displaying wing shape with upcurving tips while flying. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Erpel_Startend_P1280086-2-PSD.jpg accessed 05/01/25.

In addition to bird and insect legs, there are two examples of *Potniai Theron* with fish or reptile legs. A bronze krater handle from Western Greece ca.500 (**Fig. 135**) shows a gorgon lifting her short dress to show two snakes in place of legs. Archaic gorgons were often experimental in their representation and the snake-legged variation does not appear often.[496] As the heads of the snakes are visible, the viewer can imagine that the gorgon likely travels in a similar position to that shown on the handle – with the snakes supporting the upper body.

A comparable example is a 6th century shield from Olympia (**Fig. 218**) which has a long fish-like tail. This gorgon again demonstrates the varied and experimental depiction of gorgons in the Archaic period. The placement of this figure on a shield may go some way to explaining its appearance. Creating a gorgon with a more fearsome and confusing combination of features may be a defensive feature of this shield.

While examples of *Potniai Theron* with non-human legs and feet appear less frequently in the IC than other forms of hybridity, it is helpful to look at these examples to understand why these features would be combined. Examples such as the bee plaques from Rhodes (**Fig. 117-118**) and the gorgon shield (**Fig. 218**) demonstrate this kind of multiple animal hybridity; showing how the non-human lower body allows for hybridity involving multiple animal types.

5.6: Gorgon

Gorgons are often presented in Greek art and myth as occupying a liminal space (see **Section 7.4**). This liminality is expressed in their hybridised appearance – most notably combining human and animalistic features. However, other forms of hybridity in gorgons, such as male/female and human/divine have received less attention in previous studies. When looking at examples of gorgons or gorgon-like figures in the role of the *Potnia Theron*, the animalistic features have the most obvious connection to the *Potnia Theron* motif. This section will cover the various forms of hybridity visible in gorgon figures in the IC.

Gorgon representations of the earliest Greek type (ca.8th and 7th century) are sometimes thought to have gone through an "experimental" phase, in which the iconography was not yet determined and in which more unusual forms of hybridity are shown.[497] An example of this experimentation can be seen in the "hippogorgon" – a female centaur body with a frontal face. This figure is identifiable as the gorgon Medusa by the presence of Perseus to her left, who is in the process of beheading the hippogorgon. Centaurs are also more commonly shown to be male, while the Medusa-centaur is specifically female – not only in her identification from context but also her feminine body shape and breasts.[498] Attempts have been made to explain the horse-bodied appearance of Medusa as emphasising her role as mother of Pegasus.[499]

[496] Langdon (2008) p.113.
[497] Wilk (2000) p.37; Wengrow (2014) p.79.
[498] Hurwit (2006) p.124.
[499] Frothingham (1911) p.375; Coldstream (1977) p.15.

The “hippogorgon” is unusual as it lacks the exaggerated facial features and large eyes seen in other Archaic depictions of gorgons and due to its unique style, it is thought that this “hippogorgon” may be one of the earliest images of a gorgon in Greek art. [500] This suggestion agrees with the theory above that the “hippogorgon” comes from a period of experimentation before a “canonical” gorgon image was formed. During this period, other artists may have drawn influence from representations of other monsters to create their image of a gorgon. An example from the IC which further reinforces this theory is a 6th century scarab gem (**Fig. 75**). This gem shows a different kind of “hippogorgon” with a more typical gorgon face that has large, exaggerated eyes and mouth, as well as snakes around the head or in place of her hair. The “hippogorgon” from the gem is also winged – demonstrating both further experimentation within the gorgon image as a whole and showing an additional form of hybridity used to create the “hippogorgon” subtype.

A more common composition is Medusa with her sons Pegasus and Chrysaor by her sides or in her arms (e.g. shield strap from Olympia ca.600 **Fig. 222**). There are also depictions of the beheaded Medusa with Pegasus and Chrysaor emerging from her neck (e.g. amphora from Caere ca.530-510 **Fig. 40**). Something which is not commonly represented in this period of Greek art is the rape of Medusa by Poseidon. While this myth is recorded as early as Hesiod (ca.700), the idea of Medusa being transformed into a mare during this event is not specified in the literature.[501] A similar myth, where Demeter is raped by Poseidon in the form of a horse is also recorded and in one version Demeter is said to have also been transformed into a horse.[502] Similar to the Medusa myth, Demeter gives birth to a horse (Areion), which is the child of Poseidon, although this version of the myth is considerably later (2nd Century A.D.) Other versions of this myth also show the transformation of Poseidon into a horse, but Pausanias’ account is the only version in extant literature in which Demeter also becomes a horse.[503] However, given the Theban origin of this vase, her horse-bodied appearance may be connected to Poseidon Hippios, who was a major deity in Boeotia.[504] These horse transformations in myth are distinct from depictions of hybridity in art or literature, although they bear some resemblance to one another. The presence of the gods in these myths strongly suggests a super-human aspect to these animal transformations.

[500] Coldstream (1977) p.15.
[501] Hes. *Theog.* 278-9; Dexter (2010) p.36.
[502] Paus. 8.25.5.
[503] Another version of the myth is found in Ov. *Met.* 6.118.
[504] Langdon (2008) p.114.



Img.5.13 Relief pithos ca. 675-650 showing "hippogorgon" with distinctive face style. Hurwit, J.M. (2006) p.121-36. P.124.

The type of hybridity most frequently associated with gorgons is the addition of attachments in the form of snakes, usually in place of hair or around the head and body (see **Section 3.1.3**). Of the figures in this study, 35 could be identified as gorgons, and of these figures, 21 can be identified as having a snake around the head, neck, waist on in the hands.

Position of snakes	Number
Head	8
Held in hands	5
Waist	4
Neck/shoulders	3
Hybridised with snakes	1

Table 5.4: Position of snakes on *Potnia Theron* figures.

From the information in **Table 5.4**, the most common placements for snakes are around the head. There are also eight non-gorgon *Potnia Theron* figures which have (or appear to have) snakes as an attribute. Non-gorgon *Potniai Theron* interacting with snakes in this way suggests a visual link to gorgons, who are often shown as being physically connected to snakes. This also provides a distinction between the *Potnia Theron* motif and gorgon representations not shown in the role of *Potnia Theron.* While both can have interactions with snakes or snake-like elements, it is the control of snakes which defines the *Potnia Theron* role.

A conflicting view is that the snakes are simply a decorative element and even when appearing to emerge from the head of the gorgon, such as the antefix from East Greece ca.550 (**Fig.9**), these should be taken as decorative additions and not part of the body.[505] However, we do see examples where snakes are more clearly held or worn – such as when snakes are worn around the waist as a belt or girdle (**Fig. 40**) and in myth, we have a record of "snaky hair" associated with Medusa specifically.[506] While the myth of Athena transforming Medusa's hair into snakes appears later in Ovid, we also have reference to Pindar referring to Pegasus as being offspring of "the snake-haired gorgon".[507] This suggests

[505] Wilson (1920) p.235.
[506] Serfontein (1991) p.25-6; Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.1.
[507] Ov. *Met.*4.770ff; Pind*. Ol*.13.64.

that by Pindar's time (ca.522-443) snake hair was a recognisable attribute of Medusa or gorgons in general.

While snakes are the most recognisable form of hybridity associated with gorgons, features of other animals are also present within gorgon figures from this study. Of these figures, the most frequently occurring animalistic feature is teeth extending outside the mouth, often with the upper and lower teeth crossing like the tusks of wild boars, of which there are 20 examples in this study. Boar-tusks are thought to be one of the earlier developments of gorgon iconography, along with the wings and protruding tongue.[508]

Of the figures discussed in this section so far, what defines a "gorgon" tends to be the face – specifically the eyes. In Archaic representations of gorgons, the eyes are usually emphasised and shown very large, often with concentric pupils.[509] One example which appears to deviate from this pattern is the figure on a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**). While this example closely resembles other gorgons in some respects, it is notable due to its more unusual details. The eyes are neither especially large nor round but appear diamond-shaped with smaller pupils.[510] Another unusual feature is the striped headband, something which is not commonly a feature of gorgon representations. A third unusual element is the "frame" around the face, which curls upwards at the figure's chin. None of these features are typical of Archaic gorgons.

The band around the head of the Rhodes plate gorgon may be a means of attaching a mask to the head, and the unusual eye shape could depict holes in a mask with the wearer's eyes visible. The curling edge under the chin may be part a decorative edge to hide the neck below. The mouth also appears unusual and could fit within the idea of this face as a mask being worn. While a protruding tongue and tusks are common additions to Archaic gorgoneia, in this example the tusks and tongue appear to be attached to the outside of the mouth, rather than emerging naturally from the inside. Unlike the bird-faced figures from Boeotia (see **Section 5.4**), the Rhodes example displays the edges of what appears to be a mask as well as a method of attachment and suggestion of a face below the mask.

As discussed in **Section 5.2**, the wings do not appear to be attached to the back, shoulders, or sides of the figure but appear to be worn across the front of the body – appearing more decorative rather than functional. It is difficult to envisage how these wings could move.[511] The position of the "gorgon"'s feet further support the idea this may be a human figure in costume. The bare feet of the figure overlap the border decoration of the plate, however, there does not appear to be any attempts to correct this as we might expect if this was a mistake by the artist. The deliberate placement of the feet outside the frame could suggest entering a liminal state where the figure is transformed and "becomes" the gorgon or a similar figure while dressed in this way. It could also suggest ritual activity –

[508] Dexter (2010) p.37.
[509] Chiaro (1964), p.108.
[510] Wolff (2021) p.132.
[511] Wolff (2021) p.132.

especially with the presence of long-necked water-birds held in the masked figure's hands. These appear lifeless and may suggest they have been offered in sacrifice.

Overall, the appearance of the Rhodian plate figure suggests a costume being worn. The wings do not appear to grow from the central figure and even if we are to suppose that they are attached, there is no practical way that they could be seen to function as real wings would. There is the argument that gorgons (if that is what the central figure is intended to be) are not real and therefore there is no reason the artist should consider a realistic placement for the wings. However, the face also appears mask-like and the body of the figure is decorated with sun-like marks or tattoos – stylistic comparison to other gorgon representations of this period has revealed that these marks are not frequently associated with gorgons. I suggest a more likely explanation is that this figure is being shown wearing a costume including a mask and wings. The importance of this is that this is not a representation of a hybridised figure but possibly shows a human figure imitating a hybridised form by wearing a mask and costume. If this depiction is accepted as a human dressed as a gorgon, this again provides an element of hybridity. Both between the human world and the world of mythology, but if the costume is part of a ritual (see **Section 7.7**), hybridity between the mortal and the divine.

5.7: Vegetal additions

The final form of hybridity examined in this chapter concerns those examples where figures appear to have been hybridised with plant-like elements. Several *Potnia Theron* representations are shown with vegetal motifs such as flowers or vines, but there are some examples in the IC where these elements appear to become part of the central figure.

A possible predecessor for these figures is the "upraised arms" figures from Karphi, Crete, which begin to appear around 1450-1350 B.C. and are often thought to be goddesses (see **Section 2.4.3**).[512] These figures have a number of features in common with the *Potnia Theron* such as the upraised arm position (see **Section 6.3.1**). While none of the terracotta figures from Crete are shown to hold animals, some are shown with birds as part of their headdress (**Img. 2.15**). As mentioned in the section on feet above, some of these figures are also shown with their skirts shaped to expose their feet (see **Section 4.6**). The figures which are of significance to this section are those with headdresses decorated with what appear to be poppy-heads. The poppy headdresses may be linked to the use of opium in a religious context which would support the identification of these figures as goddesses, priestesses or other female figures of religious significance.[513]

Vegetal elements also appear on the headdress of a Boeotian relief pithos, showing a central figure with a stylised rhomboid body, in a pose of protection over two smaller figures, with a pair of confronted lions either side of the group (**Fig. 38**). Two branch-like additions appear to grow horizontally from the top of her head, almost reaching the raised

[512] Prent (2009) p.654; Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.511.
[513] Gesell (2004) p.143.

hands of the figure. [514] These branches are shown to be attached to the head of the figure rather than being part of the *polos* and have a curved, wavy shape, extending outwards from the head. Both branches terminate in a double fork and seem to bear a kind of fruit, either small bunches of grapes or pinecones.[515] These could represent other kinds of fruits or buds, but this along with the curving shape of the branches seems to suggest living and growing vegetation, rather than cut branches worn as a decoration.

A close parallel to the relief pithos figure with vines emerging from her head or *polos* is a fragment from Tenos (**Img. 4.4**). The Tenos example not only shows the distinctive facial style (although damaged) but also wears a similar stylised *chiton* and appears to have a vine across her head. Unlike the Boeotian pithos example, the Tenos figure does not wear a *polos,* which may support the idea that the vines on the Boeotia figure also extend from the head rather than from her headwear.

Another figure which appears to have branch-like or vine-like attachments comes from a figure on the neck of a vase from Melos ca.670-660 (**Fig. 29**). This figure appears to wear a low *polos* or fillet from which appear two long vine-like attachments. Unlike the branch-like attachments of the figure from the Boeotian relief pithos above, these appear to be more vine-like and do not appear to bear anything apart from what appears to be a single leaf at either end. Like the Boeotian figure, these attachments appear from the top of the head, but in this instance, it is less clear if they are part of the figure or an attachment of her headwear.

Within this study, the figures with plant-like attachments show us a form of hybridity not specifically associated with the animal world. These examples are still very much figures of wild nature and their function would appear to be similar to that of the other hybridised figures – as a liminal or boundary figure, occupying an area between the civilized world and the untamed wild.

5.8: Conclusion

The examples discussed in this chapter demonstrate the significant role that hybridity plays in understanding the *Potnia Theron* motif. Of these hybridised figures, the majority remain predominantly human, while more unusual are the figures which are shown with more significant forms of hybridity, such as gorgon-faces or insect bodies. Not only are these images more removed from the more human *Potnia Theron* figures, but they also tend to incorporate more "dangerous" animal elements, such as the tusks of boars or the mane of lions.

While **Chapter 3** discusses the role of animal attributes in the *Potnia Theron* motif, the distinction between attribute and hybrid element is significant. Different types of control are explored in **Section 6.2**, although where the *Potnia Theron* is hybridised with elements of the wild, the relationship between the central figure and her animals changes.

[514] Roller (1999) p.136; Marquardt (1981) p.256.
[515] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.10 – suggests these are grape vines.

Where the *Potnia Theron* demonstrates her control over animals, we can infer that she also has control over the aspects they represent. This can be a power to protect against threat or power over aspects such as fertility, as represented by water birds (see **Section 3.2.1**).

Ultimately, this is the role of the *Potnia Theron* – to occupy the liminal space between the dangerous world of wild animals and uncontrolled nature, and of the civilized world of humans (see **Section 7.4**). When we view her in this intermediary role, it seems logical that this is a figure which could be represented in a hybridised form – one which is both human and animal, both wild and civilized, as she stands on the boundary. It is when the line is crossed into the realm of the monstrous that we are given the impression of threat. We are still shown a figure whose power is over wild nature and the animal world, but she appears as part of their world, rather than the human realm.

6: Pose and context of the *Potnia Theron*

6.1: Composition

As discussed in **Section 1.4**, the defining elements of the *Potnia Theron* are frequently listed as a female figure, possibly winged, holding or controlling animals.[516] This chapter focuses on the relationships between the *Potnia Theron* and other iconographic elements such as animals, fill motifs and frames, to better understand the meaning and use of *Potnia Theron* images. For this section, the physical pose of the central *Potnia Theron* figure and the spatial relationship of elements within these images are analysed to identify trends in these images and understand their use.

Looking at the composition of the *Potnia Theron* images, the primary considerations are the central figure, the animals she holds or controls, and these figures' context. This section will assess what combinations of these elements appear within the study and interpret these unique relationships. This section will first look at the number of animals and symmetry of their display before moving on to control types over animals. The focus of this chapter will be the pose of the central *Potnia Theron* figure, supplementary figures, framing and fill motifs before summarising what these finds tell us about the *Potnia Theron*.

Number of animals held or controlled	Total
Two	149
One	54
Multiple (more than two)	48
Too damaged to identify	12

Table 6.1: Number of animals held by *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

[516] Dawkins (1929) p.247; Howe (1954) p.214; Beazley (1986) p.33; Bevan (1986) p.40; Cook R. M. (1997) p.72; Larson (2007) p.106; Mazet (2017) p.17.

Table 6.1 summarises data on how many animals are held or controlled in *Potnia Theron* images from the IC. The data in **Table 6.2** (below) demonstrates the number of symmetrical figures in the IC based on the number of animals present, which can be compared to **Table 6.3**, which outlines the total number of symmetrical images based on animal type.

Arrangement of animals	Total
Symmetrical	162
Non-symmetrical	88
Too damaged to identify	13

Table 6.2: Symmetry of animals held or controlled in *Potnia Theron* images based on number of animals.

Arrangement of animals	Total
Symmetrical	183
Non-symmetrical	67
Too damaged to identify	13

Table 6.3: Symmetry of animals held or controlled in *Potnia Theron* images based on animal type.

These figures show that while there is some diversity in the *Potnia Theron* images, examples with two symmetrical animals are most common. The following sections go into further detail on each type of composition, with the aim of demonstrating the way the *Potnia Theron* can appear in different media and contexts, while remaining recognisable.

6.1.1: Symmetrical – two animals

Symmetrical *Potnia Theron* images make up the largest number of figures within this study, with 165 examples. This frequent symmetrical representation may have led to previous definitions of the *Potnia Theron* as a figure flanked by identical animals (see **Section 1.4**).[517] This arrangement has been called "hieratic", which suggests a religious connotation through the Greek ἱερατιός ("priestly").[518]

The structure of this composition may also suggest possible antecedents. A likely forerunner is the Minoan "Mother of Mountains" seal (**Img. 2.12** – see **Section 2.4.1**). As with the symmetrical images, this seal shows a central figure standing between two flanking animals. The main difference between the seal and the later image is the mountain's presence, which is not a prominent feature in any of the *Potnia Theron* images of this study. Another example is the Mycenae lion gate (**Img. 6.1**) which again displays a pair of large felines posed in an unnatural manner, this time either side of a pillar. The rigid pose of the lions, each facing the pillar, closely resembles the relative positions of the *Potnia Theron* with her attendant animals. Looking at the *Potnia Theron* as she appears in the IC, some trends can be identified regarding symmetrical compositions with two animals of the same type.

Animals	Total

[517] Schuhmann (2009) p.112.
[518] Beazley (1986) p.33; Amyx & Lawrence (1996) p.61; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.9; Larson (2002) p.114. ἱερατιός: Liddell & Scott (1996) p.821

Large felines	58
Birds	37
Other	13
Snake	9
Horse	7
Goat/sheep/deer	5
Sphinx	5
Other hybrids	4
Griffin	3

Table 6.4: Animals shown in symmetrical *Potnia Theron* images within this study.

The data in **Table 6.4** demonstrates that figures controlling large felines are the most common, as discussed in **Section 3.1**, including the differentiation of types and possible meanings. The arrangement of a central female figure flanked by animals indicates the dynamic of the relationship. The central figure is often the largest in the scene and controls the animals on either side of her. Types of control are discussed in more detail in **Section 6.2.** There are examples in which the animals appear larger than the central figure (e.g., **Figs. 67** and **221**). However, as will be discussed concerning control of the animals, it is unusual for the central figure to be smaller than the animals flanking her.



Img.6.1: Lion gate, Mycenae, c.1250 B.C. showing lions posed either side of pillar. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Lions_Gate_detail.JPG accessed 07/02/25.

This relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and her animals is maintained when the main figure appears in abbreviated form. An example of this is the relief plaques in ivory and terracotta (**Figs. 90, 186,** and **187**) from Sparta. In these examples, only the head of the central figure appears, alongside two horses' heads. In this example, the same relationship is shown – the *Potnia Theron* flanked by two identical attendant animals under her control.

Another possible function of this symmetrical composition is repetition for emphasis. The animals which flank the *Potnia Theron* appear to have specific significance – discussed further in **Chapter 3**. As there are distinct meanings attached to these animals, their

repetition may suggest these qualities are being emphasised or exaggerated in the *Potnia Theron* images where they repeat. This meaning seems to be more likely when the animals are identical in their pose and method of control. In these examples, we see the complete control of the *Potnia Theron*, taking the animals out of their wild nature and removing any individualisation between the two animals. This makes it more likely that they are intended as the central figure's attributes rather than having their own character.

6.1.2: Symmetrical – multiple animals

The *Potnia Theron* images featuring a central figure with more than two animals in a symmetrical composition seem to have a similar meaning to the two-animal images. This category is divided into those where a single type of animal appears and those with multiple animal types.

The examples where numerous animal types are displayed usually combine quadrupeds and birds, making the animals easier to distinguish. Like the two-animal images above, this may be to emphasise the central figure's role. This emphasis shows the power to control diverse animals, demonstrating a wider sphere of influence. Control of different animals may also signify a connection to the wild in a more general sense – rule over birds with their power of flight or snakes with their chthonic associations may also suggest capabilities extending beyond the human realm.[519]

One example of this type is the bronze hydria decoration from Taranto ca.570 (**Fig.76**), appearing with a symmetrical group of lions, hares, snakes, and an eagle.[520] This combination of animals suggests a figure with significant and diverse power over the natural world. Although she only holds the hares, the animals appear still and posed, which implies the central figure has command of the animals without physically controlling them.

The other type seen in this group are gorgons or gorgoneia surrounded by multiple snakes. Within the IC, there are thirteen examples which show some variation. The gorgon and gorgoneia images differ from the other multiple-animal figures in that often snakes are the only animal shown. This distinction is visible in examples such as a 6th century bronze shield from Olympia (**Fig. 220**), where a circle of snakes surrounds the gorgoneion. The first thing to be noted is that the gorgoneion is given prominence in the image's centre. The snakes' relative position shows they are controlled – they form identical s-shapes equidistant to one another rather than shown in more natural shapes. The head's surrounding also clarifies that it is detached from the body – this recalls the myth of Medusa and provides us with a clue to the identity of the central image. It is clear from the figure's form that she is a gorgon, and as the only gorgon to have beheaded by Perseus was Medusa, this identification is the most likely.

Other gorgon images hold snakes in their hands. A 6th century Etruscan kotyle by the Painter of the Bad Wolf (**Fig. 61**) depicts a polychrome gorgon holding two snakes. There are some unusual features of this image such as a wolf to the left of the gorgon and a red ring

[519] Wittkower (1939) p.309; Christou (1968) p.19; Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1.
[520] Frothingham (1911) p.375; Hoffmann (1964) p.186; Simons (2014) p.84.

around her face. There are also many aspects of the scene shared with other gorgon images in the IC such as the large eyes and exaggerated mouth with protruding tongue. All these features are commonplace in archaic gorgon representations.[521] The way the gorgon holds the snakes is also familiar from other gorgon representations – an East Greek antefix ca.550 (**Fig. 9**) shows a gorgon holding snakes in a similar pose.

Looking at the examples in this section, it is apparent that images which arrange multiple animals symmetrically around a central figure generally do so for emphasis. However, the context and form can vary greatly; it is necessary to look closer at the elements of these images to understand what is being emphasised by the animals' repetition and position relative to the central figure.

6.1.3: Asymmetrical – two animals

There are eight examples where two different animals flank the *Potnia Theron*.

Animals	Number
Large felines and deer	3
Bird and other quadrupeds	3
Two different large felines	1
Large felines and birds	1

Table 6.5: Animals shown flanking the *Potnia Theron* in symmetrical images.

The relationship between the central figure and the animals appears to be the same as the images discussed in **Section 6.1.2**. While different combinations of animals suggest different meanings to these images (see **Chapter 3**), the way the *Potnia Theron* figure controls the animals is the same as in symmetrical examples.

It is unusual that, unlike the multiple animal figures discussed above, quadrupeds appear most often in the images that show two different animals controlled. Examples with large felines and deer appear more symmetrical – due to similarity in shape of the animals under control. The appearance of deer with lions could be symbolic of the Olympic Artemis' syncretism. Artemis is often associated with deer, while lions appear with earlier goddesses.[522] The connection of earlier goddesses with lions is explored in more detail in **Section 3.1.1**.

Where two different large felines appear, this appears to be more likely to be a stylistic decision as they bear similar iconographic meaning. Discussion of these interpretations in more detail appears in **Section 3.1.2**. The one example from the IC is a reconstruction based on Pausanias' account of the Chest of Kypselos.[523] As the original chest no longer survives, the reconstruction must be used with caution. The original description provided by Pausanias goes into detail of each figure and describes "Artemis" as holding a leopard (πάρδαλις) and lion (λέοντα), differentiating two types of large felines held by the goddess. This reconstruction still relies on Pausanias' accuracy – his description is short, and

[521] Frothingham (1911) p.363; Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) p.157; Marinatos (2000) p.55; Wilk (2000) p.21.
[522] Artemis and deer: Bevan (1986) p.41; Budin (2016) p.28; Marinatos (2000) p.60.
[523] Paus. 5.19.5.

the only other information is that Pausanias does not know why Artemis is depicted here with wings. This suggests that Pausanias considered the felines and identified their species as the relevant information to include when describing this figure – just one of many decorating the chest.

Birds and quadrupeds are not only visually distinct but often convey different meanings in *Potnia Theron* images. When both types of animals are shown together, they allow a more nuanced interpretation of the role and identity of the central *Potnia Theron* figure. The appearance of similar ideas here and in **Section 6.1.2** suggests the same argument expressed differently. This difference may also be due to the syncretism occurring in the Archaic period – notably concerning the identity of the "Mistress of Animals" figures and Artemis (see **Section 7.1.1**).[524]

6.1.4: Asymmetrical – multiple animals

Only five *Potnia Theron* figures controlling multiple animals in asymmetrical compositions were identified in this study. However, not all these examples are necessarily outliers within the *Potnia Theron* schema.

Three examples of this type are identifiable as Kirke holding a cup and wand while human-animal hybrids surround her. These are a kylix from Athens and two lekythoi from Taranto (**Figs. 63, 158** and **159**). On the Athens example, the hybrid men include a lion (far left, behind Odysseus), two boar-men with tusks on either side of Kirke, who is depicted nude. A figure with a fish-like head and hooves stands to the right of the boar-man in front of Kirke, and another boar-like figure on the far right. Here, Kirke's control is seen in her keeping the men in the form of hybrid-animals – a narrative supported by her holding the cup and wand. A dog also sits at her feet – a different kind of control over animals, perhaps demonstrating her ability to command animals in both the natural and supernatural realms. The two examples from Taranto differ slightly – the first (**Fig. 158**) shows three hybrid figures, two on the left and one on the right. These are all boar-men, and like the example from Athens, they have human feet, but their hands have been replaced with hooves. The other Taranto vase has a boar-man with human hands and feet, but boar's head, the figure to his right, has a boar-or dog-like head and long tail. To the right of Kirke are lion-headed and bull-headed men with long tails and human hands and feet. A notable difference in the boar-men on the Taranto example is their tails which are not visible on the Athens hybrids. Figures on both Taranto vases also have more dynamic poses, unlike the rigid profiles of the Athens hybrids – this makes the tails easier to see and seems to emphasise another aspect of hybridity. The Taranto Lekythoi also have vines in the background, comparable to the Athens cup's vine-leaf border motifs. In both examples, this could suggest Kirke's power extending beyond the animal world into the wider natural world, specifically into plants. In the Odyssey, she is called πολυφαρμάκου ("of many drugs") and Odysseus protects himself from her powers with the plant moly.[525]

[524] West (1990) p.101; Marinatos (2000) p.89; Nosch (2009) p.24; Braund (2018) p.91; Budin (2016) p.21.
[525] Πολυφαρμάκου: Hom.*Od.* 10.276. Moly: Hom. *Od.* 10.302.

A further example appears on a bronze horse pendant from Cyprus (**Fig. 94**).[526] The central figure is depicted nude, surrounded by various animals, including water birds, smaller birds, larger quadrupeds which may be large felines, and smaller quadrupeds. Different animals are visible on either side of the central figure, and additional animals appear on the pendant's upper part. The variety and number of animals in this example suggest a command of all animals, and the presence of many animals suggests this power is significant. Like the Kirke of the Athenian Cup discussed above (**Fig. 63**), the central figure is depicted nude, but her identity is less clear – there is nothing to indicate she is Kirke, such as a cup, wand, or figures from her story in the *Odyssey*. Generally, nudity signifies femininity and sexuality; it can also indicate artistic influence, the figure's identity or divinity, or associations with fertility and reproductive powers.[527] There is further discussion of nudity in **Section 4.8**. In this example, the nakedness of the figure suggests Phoenician and Near Eastern influences.[528]

The final example is the least certain – a Boeotian Amphora dated to the 7th century (**Fig. 27**). The reason for being cautious with this is deciding which of the animals can are under the control of the central figure. The central *Potnia Theron* is flanked by two lions and two large water birds, which appear symmetrically. Above this are the head and possibly the leg of a bull.[529] While the head of an animal sometimes stands in for the whole animal – such as the plaques from Sparta in ivory and terracotta (**Figs. 90, 186**, and **187**), there are no examples within this study where legs or other animal parts used in the same way. While the lions and birds on this amphora appear similar to those seen in the two- and multiple-animal symmetrical images, it is more difficult to see the control over the bull-head and possible leg. The fish on the figure's skirt is another area of ambiguity – it is unclear if it is intended to be a "real" fish – comparable to the birds and lions or a design on her skirt. If the fish is understood as a real animal, its control is comparable to that of lions and birds. However, if the fish is a pattern on the figure's skirt, it is perhaps unlikely to be a form of control.

In these scenes, the unifying factor is how the central figure demonstrates her control over multiple and varied animals at once. This control of many animals could be a way of establishing an identity of great power. In the case of Kirke, this kind of representation may indicate the threat posed by her to Odysseus and his crew – as she transforms men into hybrid creatures, bringing them under her control. Like the figures controlling symmetrical groups of animals discussed above, these images suggest powers extending to the broader animal kingdom and perhaps also over the natural world – also including vegetation. However, the examples with asymmetrical groups of multiple animals appear more chaotic – only the Boeotian amphora (**Fig. 27**) shows the animals around the central figure as being posed. This example is questionable if it belongs to this category at

[526] Serwint (2002) p.341.
[527] Nudity and sexuality: Marinatos (2000) p.43. Nudity and fertility: Christou (1968) p.53; Serwint (2002) p.337. Divinity and nudity: Bonfante (1989) p.545. Nudity and gender: Lee (2015) p.173. Nudity and Near Eastern origin: Marinatos (2000) p.43.
[528] Serwint (2002) p.337.
[529] Bull's leg: Johnson (1981) p.236.

all. The bronze horse pendant (**Fig. 94**) shows the central figure in quite a rigid pose, and the birds above her have some symmetry. However, the rest of the animals surrounding her do not appear organised in any way – we assume they are under her command from their proximity. Still, they do not face her or pose around her as in other examples. In the Kirke examples, most animal-hybrids stand close to the central figure, demonstrating her control, but face different directions and stand in various poses, suggesting they struggle against her power.

6.1.5: Asymmetrical – one animal

All the *Potnia Theron* images where one animal appears are asymmetrical, and there is some variation in these depictions. **Table 6.6** summarises the different animals that appear in *Potnia Theron* scenes. The largest group is those figures which hold birds (see **Section 3.2**), closely followed by large felines, most of which appear to be lions due to their visible mane (e.g. amphora fragment from Melos, ca.670-640, **Fig. 49**).

Type of animal	Number
Birds	11
Large felines	10
Hybrid	9
Horse	6
Snake	6
Deer	5
Hare	3
Goat	3
Other	2

Table 6.6: Animals shown in *Potnia Theron* images with one animal.

Although many animals of this group are held or controlled in the same way as those of the rest of the IC (see **Section 6.2** discussion of types of control), the single animal group also has central figures riding the animals as a type of control. Figures which ride lions, such as on the gold jewellery plaque from Cyprus ca.700 (**Fig. 93**), share the same kind of power as those who control lions by physically holding them. In both cases, the central figure appears interacting with the lion in a way a mortal woman would not, due to the threat of injury or death. As lions are deeply associated with strength and the wild, the ability to tame a lion as though it was a horse (here riding it) suggests an identity of great power and influence.

Other figures appear riding horses, such as a 6th century terracotta figure from Sparta (**Fig. 235**). Here, the central figure appears much larger than the horse, which could be an aesthetic choice but could also emphasise the female figure's importance or intend to depict her as significantly larger than a mortal woman. Of these options, the latter two seem more likely. Comparing this figure with terracotta pendants from the same century, also from Sparta (**Figs. 186** and **187**), the central female face is also significantly larger than a mortal woman's head would be in comparison to the horses. Another horse-riding image

appears on an 8th century bronze tripod from Olympia (**Fig. 247**).[530] This image is significantly different as the rider is shown as a stick-figure and seems to be very small and stands on the back of a horse. A 7th century bronze helmet from Delphi (**Fig. 193**) is more unusual as the central figure rides a cow. While this is not a typical scene, the animal's size and its domesticated nature as a farmed animal give it similarities with horses. More unusual is riding on the back of a bird which appears in a 6th century terracotta figurine from Boeotia (**Fig. 241**). This image is notable as not only are birds never used by mortal women to ride due to their size, but the female figure also stands upright to be carried along on the back of the bird, like the Olympia tripod figure mentioned above.

Types of single-animal control in *Potnia Theron* scenes are often less dramatic, compared to the "superhuman" poses depicted in many of the multiple animal scenes. An example of this less dramatic type is the figurines with a small bird or animal held to their chest (e.g. **Figs. 18,23, 229** and **230**). Other examples show animals resisting the control of the *Potnia Theron* such as the deer on the 7th century amphora from Melos (**Fig. 28**) or the expression and turned-back head of the lion of the amphora fragment from Melos ca.670-640 (**Fig. 49**). The type of animal held or controlled seems to be a consideration here – small birds and animals are held close to the body and appear to be the same size as they would be if held by a mortal woman. Larger animals such as deer or lions seem to be more resistant to being controlled and appear smaller than if a mortal figure was holding them.

The only distinction of this group's animals seems to be a tendency to feature animals that appear less frequently alongside the *Potnia Theron*. The goat, hare, cow and dolphin all appear in this group.[531] It is difficult to discern trends in these images' central figures due to the small sample size, but some features about the *Potnia Theron* are notable within this group. Two figures appear as maenads – on an Attic cup and a Hydria from Caere (**Figs. 60** and **77**), which are the only examples of maenads within this study. Two sphinxes also appear as the *Potnia Theron* rather than as attributes. One on an alabastron from Corinth and another from an Oinochoe from Rhodes (**Figs. 17** and **169**). This appearance is notable as these are the only examples of sphinxes in the role of *Potnia Theron* within this study. There are six other examples of sphinxes within the study, but these are all shown as animals under the control of a *Potnia Theron*. Eight examples of *Potniai Theron* which control a single animal depict the central figure as a gorgon. Three of these appear on seals (**Figs. 73**, **74,** and **75**) where these figures can be identified as gorgons by the emphasis on the large head and exaggerated features (see **Section 5.6**). Beyond this and being shown as full-bodied gorgons with wings, these images have little in common with one another. The gorgons from the two Scaraboid seals (**Figs. 73** and **75**) both gorgons control a standing lion while the seal from Melos (**Fig. 74**) holds a dolphin and a wheel. The frequency of gorgons seems less notable; there is a total of 35 gorgons and gorgoneia in the role of a *Potnia Theron* within the IC.

[530] Figure identified as "Potnia" in LIMC Vol.8.1 p.1025 and Vol.8.2 p.679.
[531] See **Chapter 3** for information on which animals are found within the study and their totals.

6.2: Relation to animals

Looking at how the *Potnia Theron* holds or controls animals, there are two main categories: active and passive control." This control can be seen interpreted as superhuman – such as figures which hold lions in a demonstration of physical strength; or supernatural – like the figures which appear to control animals by keeping them at a distance, often in unnatural poses. "Active control" refers to where the *Potnia Theron* physically holds the animal. In contrast, "passive control" shows animals under control – demonstrated by their pose or proximity to other figures – but not being physically touched or held.[532] While these types are defined in previous scholarship, there has been no real discussion of how they are depicted and what they can tell us.

The difference between the two types of control gives us some insight into the nature of the central figure's power in a specific *Potnia Theron* scene. For example, a figure holding a lion off the ground may demonstrate superhuman strength and size. Another figure type keeping lions at a safe distance may be thought of as having a different kind of apotropaic power – to keep away or turn away danger without physically holding the lion. This distinction may reflect the difference between those *Potnia Theron* figures that protect civilization from the wild from within society's boundaries and those that protect from the wild from a position outside those boundaries. This liminality also occurs in the cult places of figures associated with the *Potnia Theron,* such as Artemis, which are often on civilised areas' borders.[533]

The types of control are distributed within the study as follows:

Type of control	Total
Active	158
Passive	78
Too damaged to identify	21
Combination	6

Table 6.7: Distribution of active and passive control examples within the IC.

From this, we can see that there are far more active than passive examples. The "active" group also includes animals being "worn" (e.g. the *aegis* of Athena) as there is physical contact made, animals that are attached to the body of the *Potnia Theron*, and those animals which the *Potnia Theron* rides or stands on. The "passive" group includes examples where the *Potnia Theron* is depicted without a body (as there is no way to hold the animal), animals being hunted (see **Section 7.3.1**), and animals which appear to be controlled by supernatural power. There are also six examples where both active and passive control are present, such as the hydria decoration from Taranto, ca.570 (**Fig. 76**), where the central figure holds rabbits or hares with her hands (active control) while surrounded by posed lions and snakes (passive control). Both types of control will be looked at in greater detail in the following sections.

[532] Barclay (2001) p.378; Schuhmann (2009) p.6.
[533] Langdon (2008) p.175; Zolotnikova (2017) p.9. See also **Section 7.4.**

6.2.1: Active control

The most unambiguous indication of active control is that where a *Potnia Theron* holds an animal can include more forceful examples such as an amphora from Athens ca.550-500 (**Fig. 34**) with a central figure who holds lions off the ground. Active control can also describe images such as the marble statue from Miletus ca.570-560 (**Fig. 229**) where a small bird is carried – the pose here is far less dramatic; however, the bird is still physically held by the *Potnia Theron*. Within the active control images, the way animals are controlled can be broken down as follows:

How the animal is held by the *Potnia Theron*	Number
Neck	44
Worn or attached to central figure	31
Tail	20
Body	16
Multiple	15
Front leg	14
Riding	9
Head/horns/ears	8
Rear legs	4
Held by leash	3

Table 6.8: Ways that animals are held in *Potnia Theron* scenes.

Some factors need to be considered when looking at these numbers. For example, the different types of animals which are being held or controlled. A full breakdown of the animal types in the IC can be found in **Chapter 3**. There is some ambiguity when interpreting how animals are held, for example, as snakes do not have legs, they do not appear in two of the categories above. It is also difficult to differentiate what is "neck", "body", or "tail". In theory, snakes held by the head or tail could classify as such, but no examples of this type appear in the IC. For this reason, active control examples of snakes classify as "body", as the middle of the body is held in all instances.

Looking at the distribution of how the *Potnia Theron* holds animals, the majority are held by the neck (see **Table 6.8**). The significance of this is the power exhibited by this kind of hold. The neck is a vulnerable part of the body, and by taking control of an animal in this way, the *Potnia Theron* is not only limiting the movement of the animal but potentially controlling its ability to breathe. This control may signify a power over animal life and death, as we find examples within this group when the animals appear lifeless. One example of this is a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) where the central figure holds a pair of long-necked water birds, which hang lifelessly by their necks. Not all animals grasped by the neck appear lifeless; for example, an aryballos from Corinth ca.625-600 (**Fig. 54**) showing a *Potnia Theron* holding two long-necked water birds. Both birds appear upright and live – the bird on the left also seems to struggle against being held, raising its wings. This example demonstrates the importance of context – these two examples of birds grasped by the neck give different

impressions and possibly carry different meanings. While a living animal could be an attribute of the central figure or a representation of her sphere of influence, a deceased animal could represent a sacrifice or offering and suggest her powers extending beyond the living world. On the plate from Rhodes, the central figure appears to be stepping out of the picture frame and dressed unusually, suggesting she may be engaged in ritual activity, and the birds she holds may be sacrificial.[534]

Where the head, horns or ears are used to hold animals, this is again a straightforward form of control, but there is still variation. For example, on a 7th century amphora from Melos (**Fig. 28**), the female figure to the right holds a deer by its antlers – the deer struggles against this control with its legs in the air but cannot break free of her power. On an 8th century bronze shield from Crete (**Fig. 221**), a pair of lions grasped held by their ears. The lions are significantly larger than the central figure but are held by their ears and raise their front legs to her. In contrast to the deer, they do not resist being controlled instead of turning towards the central figure. The group of figures held by the head is also unique in that there are some animals represented as a head alone. An example of this is a 9th century horse ornament from Samos (**Fig. 189**), where the central figure both holds and stands on large feline heads.

The heads of animals also appear outside of active control contexts as abbreviations for the whole animal, such as terracotta pendants ca. 700-500 from Sparta (**Figs. 186** and **187**) and the bull's head the 7th century amphora from Boeotia (**Fig. 27**).[535] This abbreviation suggests importance to the animal's head, appearing as almost a signifier of its identity. Therefore, in iconographic terms, to hold an animal by the head makes a strong statement about the type of control demonstrated by the *Potnia Theron* in these images. Where the head of the animal is held, it may also suggest controlling the animal's will or mind. Thinking about this kind of control, it seems closer to the "passive" control type discussed below, which implies the *Potnia Theron* can control animals remotely, as well as by physically holding or controlling them.

The most conspicuous examples of physical control are those where animals are grasped by their limbs. Within this study, front legs seem to be held more frequently, such as an antefix from Campania ca.500-480 (**Fig.7**) where two lions, identified by their manes, are held by their forelegs. While the antefix is damaged, we can see that the forelegs are narrow and the lions are being held by a single limb. This position not only makes the lions appear helpless but also demonstrates the power of the *Potnia Theron*. In contrast, earlier, later, and contemporary images of lions in the Greek world associate them with strength and power.[536]

The action of holding two lions off the ground in this way suggests not only superhuman physical size and strength but also a control over the will of animals. While the

[534] See **Section 7.7**.
[535] This idea is presented in Gunter (2002) p.87, specifically referring to animal representations at Çatal Höyük. While the kind of abbreviation appears to be the same, I am not suggesting this connects these images with those from Çatal Höyük.
[536] Starr (1961) p.282; Blakolmer (2016) p.61.

lions turning their heads from the central figure suggests struggling against her power, the lions remain symmetrical in their poses and do not seem as though they are trying to attack her. The lions' positioning, baring their teeth and turning away from the central figure, reinforces that these are animals of the wild. Holding lions off the ground seems like a visual cue that they are outside of their usual context in the wild and are now attributes of a supernatural figure.

Animals held by the forelegs are all shown upright. Even when lifted off the ground, they are in a "standing" position with their hind legs towards the ground. However, when an animal is held by its hind leg, the body is usually inverted, showing the head towards the ground. An amphora from Athens ca.550-500 (**Fig.34**) provides an example where the central figure holds a pair of lions by their hind legs. This example inverts the animal's image – not only taking it out of its usual context in the wild but also giving the animal a more unfamiliar appearance. The meaning here is again control – the *Potnia Theron* is shown to have complete control of the animal, the inversion disarms animals such as lions. An exception to this is a Corinthian aryballos ca.600-575 (**Fig. 57**) which shows a central figure holding two animals likely to be goats – identified by their hooves and the "beard" on the animal on the right – by their hind legs. In this example, both animals remain upright as though running along the ground, with one of their hind legs extending backwards, held by the *Potnia Theron*. Apart from this and one other example – a relief plate from Crete ca.750 (**Fig. 204**), which again shows goat-like animals, all other images where animals are held by a hind leg show large felines such as lions. The Corinthian aryballos is the only example where the animals stand on the ground – the goat-like animals from the Cretan plate are held off the ground by their hind legs in the same way as the large felines seen in other images. While holding a large feline upside-down appears to challenge the usual association with threat, it is unlikely to be the same meaning for goats in the same position. Here, it is more likely to connect to the "wild" nature of goats and their place on mountainsides – by inverting an animal with these associations-suggests a domesticating or civilizing force.

The examples where animals are held by their tails focus on another narrow and potentially vulnerable part of the animal's body. Like the animals grasped by their hind legs, the examples where the *Potnia Theron* holds the tail mainly show the animal upside down. These examples can be understood similarly to those where the hind legs of animals are held. The distribution of animals is also similar, with 18 of 20 examples showing lions. Of the remaining two images, one holds goats, while the other holds dolphins. This indicates substantial similarity to the animals held by their hind legs; like goats, deer have a strong association with the wild and can be understood similarly.[537] The only outlier is the dolphins, which are significantly different from the other animals shown in this group. The figures in the image with dolphins can be identified as Nereids, making the dolphins attributes of this identity.[538] Looking at how the dolphins are held, this may be a combination of practical considerations and ensuring the animal is recognisable. Dolphins do not have any limbs to hold onto like other animals examined in this section, and the shape of their bodies would

[537] Thomas (2009) p.24.
[538] LIMC Vol.6.1 p.788; https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010249946 accessed 05/02/2025.

mean the tail is a logical place for the *Potnia Theron* to grasp. This positioning also allows the dolphin to remain identifiable while it is being held, meaning it is useful as a recognisable attribute.

The figures which are shown riding or standing on animals exhibit a different kind of active control. Here we can see the authority implied by the *Potnia Theron* figure's relative position to the animal below her. Of the nine examples which stand or ride on the back of an animal, only three are seated on the animal's back. The first example of this type is a jewellery plaque from Cyprus ca.700 (**Fig. 93**) showing a female figure riding a lion, secondly, a 7th century bronze helmet from Delphi (**Fig. 193**) where a female rider appears with a bull, and thirdly a 6th century terracotta figurine from Sparta showing a female figure on a horse (**Fig. 235**). These images' perspectives are very different, with the Cyprus figure shown frontally, making the *Potnia Theron* figure appear larger than the lion below her.

Similarly, the Sparta figure seems larger than life-size compared to the horse; the Delphi example, however, shows the female figure as being closer to life-size and seated side-saddle on the back of a bull that she holds by a leash. It is also useful to consider the different implications of riding these animals – while a figure riding on the back of a bull is unusual, it would not be impossible. Riding a lion is far more uncommon due to the danger of attempting to control a wild animal associated with great power. Riding a horse seems the most usual but may tell us something about the rider's nature as horses were associated with status in the Archaic period and were associated with the Spartan goddess Orthia.[539] The riding pose places the central figure close to the animal, but one that makes her position clear is above and in control of the animal.

Figures that stand on animals are slightly different from those that ride them, although some examples are ambiguous if the figure is understood as "standing" or "riding" on an animal. One example of this is an 8th century bronze tripod from Olympia (**Fig. 247**), which shows a horse with a stick figure standing on its back. Due to the figure's lack of detail, it is difficult to understand if it depicts "standing" or "riding" the horse. In this example, either interpretation would give a similar understanding – although the legs of the horse appear to bend as if in movement, so riding seems more likely based on the figure's balance. Unlike the horse-riding example from Sparta discussed above (**Fig. 235**), it is unlikely the Olympia figure represents Orthia due to location. This figure has been identified elsewhere only as "*Potnia*"; however, this is not elaborated further.[540] In this case, it seems more likely that the horse is symbolic of status – as mentioned before – or possibly may indicate a connection to war if taken in connection with the long stick or spear.

Two figures which warrant special mention are statuettes identified as Aphrodite accompanied by water birds. The first of these is a 6th century statuette from Boeotia showing Aphrodite standing on the back of a large bird, identified as a swan (**Fig. 241**).[541]

[539] Status: Boardman (1978) p.167. Orthia: Dawkins (1920) p.149; Fitzhardinge (1980) p.49; Carter (1987) p.379.
[540] LIMC Vol.8.1 p.1025. See also discussion of the name "Potnia" in **Section 1.3**.
[541] LIMC Vol.2.1 p.96; Johnson (1981) p.75; https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010259739 accessed 05/02/2025.

The second figure is a 6th century figure from Athens (**Fig. 242**) and appears seated on the back of a pair of long-necked water birds.[542] Like the 8th century Olympia tripod figure (**Fig. 247**) discussed above, these two figures are challenging to categorize as either "standing" or "riding". However, in this case, the images are more detailed and so there is more information to be considered. Looking first at the standing Aphrodite figure (**Fig. 241**), the bird appears to be in flight due to its wing position, so while it seems an unstable position, "riding" would be an appropriate description. The upright posture of Aphrodite may suggest the control she has over the swan – demonstrating that her control allows her to not only ride on the back of the swan but do so while standing. In the second figure, the birds do not appear to be moving. It is also unclear if she is supported on the back of two swans or whether she is sitting on a seat or throne fashioned in this shape. Due to the details added to the birds' faces and wings and the unusual form of the "seat", it seems more likely they are intended to represent real birds, especially if the seated figure is identifiable as Aphrodite. An alternate identification of Hyakinthus has been suggested for this figure. However, this identification has no reasoning while the identification of Aphrodite is only explained by the enthroned pose.[543] Greater detail of identity is discussed in **Chapter 7**. This section will only focus on the poses that relate to the role of the *Potnia Theron* rather than her identity. Looking at the figure's positioning concerning the birds, we can tell something about the central figure's control. While this type of power is not the typical kind of direct control – where animals are physically held – there is still the physical contact that defines active control; this is seen in the swans' symmetrical and unnatural positioning to support the central figure between them.

The figures which stand, rather than riding on animals, display a slightly different kind of control. While they still appear above the animal, they control and occupy a similar space in terms of proximity to the animal they hold. The animals controlled tend to be shown in reclined poses. An example is a 6th century bronze mirror stand from Hermione (**Fig. 161**), where the central figure stands on the back of a lion laying with its head between its paws. This composition may suggest an influence from earlier Near Eastern images as well as a clear demonstration of control over the lion.[544] A Near Eastern influence is also suggested for a similar 6th century mirror stand from Lakonia (**Fig. 167**), which also shows a female figure standing on the back of a recumbent lion.[545] While the two mirror examples are quite similar in form and appearance, there are also four examples of 7th-century *perirrhanteria* (ritual basin-stands) that display a similar composition.[546] As with the mirror handles, *perirrhanteria*, which feature female figures standing on lions, appear to be influenced by Near Eastern images, such as those from the 9th-century temple of Tel Halaf

[542] Johnson (1981) p.78; https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010280657 accessed 05/02/2025.
[543] Identification as Hyakinthus: https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010280657 accessed 05/02/2025; Identification as Aphrodite: Johnson (1981) p.78.
[544] Near Eastern influence: Breitenberger (2007) p.14. See also **Section 2.3**.
[545] https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/253556?&searchField=All&sortBy=Relevance&ft=mistress+of+animals&offset=0&rpp=20&pos=8 accessed 05/02/2025.
[546] Function of Perirrhanteria: Fitzhardinge (1980) p.70; Dillon (2002) p.54.

(Syria).[547] One example is from Corinth (**Fig.177**) and comprises three identical female figures standing in a rigid pose on top of reclined lions. In this example, physical contact between the female figures and the lions is seen in the female figures' feet on the backs of the lions. A similar *perirrhanterion* from Rhodes (**Fig. 179**), appears to be a different variety, where the female figures stand on the backs of the lions and control them by holding leashes around their necks.[548] This composition slightly changes the control shown between the *Potnia Theron* and the lion. The *perirrhanteria* offer two types of active or physical control over the lion: standing on the lion's back and controlling the lion by a leash around its neck. Similar leashes appear on a comparable *perirrhanterion* from Samos (**Fig. 180**), although here the female figures stand to the side of the lions. The variation in *perirrhanteria* designs seem to be influenced by aesthetic preference rather than conveying strongly different iconographic meanings – in each of the examples looked at here, female figures appear in clear control of lions in submissive postures. This similarity gives the *perirrhanteria* a coherence where they all demonstrate comparable types of active control over lions.

These active control types – sitting, standing, or riding on animals, all have a similar effect in bringing the animal under a kind of control where the central figure can ride or balance on its back. This control demonstrates that the central figure has the power to physically keep the animal in place and keep it stable enough to stand or sit on it. With more docile animals such as cows, horses, and to some extent, water birds, this does not seem too extraordinary. However, when wild animals such as lions are controlled in the same way, the viewer can understand that the figure demonstrates abilities beyond human capacity – suggesting a supernatural ability.

6.2.2: Passive control

Passive or implied control of animals is defined in this study as examples where the *Potnia Theron* is seen controlling an animal without the use of physical contact. This kind of control can be more challenging to identify, so this section will cover some of the different ways passive control appears and what this type of control brings to our more comprehensive understanding of the *Potnia Theron* image.

Figures that appear as a head alone are grouped in this category as they do not have a body to hold an animal physically. There are 25 images in the IC depicted without a body, 12 of which are gorgoneia. The depiction of a gorgon as an isolated head recalls the myth of Medusa's beheading and implies a "taming" of the gorgon.[549] There is significant diversity among the gorgoneia, which appear as the *Potnia Theron*. Many differences concern the appearance of specific gorgoneia – features such as the hair and jewellery of these examples are covered in **Chapter 4**, while hybridised and monstrous features are covered in **Chapter 5**. This section will look only at the interaction of gorgoneia which are shown to control animals.

[547] Dillon (2002) p.54; Angell (2017) p.74.
[548] Angell (2017) p.98.
[549] Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.7.

The clearest examples of gorgoneia in a *Potnia Theron* role are those where the animals flank the central image in a way recognisable from other symmetrical *Potnia Theron* compositions. One example of this is a Lakonian amphora ca.540-530 (**Fig. 46**) which shows a gorgoneion flanked by two sphinxes. The frontal view is typical for gorgoneia, and gorgon faces more generally, while the sphinxes are shown in profile, facing the central figure.[550] In these examples, control of the central figure is seen in the symmetrical pose of the sphinxes. As will be discussed below, this symmetry is a visual cue to the *Potnia Theron's* power, giving the appearance the animals are trained or controlled to pose in a way that wild animals would not. The same kind of symmetry is seen on a series of antefixes from Capua (**Figs. 4, 5,** and **6**). Here, the animals appear above the gorgoneia, but the same kind of control is visible, with the animals appearing in symmetrical poses – the control implied from the central figure's central and frontal positioning and her size relative to the animals. This positioning designates her role as *Potnia Theron* within this scene; from this, we can imply that the power over the animals comes from the gorgoneia.

There are also non-gorgoneia figures appearing only as a head with animals, such as ivory (**Fig. 90**) and terracotta (**Figs. 186** and **187**) examples from Sparta, showing a frontal female head between two horse heads. Here, the female head could be an abbreviation for a goddess with two horses under her control.[551] The kind of control demonstrated in these images is the same as the gorgoneia described above – her relative position implies the central figure's command over the horse heads. The main difference being the type of figure shown in the centre of these compositions – the Sparta examples are not gorgoneia as they lack the exaggerated or monstrous features associated with gorgon representations in the Archaic period.[552] The ability to control horses also seems less miraculous than control of wild animals such as lions or mythological creatures like sphinxes – this raises the question of whether this can then be considered the same kind of supernatural control of animals as other *Potnia Theron* figures? In the case of these Sparta images, the context suggests they are likely to be goddesses as they were found in the sanctuary of Orthia.[553] The examples from Sparta are not the only non-gorgoneia images to abbreviate the *Potnia Theron* figure to a head flanked by animals. Lekythoi from Rhitsona (**Fig. 156**) and Athens (**Fig. 157**) show female faces between snakes. These examples are unusual because the faces appear in profile rather than the frontal faces of the examples discussed in the gorgoneia and Sparta examples. These figures are both identified as Medea, the Athens lekythos with an inscription.[554] Later sources describe Medea driving a chariot drawn by serpents or dragon-serpents so that these images may be an earlier and abbreviated version of these episodes.[555] Similar to the gorgoneia examples, the control over the snakes is implied by both the central figure's size and relative position, placing her in a prominent and

[550] Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) p.157; Hedreen (2007) p.218; see also **Section 6.3.**
[551] Thompson (1909) p.290; Waugh (2012) p.8-10. Identified specifically as Orthia: Dawkins (1929) p.241.
[552] Frothingham (1911) p.375 disagrees and identifies **Fig.90** as a gorgon head. See **Section 5.6**.
[553] Waugh (2012) p.9.
[554] Athens lekythos: https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1926-0417-1 accessed 05/02/2025. Rhitsona lekythos: https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/record/84253706-3964-4E82-B6E5-BF494E7628AD accessed 05/02/2025.
[555] Apollod. *Bibl.*1.9.28; Diod. Sic 4.51.4. Both use the term δρακόντων for the "dragon-serpents."

controlling position between them. The unnaturally uniform bends of the snake bodies and the way they appear to "stand" with their mouths open towards the central figure suggest the central figure has power over the snakes. These, along with the Orthia and gorgoneia images, are all similar in their composition and the way they suggest control of animals. So, while they convey very different identities, they can represent the role of *Potnia Theron*.

Gorgoneia also appear in other kinds of passive control images, where control of animals is implied, but the animals do not flank the central figure symmetrically. One example of this is a 7th century bronze shield (**Fig. 219**) showing a gorgoneion surrounded by bands of running animals.[556] The gorgoneion is encircled with snakes which appear to emerge from her head. This hybridity needs to be considered outside of active and passive control, as it does not satisfactorily fit within either category – it has the physical contact of active control but lacks the "intent" to control, which typifies active control scenes such as those discussed in **Section 6.2.1**. Beyond the snakes, the rows of animals appear in ordered concentric circles, suggesting boundaries of control set by the central figure. So, while the figure cannot physically control the animals by holding or grasping them, they are still shown to be controlled and conforming to the central figure's will.

An example where the control of the *Potnia Theron* can be seen in the way her animals are posed is on a relief amphora from Boeotia ca.675 (**Fig. 38**), which shows the central figure with her arms raised and two smaller figures either side of her. Two large felines are posed symmetrically on either side of the central figure group, the pose of the felines is significant because they appear larger than the central figure and display open mouths and raised tails, suggesting they are living animals. Therefore, these can be understood as powerful animals capable of attacking the smaller figures protected by the *Potnia Theron*. However, the felines' pose shows them resting on their back legs – as though their front paws were resting on something in front of them. This is a good example of passive control, as we can see the potential threat associated with the animals and the power of the central figure to protect from this threat without taking physical control of the animals. The vines on either side of her head also imply that this power may extend to control to the wild in general.

There are other examples of this kind of passive control connected with magic. Within this study, these scenes are all associated with the identity of Kirke. These images show Kirke with Odysseus' crew in the process of being turned into hybrid creatures – most with animal heads, but some also with animal hooves and tails. There is some variation in the way Kirke appears in this study - there are both seated and standing figures as well as both nude and clothed examples. Most examples of Kirke in this study show her painted with white skin in contrast to the darker male characters; a colour convention also found in Neopalatial Minoan frescoes to differentiate gender.[557] The way control is demonstrated also differs from the examples explored so far – the most apparent visual clue to Kirke's power is the hybridity of the figures around her.[558] In hybridising Odysseus's men, Kirke

[556] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1922-0511-386 accessed 05/02/2025.
[557] Chapin (2010) p.225.
[558] Hom. *Od.* 10.212; Aston (2011) p.304.

removes their human shape and effectively moves them from the civilized world into the "wild"- we see this at a liminal stage where they cross between the two. The cup and wand held by Kirke also act as a clue to her control over the hybridised beast-men.[559] Similarities to other passive control examples are apparent – for example, the lekythos from Taranto ca.510-500 (**Fig. 158**) shows the hybrid figures around Kirke, all facing her, but none touch her. They turn their faces towards Kirke, but their bodies move away, suggesting she controls their movements away from her, protecting herself from the threat of the "animal" aspects of these figures. The use of pose and proximity to the central figure have both been discussed above as indicating the control of the central figure. With the Kirke images, we also see items such as the cup and wand displaying how this power is created and manipulated.

Another specific type of passive control appears in ten examples in this study, where the central figure appears in a hunting role. While the role of hunter seems possibly paradoxical given other functions of the *Potnia Theron,* it also shows another means of animal control.[560] Similar to Kirke's images discussed above, many hunting images show the central figure holding weapons that could suggest means of controlling animals around her. An aryballos from Rhodes ca.600-575 (**Fig. 58**) gives an example where we can see the central figure with a bow and arrow in the centre of the image, with large felines on either side of her. Control of the feline in front of her appears to come from the bow and arrows – she can confront the animal and potentially kill it. However, there is a second feline behind her. The feline remains at a distance rather than appearing to pose a threat. The animals stay distant and turn their heads outwards to the viewer rather than towards the *Potnia Theron*. An Anatolian pitcher ca.699-600 (**Fig. 131**) shows a different kind of scene with the *Potnia Theron* as a hunter – in this example, the central figure is again shown with a bow and arrow. The spotted animal in front of her is shot with arrows. This demonstrates a more direct and less supernatural kind of control; however, it is likely that the image of a female figure hunting a leopard or similar large feline alone has led to identifying this figure as either Artemis or Cybele/Kubaba.[561] A different hunting figure appears on a krater from Samos ca.670-650 (**Fig. 133**), showing the central figure with a shield and spear rather than a bow and arrows – this figure appears with a small sphinx raising its front paw towards her. The female figure holds her spear horizontal as if about to throw it at the animal walking away on the right. The inclusion of these hybrid animals and the appearance of the central figure in a *polos* – headwear often associated with divine figures – makes it seem more likely that the central figure should be interpreted as a deity.[562] The *Potnia Theron* figures appear as hunters form a specific sub-group, with a distinct role within that of a *Potnia Theron*. However, when looking at this sub-group, we see a kind of variation familiar from the rest of the study – the clothing, appearance, identity, origin and accompanying animals distinguish

[559] Lawler (1952) p.317; Giuliano (2004) p.90.
[560] Hjerrild (2009) p.41; see also **Section 7.3.1.**
[561] Artemis: LIMC. Vol.2.1 p.633; Vol.2.2 p.451. Cybele/Kubaba: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/155814 accessed 05/02/2025.
[562] Levi (1945) p.19; Hoffmann (1964) p.186; Burkert (1985) p.149; Ammerman (1991) p.226; Marinatos (2000) p.82; Ulbrich (2010) p.173; Winbladh (2012) p.51; Budin (2016) p.21. See also **Chapter 4**.

the images from one another, emphasising the importance of assessing these images on an individual basis.

Also included within the passive control group are 15 jewellery plaques from Rhodes (**Figs. 108, 109, 111, 112, 113, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124**, and **125)**. In all these examples, the hands of the *Potnia Theron* do not meet the animal's body; however, there are multiple other examples of similar jewellery plaques from Rhodes where animals are held (e.g., **Fig. 101**). The same idea may be depicted here, and the gap may be a stylistic choice rather than depicting a different kind of control over the animals in these examples. These examples highlight the issue by categorising images as either "active" or "passive" control types. These descriptors are useful in describing *Potnia Theron* images. However, not all images fit comfortably into these categories. As the dichotomy of active or passive control came from modern scholarship's interpretation of these images, it is unsurprising to find outliers to this paradigm as they were not created within it. This is not to say there is no value in differentiating the type of control shown by the *Potnia Theron* figures. A better understanding of each *Potnia Theron* figure's types of control can be valuable to understand the diverse and distinct figures that come under the description of *Potnia Theron*.

6.3: Pose

The body of the *Potnia Theron* takes on several poses throughout this study. The preceding sections have looked at the relation of the *Potnia Theron* figure to her subject animals. However, the following sections will look in greater depth at the positioning of the central figures of *Potnia Theron* images. The aim of comparing the pose and perspective of these figures is firstly to find areas of similarity and difference in the overall context of the study. Secondly, this data allows closer consideration of how the body of the *Potnia Theron* is viewed, what is visible and how this affects our perception of her identity and powers of control.

The first area for consideration is the positioning of the central figure of the *Potnia Theron* – art from the Greek world in the period covered by this study was subject to varied influences and not yet codified. Therefore, significant variation and experimentation occur.[563]

The perspective of individual *Potnia Theron* figures can change how we interpret them. As many figures – even those modelled in the round – are intended to be viewed from a single perspective. This perspective must be considered as part of a thorough analysis. For example, frontal faces have associations with figures such as gorgons and figures linked to Dionysus such as satyrs and maenads.[564] The body position is often closely

[563] Experimentation in Archaic art: Fitzhardinge (1980) p.26; Coldstream (1984) p.97; Ferrari (1986) p.6; Cook (1997) p.47; Cook & Dupont (1998) p.33; Tsiafakis (2003) p.97 Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.15; Langdon (2008) p.110; Prent (2009) p.237.

[564] Boardman (1978) p.156; Burkert (1985) p.83; Boardman (1991) p.198; Dexter (2010) p.28; Angell (2017) p.83. Dionysos: Korshak (1987) p.20; Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) p.152; Boardman (1991) p.108; Cole (2007) p.332; Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.79. Deceased figures: Korshak (1987) p.14.

linked to how *Potnia Theron* figures interact with animals, as discussed above. For example, certain poses make physically holding or controlling animals more challenging to portray.

Table 6.9 gives a breakdown of the positioning of *Potnia Theron* figures and the frequency of each type within the IC. Subsequent sections will build on this data regarding the positioning of the head, body and limbs of the central figure.

Position	Number
Frontal face and body	90
Profile face and body	64
Profile face, frontal body	29
Too damaged to identify	28
No body shown	25
Frontal face and body, legs in profile	15
Hybrid/non-human body	10
Frontal face, profile body	2

Table 6.9: Positioning of the face and body of *Potnia Theron* figures within this study.

These figures show a clear majority of figures depicted frontally – as mentioned above the frontal depictions tend to be associated with liminality. Within the IC, there are five of the examples with face and body frontal that appear as gorgons. Frontality tends to have liminal associations – gorgons are hybridised, and maenads, through their association with Dionysos, can be viewed as intoxicated and outside of societal norms in their dress and behaviour.[565] However, the figures identifiable as gorgons tend to have frontal faces, but their bodies are more likely to be in profile – especially in the *knielaufen* pose. Similarly, Maenads have strong links to liminality through Dionysus, but the two examples of figures identifiable as maenads within the study are both shown with face and body in profile. While these two identities are not especially prominent in the frontal figures, they demonstrate the link between frontality and liminality, and other figures within the frontal group can still be seen as liminal figures, even if they cannot be associated with one of these identities. The *Potnia Theron* generally occupies a space between the civilized world and the wild animals they control.[566] There are also liminal associations with figures like Artemis, which have close associations with the *Potnia Theron*.[567]

The collection of figures with frontal face and body are relatively small. Thirty-two figures appear on the jewellery plaques from Rhodes, many of which are very similar or identical. Some bear such close resemblances that they are likely to come from the same mould, such as two examples now in the British Museum (**Fig. 114** and **Fig. 115**). The likelihood of them coming from the same mould is increased when looking closely at the details, such as the left hand being slightly higher than the right on both figures. This difference is subtle and unlikely to be a significant design choice but does give us a visual distinction that suggests a link between these figures.

[565] Gorgons: Tsiafakis (2003) p.74; Mazet (2017) p.20.Maenads: Bonfante (1989) p.560; Dillon (2002) p.139; Seaford (2006) p.24. See also **Section 7.4**
[566] Examples of this can be found in **Section 7.4**.
[567] Mazet (2017) p.24; Simons (2014) p.23.

Similarly, a series of bronze Archaic mirrors from the North Pontic area (**Figs. 161** to **165**) show strong similarities, suggesting mould-made handles. However, frontality does not always appear in mould-made figures – the series of lead votives from Sparta (**Figs. 138** to **148**) have head and body in profile. So, while the Jewellery plaques from Rhodes and the North Pontic mirror handles may seem to explain frontal figures as a product of mould-made images, the Sparta lead votives disagree with this.

The medium for representation can also be considered when looking at the positioning of the *Potnia Theron* figures. The frontal face and body group includes 27 statues or figurines modelled in the round. The only other group where these figures appear is that of fragments, where there is not enough to determine the face and body's relative positions. Slightly more of a trend can be seen with the 29 figures shown with face in profile and frontal body 11 of which appear on Corinthian alabastra and a further seven on Corinthian aryballoi. While this pose is also seen elsewhere, the frequent appearance of the same pose in Corinthian examples suggests a regional preference.

Although the information on body positions alone does not appear to reveal much information, as will be demonstrated in the subsequent sections, this information lends support to points made in other chapters. It helps to interpret the *Potnia Theron* images based on their details, rather than generalisations rooted in identities that may or may not connect with each image.

6.3.1: Position of arms

Position of arms	Number
Elbows bent; arms lowered	86
Elbows bent; arms raised	51
Combination (arms in different positions)	40
No arms	28
Damaged or missing	28
Elbows straight, arms down	19
Other arm positions	9
Elbows straight, arms out or up	2

Table 6.10: Arm positions of *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Like the body position, the positioning of the arms alone does not seem to reveal much information. The largest group in **Table 6.10** are the figures with elbows bent and arms lowered, but little can be discerned from this information alone. These numbers include two examples where wings appear in place of arms (see **Section 5.2**) with the wings shaped as though they were arms. Nine examples do not easily fit into any of the categories in **Table 6.10**. One example where an unusual arm position can be seen is an aryballos from Rhodes, ca.600-575 (**Fig. 58**) depicting the central figure in three-quarter perspective, holding a bow and arrow. A gold plaque from Rhodes, ca.700-600 (**Fig. 129**) is also unique within the IC, as the central figure is shown holding her breasts. The data regarding arm positions becomes more significant when viewed in combination with the information above regarding animals' hold or control. The position of the arms, to some extent, influences the way that animals can be physically held. While animals can also be held with

the arms bending upwards, these tend to be smaller animals, such as the smaller birds held by the figure on the 9th century Protogeometric urn from Knossos (**Fig. 250**). In this way, the position of arms has some connection with both the animals' size and how they are held.

A combination of arm positions can also suggest specific control types, such as those figures that hold a small animal against the body with one hand. All these figures are in the "Combination" group regarding arm position, despite being quite different in form, including smaller aryballoi (e.g., **Fig. 23**) to larger statues (e.g., **Figs. 229** and **230**), and the animal can vary, mainly small birds (e.g., **Fig. 234**) but other animals such as rabbits are also held (e.g., **Fig. 236**).

While the differences in percentages of passive control examples are not extreme, they demonstrate that straightened arms are more likely to be associated with passive control within this study. In contrast, arms that bend downwards at the elbow are most likely related to active control and physically holding animals. As with other sets of data in this section, it is most useful when viewed in combination with the information presented in other chapters.

6.3.2: Position of legs

Position of legs	Number
Legs straight	143
Striding	33
No legs shown	31
Knees bent	17
No legs due to damage	19
Hybrid/non-human legs	9

Table 6.11: Leg positions of *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

The position of legs is another area where it is beneficial to look at the data in the context of other information within the study. For example, the nine examples with hybridised or non-human legs are covered in greater detail in **Chapter 5**. Similarly, seated figures are discussed **Section 6.3.4**.

Of the figures where legs are seen, the majority appear standing with their legs straight. Within this group, a clear preference in clothing can be seen with 124 examples wearing long skirts which cover the legs (see **Chapter 4**).

Moving on to the figures with legs bent at the knees, 19 examples are in the *knielaufen* pose where the figure is kneeling-running, the rest of this group are seated figures.[568] Of the *knielaufen* figures, 15 can be identified as gorgons. In the Archaic period, this pose is often used for gorgon images. Generally, this pose is assumed to be adapted from Near Eastern figures such as Humbaba and Master of Animals figure; **Section 2.3.3** covers the connection between these figures and the *Potnia Theron*. Of the *knielaufen*

[568] Frothingham (1911) p.369; Burkert (1990) p.26; Dexter (2010) p.35.

figures that are not identifiable as gorgons, one is on fragments of a cup from Miletus ca.560 (**Fig. 65**). The figure appears to be a *Potnia Theron* moving to the left, holding a lion by its tail or leg in her left hand. The details are difficult to discern due to the fragmentary condition of the cup. Still, the lower part of the figure's face appears to show the nose and jaw in profile, suggesting that this is not a gorgon, as large and exaggerated frontal faces usually characterise these figures.[569] Another non-gorgon figure shown in this way is an oinochoe from Corinth ca.575-550 (**Fig. 171**), which shows a female figure in a *knielaufen* pose moving to the right between two sirens. Again, the figure's head is in profile and does not suggest she could be identified as a gorgon. The *knielaufen* pose can suggest flight or swift movement, which along with the sirens' presence, indicates that this is a divine figure or at least that this scene takes place in the realm of the supernatural.[570]

The data from **Table 10** and **Table 11** can be used in several ways. Firstly, to help provide context to information in other sections within this study, secondly, to identify trends which may help in identifying *Potnia Theron* figures in fragmentary images, and thirdly to allow a more nuanced understanding of the type of *Potnia Theron* figure represented, when images are incomplete.

6.3.3: Feet

Position of feet	Number
Pointing right	73
Feet covered	48
Feet frontal	40
Pointing left	32
Too damaged to identify	30
No feet	26
Hybrid/non-human feet	8
Combination of foot positions	6

Table 6.12: Foot positions of *Potnia Theron* figures of the IC.

The feet of the *Potnia Theron* are most often shown in profile, with 108 examples showing the feet facing the same direction as the face. There are 29 examples with feet pointing in the opposite direction to the figure, including a jug from Cyprus ca.750-600 (**Fig. 130**). Here the figure faces the right, but the feet point to the left.

Another trend within this section is that the feet are often shown uncovered, as suggested in the section on footwear in **Section 4.6.** The deliberate uncovering of the feet may be a visual indication that these figures are divine or otherwise more than human. This idea connects to the concept of divine nudity, also explored in **Chapter 4**.[571] The positioning of the feet also gives some context placing the figure within her surroundings – like the positioning of legs, it can suggest if a figure is intended as being in motion or in a more rigid pose.

[569] See **Chapter 5**.
[570] Burkert (1992) p.83.
[571] Christou (1968) p.22; Bonfante (1989) p.545; Angell (2017) p.77.

6.3.4: Movement

Following on from looking at the legs and feet of *Potnia Theron* figures, there is a division between those figures shown in static poses and those that appear in motion.

Pose	Number	Active Pose	Number	Passive Pose	Number
Still	167	Still	112	Still	47
Moving	43	Moving	30	Moving	12
No body	25	No body	9	No body	15
Damaged	20	Damaged	3	Damaged	0
Seated	8	Seated	5	Seated	3

Table 6.13: Distribution of moving, still and seated *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC.

Table 6.13 demonstrates the distribution of active and passive control types across different poses of the *Potnia Theron*. There is some discrepancy in the figures due to two damaged and six mixed control type figures in the still group and one damaged example in the moving group. The damaged figures from the "still" and "moving" categories are those where the movement of the central figure can be understood, but the type of control displayed cannot be due to damage.

The data in **Table 6.13** highlights some of the trends visible in the types of control associated with different poses of the *Potnia Theron*. The high number of still figures displaying active control of animals is unsurprising as some of the most famous *Potnia Theron* images use this combination, such as the François Vase (**Figs. 136** and **137**).

The seated figures include three figures seated on animals they are riding, and six figures seated on chairs or the ground. These make up a small group within this study, but it is useful to look at the possible interpretations for representing these figures in this way. Most of the seated figures in the IC are sculpted and vary in size from a pair of lintel figures from Prinias which are close to life-size (**Fig. 50**) to smaller figurines, such as a terracotta figurine (**Fig. 236**) at 187mm in height.[572] Painted figures identifiable as Kirke are also shown seated (**Figs. 158** and **159**). Unlike other figures, she is shown in profile, sitting on a cross-legged chair on one vase (**Fig. 158**) and a rounded stool (**Fig. 159**) – both show Kirke in profile holding her cup and wand, surrounded by hybrid animal-men. In these scenes, she is separated and shown as controlling the scene from this position. However, the Kirke scenes are distinct from other seated figures who do not share this identity but still display a distinct status in their seated pose.

6.4: Supplementary figures

In addition to the animals which accompany the *Potnia Theron,* there are 31 images shown with additional figures and 6 where the central *Potnia Theron* is repeated. As with the animal attributes of the *Potnia Theron*, the other figures in these scenes can provide meaningful context, which contributes to a better understanding of the *Potnia Theron*.

[572] Prinias figures: Marinatos (2000) p.76. Figurine: https://clevelandart.org/art/1924.877 accessed 05/02/25.

The first group of figures we see accompanying the *Potnia Theron* are gods – there examples of this type with representations of Athena, Apollo and Dionysos alongside the central figure. In some cases, the gods appearing alongside the *Potnia Theron* have been used to help identify the central figure - such as the 7th century amphora from Melos (**Fig. 28**), showing the arrival of Apollo.[573] Similarly, in examples where Athena appears as an additional figure, she is shown with Perseus in scenes where he is approaching Medusa in the role of *Potnia Theron*. One example of this can be seen on a 6th-century limestone metope from Sicily (**Fig. 2**), in this example, Athena and Perseus both help establish Medusa's identity as distinct from an unspecified gorgon.

Some examples of accompanying figures are not identifiable as deities or specific figures from myth, but their presence suggests the central figure's status. An example of this is a lead plaque from Sparta ca.620-560 (**Fig. 153**), where the central figure is flanked by two female figures who closely resemble her and wear *poloi*. These figures are usually identified as votaries or adorants.[574] Their function suggests the divine status of the central figure – suggested by her wings, clothing, and lions' presence. The attendant figures are distinguished from the central *Potnia Theron* as they do not have wings and are shown in profile, suggesting these figures had special status and emulated the dress of the *Potnia Theron* but were not divine themselves – indicated by the lack of wings.

Other examples utilise human figures to accompany the *Potnia Theron*. There are seven examples where warriors or figures with spears flank the *Potnia Theron*. Some examples are more animated, such as an Archaic period amphora from Vulci (**Fig. 32**). The warrior figures appear in battle, with only the central *Potnia Theron* appearing unmoving within the scene. This scene contrasts with examples such as an amphora from Athensca.550-500 (**Fig. 34**) where the additional figures in the scene face the *Potnia Theron* in the centre. Still, their poses are not as animated, with an advancing foot being the only visible movement in their poses. In both examples, the *Potnia Theron* is distinct within the scene. Not only does she appear as the only female figure and different in her shape and pose than the other figures, but she is also positioned away from other figures, allowing the animals she controls to be visible.

While the figures looked at so far act as context for the *Potnia Theron*, there are also six examples where the *Potnia Theron* figure herself is repeated or duplicated within the same image. This does not include examples such as the Knossos urn (**Figs. 250** and **251**) or François Vase handles (**Figs. 136** and **137**), which display similar images with some differences - these are viewed separately within this study. Repeated identical figures appear as the base of *perirrhanteria,* where they also seem to have an apotropaic function.[575] Each *perirrhanterion* consists of three identical female figures, which would have formed a stand for a ritual basin, such as the 7th century example from Isthmia (**Fig.**

[573] Studniczka (1890) p.34; Caskey (1976) p.29; Schefold (1966) Pl.10; Boardman (1998) p.128.
[574] Identification as votaries: Thompson (1909) p.294. Identification as adorants: LIMC Vol 2.1 p.627.
[575] Angell (2017) p.43.

178). This function for ritual purification makes sense for the repeated figures to have protective or apotropaic properties.[576]

Like the *Potnia Theron*, understanding these supplementary figures' role can be useful when analysing the images of this study. While some figures have distinguishable identities, others are less defined but can still contribute to understanding the central *Potnia Theron's* functi*on* and our understanding of how they relate to each other. Generally, we see the *Potnia Theron* as a protective force, benefitting the other characters within the scene – although, in some examples, her role as an *apotropaion* is more straightforward than others.

6.5: Framing

While not all the *Potnia Theron* images are framed, looking at those which are can provide some additional context. In total, 162 of the study's images have a frame, with the majority being framed with linear patterns. Single or multiple solid lines above and below the central scene such as on an amphora from Cerveteri ca.520 (**Fig. 43**) also appear frequently, acting as a visual boundary between scenes.

Frame type	Number
Linear pattern	36
Line above/below	31
Dotted	24
Tongue pattern	18
Braided	15
Dashed band	13
Structural	10
One- or two-line box	9
Animal	3

Table 6.14: Frame types seen in *Potnia Theron* examples from the IC.

In many instances, the frames of scenes are unremarkable, and differences appear to be aesthetic. Linear patterns such as the cross-hatching on the amphora fragment from Melos, ca.670-640 (**Fig. 49**) may be influenced by the decorative bands that characterised the Geometric pottery style.[577] The group which appears to have the most connection between the framing and the central image is the final set from the table above: those framed by animal figures. The 7th century bronze shield from Karkemish (**Fig. 219**) has outer borders of concentric bands of running animals which reinforces the connection of the central figure to animals and to her role as a *Potnia Theron.* A different kind of image is the 7th century terracotta plaque from Athens, which shows a figure with upraised arms, implying control of the snakes which frame her. This kind of pose and implied control is shared with other examples such as the relief amphora from Boeotia, ca.675 (**Fig. 38**) and

[576] Angell (2017) p.3.
[577] Geometric style: Neer (2012) p.75.

the bee figures from the electrum jewellery plaques from Rhodes, ca.700-600 (**Figs. 117** and **118**). The comparison of these figures helps to demonstrate how passive control is represented in the iconography of the *Potnia Theron*.

One of the most significant features of frames in *Potnia Theron* images is those examples where the central figure extends beyond the frame's boundary. In many examples, this appears to be a deliberate decision bringing the figure in front of the frame. An example of this is a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) where the central figure's foot can be seen overlapping the painted frame. If the foot's positioning were accidental, it might be expected that the border would be re-painted over the foot, or that the angle of the foot would have been changed to avoid this. However, the whole of the right foot and the toes of the left foot are seen as though stepping out of the frame. This is not a unique example, as other *Potnia Theron* figures are also shown to extend beyond the boundary of their scenes. For example, the 6th century pediment sculpture from Corfu (**Fig. 51**) where the central figure, shown in the *knielauf* pose, extends beyond the upper part of the pediment. This positioning makes the already monumental gorgon figure appear even larger.[578] As the figure is carved in deep relief, this gives the impression of the gorgon seeming to break free of the pediment. In both this and the Rhodes plate example, the central figure appears to be moving outside of the frame of the image and moving outside of the confines of their scene. This gives the impression of a transcendent and liminal figure – one belonging to and able to cross between boundaries. This fits with the roles associated with the *Potnia Theron* – the gorgon is a good example of this as she is a figure associated with hybridity and liminality. She crosses barriers of human and animal, masculine and feminine, as well as mortal and divine.[579] This kind of liminal identity is also found in other identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* (See **Section 7.4**)

In addition to frames, 13 of the images of this study have additional embellishments to the top or bottom of the frame. These are found on jewellery plaques from Rhodes – some of which feature flower or rosette motifs, including a gold example (**Fig. 109**). Others place the Rosette in an upper corner, such as on the string of plaques (**Fig. 99**). These rosettes are relatively similar in form, although there are more elaborate examples, such as from another gold plaque (**Fig. 106**), where granulation has been used to add detail. The technique used for these decorations could suggest influence from Near Eastern – specifically Phoenician – artistic styles.[580] Besides rosette motifs, there are additional decorations that hang from the bottom of many of these plaques. These objects are usually interpreted as pomegranates.[581] One suggestion is that the pomegranates could symbolise the renewal of life, viewed alongside the *Potnia Theron* as a slayer of animals.[582] However, the animals held in these jewellery plaques do not appear lifeless but often stand on their hind legs and extend their front legs, such as in **Fig. 109**. However, this alone does not discount the figure of the Rhodes plaques from association with the cycle of death and

[578] Wilk (2000) p.39.
[579] Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1.
[580] Use of granulation: Barnett (1980) p.170; Gaultier (2013) p.917.
[581] https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1860-0201-61 accessed 07/02/2025.
[582] Christou (1968) p.83.

rebirth. The floral motifs would also support this idea as they return each year. Similar jewellery plaques also depict the central figure with a bee-like body which may convey a similar idea. In myth, bees are also connected with the birth of Zeus and protecting him in the Idaean Cave, although the written sources for this are later than the period covered in this study.[583]

The frames generally contribute to the image's context by emphasising the style of the representation. Understanding the style can give us more information about the artistic aims and influences of the image and provide additional insight into the creation of individual *Potnia Theron* images. The examples where the central figure appears to break out of the border – painted or structural – give the impression of crossing from one realm to the next. This is typically associated with the *Potnia Theron* – often seen as occupying the space between the human and animal worlds.

6.6: Fill motifs

Among the other figures and elements discussed so far in this study, many of the images include fill motifs, including dots, crosses, floral or vegetal motifs and linear patterns. These small motifs appear in the otherwise blank space surrounding an image's main figures and elements from the Geometric period onwards.[584] In total, there are 78 images from the study where fill motifs are used. This figure only reflects where fill motifs can be seen within the same decorative zone as the *Potnia Theron* as discussion or inclusion of motifs not surrounding *Potnia Theron* figures would not be useful. A possible reason why more figures do not have fill motifs is practical considerations such as the image's size. For example, gems tend not to have fill motifs and are usually small in size and require careful working. However, there are examples of gems that have fill motifs, such as the linear motifs found on the 6th century steatite seal from Melos (**Fig. 75**). Other images such as figurines and statues will not appear in this section as they do not usually feature any fill motifs. The motifs which do occur are as follows:

Motif	Number
Floral	41
Multiple	9
Dotted “sun”	8
Cross/wheel	5
Other	4
Palmette	3
Dots	2
Vines	2

[583] Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.4-5; Dio. Sic. 5.70.1.
[584] Geometric fill motifs: Hurwit (1977) p.20.

Spiral	1

Table 6.15: Fill motifs from *Potnia Theron* images.

Floral motifs are the most popular of the fill motifs appearing in the *Potnia Theron* images, however, there is some variation in the form these take. The most common of these are the rosette-style floral motifs, such as those on a Corinthian aryballos ca.630-620 (**Fig. 21**). In this example, the rosettes are shown in black with incised lines. The shape these resemble some of the rosettes on jewellery plaques from Rhodes ca. 700-600 (e.g. **Fig. 100**) discussed in the section above. Rosettes appear in various sizes, often sized to fit spaces around figures in a scene, such as on an oinochoe from Corinth ca.600-575 (**Fig. 173**), where multiple sizes of rosettes surround the central figure. In some settings, other kinds of flowers appear alongside the rosette, such as an aryballos from Corinth ca.625-600 (**Fig. 54**), where rosettes appear along with lotus-type flowers below the central figure's arms. The appearance of the lotus may suggest the influence of Egyptian or Near Eastern artistic styles.[585] This could reflect the origins of the central figure, indicating an acknowledgement that the figure depicted originated outside Greece.[586] Similarly, palmette motifs are known to have Assyrian prototypes, suggesting an origin for influences on the art style used.[587] The use of these motifs combined with the *Potnia Theron* figures suggests they were considered appropriate accompaniment – either due to being fully integrated into the Greek art style or because they shared an origin with the figure.

Another motif that displays some variation is the cross or wheel motif, which I have counted here as a single group. These motifs usually appear with four roughly equal arms, although there are examples such as a bell-shaped figure from Boeotia ca.750 (**Fig. 231**), which shows an 8-armed version. These motifs' arms may be hooked into spirals or bent into swastika-shapes, such as on the 7th century amphora from Boeotia (**Fig. 27**). In this example, the crosses' arms bend at right angles, although some examples show the angles of the arms being more acute, giving a more pointed shape to the motif. The swastika-shape is thought to occur in all Indo-European cultures but begins to appear in Greek art in the Late Geometric Ia (ca. 760-750) period.[588] The interpretation of these motifs is that they are protective or related to fertility.[589] In the images where these fill motifs appear, there is little to suggest a fertility-related function. For example, the 7th century Boeotian amphora (**Fig. 27**) shows water birds and fish, both of which could be connected to fertility through their connection with water.[590] However, these elements are not present in every example where the hooked cross or swastika motif is found. For example, a 6th century plate from Iona (**Fig. 210**), while incomplete, shows part of a figure holding a lion in her left hand, while the legs of a second lion can be seen on the right. Lions do not seem to share the same fertility associations, making protection seem a more likely interpretation. The connection

[585] Egyptian influence: Marinatos (2000) p.37. Near Eastern influence: Murray (1980) p.83; Prent (2005) p.373.
[586] See also **Section 2.3**.
[587] Levi (1945) p.10.
[588] Proto-Indo European: Bouzek (1997) p.39. Appearance in Greek art: Coldstream (2008) p.50.
[589] Protective: Hildburgh (1947) p.160. Fertility: Johnson (1981) p.236.
[590] Christou (1968) p.69; Bevan (1989) p.166; Rousioti (2000) p.310.

with protection also fits with more of the *Potnia Theron* figures, often interpreted as having an apotropaic function.[591]

Some motifs such as dots and lines are more challenging to interpret due to their generic nature. However, the first consideration is how they are rendered – painted dots frequently appear as a decorative element, such as around the mouth of an alabastron from Corinth ca.640-625 (**Fig. 24**). They seem to occur mainly as a repeated pattern whose purpose is wholly decorative. In other examples, dots may be raised, such as on a silver or electrum jewellery plaque from Rhodes ca.660-620 (**Fig. 99**), which surrounds the main figure with vertical lines of dots. In addition to being decorative, these dots form two blank squares under the large felines' heads. This could suggest that there were originally other elements attached here – such as the hanging pomegranates or attached rosettes seen in other examples of this kind of jewellery plaque. However, there does not appear to be any damage consistent with the removal of hanging elements, so it may instead be the case that this is an unfinished or discarded item that would otherwise have had additional elements added. In either case, the void left by the dots leads us to look to other comparable examples to understand this image better.

As well as raised dots, there are dotted patterns made by the process of granulation – attaching small grains of metal to decorate a surface. This technique can be seen in the decoration of the gold plaque from Rhodes (**Fig. 106**) where it defines details of the dress, wings, and hair of the central figure as well as the lines of the rosette motif at the top of the plaque. The complexity of this technique suggests it was initially manufactured for a wealthy owner.[592] Granulation also appears to form patterns such as the ground line on the same gold plaque (**Fig. 106**). Here, the central figure seems to stand on two small, inverted triangles of granulated dots below her feet. This appears to be the only examples where this feature appears – the central figure of a silver or electrum plaque (**Fig. 98**) and a gold plaque (**Fig. 107**) also stands on a row of raised dots, but these examples seem to be part of the border, rather than a separate motif.

A motif which may be related to these dotted patterns is the “sun” which appears in 12 examples. This motif also appears on figure from a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) where it occurs on the arms and leg of the central figure.[593] Similar marks appear as tattoos on Thracian women on a later red-figure kylix krater ca.470 (**Img. 6.2**).[594] The women in this scene are shown in an outdoors scene with deer, suggesting a connection to the wild, like many of the *Potnia Theron* figures. Although there is nothing to suggest that these are divine figures, they occupy a space outside of the civilized Greek world, they are visually distinct from Greek women by their dress and tattoos, and their surroundings show them in a setting outside of the order of civilization. While the Thracian women image is later than the figures of this study, it could suggest an association of the dotted sun motif with the wild or the world beyond city boundaries. As a fill motif, these suns appear in scenes with a

[591] See **Section 7.5**.
[592] Simons (2014) p.59.
[593] Wolff (2021) p.133.
[594] Mayor (2014) p.100.

variety of figures, including those which have been identified as gorgons (**Figs. 9** and **200**), Artemis (**Figs. 28** and **49**), hunting figures (**Figs. 64** and **133**) and a sphinx (**Fig. 17**). This suggests that while the sun motif is not associated with a specific figure, it may be related to a type of scene or figure – specifically those which stand on boundaries. A unifying feature of these figures is that they all have associations of liminality or hybridity.[595] This trend is useful to note as there are fragmentary examples such as the 7th century plate from Thasos (**Fig. 207**) where many details cannot be discerned due to damage. Here, we can see the upper-right part of the central figure is winged and appears to stand in a pose consistent with many of the other *Potnia Theron* figures. However, details of the scene are missing. Being able to connect the fill motifs that surround this figure with those of other Potnia Theron images, the identification of this figure becomes more certain. It helps us understand what is likely to have been represented based on comparison with other examples sharing these motifs.



Img.6.2: Red-figure kylix krater ca.470. Thracian women with tattoos including dotted sun motifs. Mayor (2014) p.100.

A motif that appears to have similar associations is the triangular motif which appears on the ground in three examples, all within the "multiple" category in **Table 6.15**. In the instance of an amphora from Boeotia (**Fig. 27**), these triangles have been interpreted as mountain peaks.[596] This interpretation may suggest a cult setting associated with the *Potnia Theron* who is known to have been associated with mountain tops as sacred places.[597] This context suggests that the image's main figure can be considered a deity or at least related to sacred space. As with the sun motifs discussed above, this information can be useful when looking at the more fragmentary images of this study, such as a 6th century plate from Ionia (**Fig. 210**) where most of a *Potnia Theron* figure can be seen, although some detail is lost through damage. Around the edge of the image, three triangular motifs can be seen, connecting the figure to a mountaintop setting. The suggestion that this is an outdoor setting is reinforced by the sun, which appears on the left edge. These motifs, combined with the central figure's wings and active control, shown lifting at least one lion by its tail

[595] See **Section 7.4**.
[596] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.10; Schuhmann (2009) p.71.
[597] Dietrich (1969) p.269.

supports the suggestion this is a goddess or other divine figure. In this way, again we see the function of fill motifs to help identify or interpret figures, especially when other details may be missing or obscured.

These findings suggest that in general, fill motifs can contribute to our understanding of *Potnia Theron* images, although their meanings do not seem to be fixed or associated with specific identities. This means that while fill motifs do not necessarily identify a figure, they can provide useful information on the context and type of figure being shown. This information is useful in fragmentary examples, where fill motifs often survive, but part of the central figure is missing. They can also be useful in interpreting complete figures to understand their function and context better.

6.7: Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated a range of ways in which the pose of individual *Potnia Theron* figures can reveal additional information about their role, identity, and context. This can involve looking broadly at the composition of the image or focussing more closely on individual elements within the images. The sections above employ both approaches to demonstrate the potential advantages of both methods.

When looking at the relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and her animal attributes, the type of control employed can tell us something about the kind of figure at the centre of a specific *Potnia Theron* image. While many of these figures may share visual or iconographic similarities, a closer investigation can reveal differences in context. This includes how animals are controlled – the difference between active and passive control tells the viewer what kind of power a specific *Potnia Theron* employs. These differences can change the way we interpret individual images and how we understand their function. While there are aesthetic and decorative elements to these images, many also convey specific identities, contexts, meanings, functions, or myths.

For example, the lekythos from Taranto ca.510-500 (**Fig. 159**) displays a female figure identifiable as a *Potnia Theron* by her control of the animals around her. The control method is passive – she controls them by means of the cup and wand that she holds – this in turn helps us identify the figure as Kirke. Looking at the rest of the scene, we can then identify the male figure to her right as Odysseus and the hybrid creatures around her as his men, who are being transformed into animals. This information means we can then identify a specific scene from myth, as recorded in the *Odyssey*.[598]

A better understanding of the way *Potnia Theron* images are constructed is also useful when looking at incomplete images. In some instances, there are similar images that can be used to draw comparisons, such as the 9th century urn from Fortetsa (**Figs. 250** and **251**) – the head of one figure is missing due to damage, but from the body and composition, it seems likely that the head and upper body would have been similar in appearance to the figure on the opposite side of the vase. However, other examples do not benefit from this

[598] Hom. *Od.* 10.210-300

kind of comparison, and parallels need to be drawn from elsewhere. For example, the 6th century plate fragment from Ionia (**Fig. 210**) – where enough of the figure can be seen to understand the way she controls the large felines visible in the fragment. The details of her pose and position, along with the motifs that fill the free space around her can then be used to recognise and understand the image's context.

While preceding chapters have looked at individual elements within *Potnia Theron* images, this section looks at the arrangement and positioning of these elements within images. This means that while looking at the relationship of these elements helps to develop a more thorough understanding of the *Potnia Theron* images, and it also relies somewhat on an understanding of the components making up each image.

7: Roles of the *Potnia Theron*.

7.1: Introduction

In previous scholarship, the *Potnia Theron* has mainly been discussed as a motif in Greek art, depicting a standing female figure flanked by animals.[599] As discussed in **Section 1.2.1**. a more appropriate definition would be "female figures which hold or control animals". This chapter concerns roles performed by *Potnia Theron* figures within the IC. Also included in this chapter are some of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif, however, these sections will not attempt to decide which of these identities should be associated with the *Potnia Theron*. It is not the aim of this study to identify a "correct" identity for the *Potnia Theron* as in many cases there may not be a specific identity represented.

7.2: Specific Identities

While one of the aims of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of the iconography of the *Potnia Theron* motif and how this can be understood, it is necessary to look at some of the identities which have been associated with the image. This section will cover the identities that have been associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif and any connected elements of their iconography.

Generally, it is assumed that the central figure of *Potnia Theron* images is intended to represent a divine figure, however, in early Greek art, there is significant difficulty in differentiating images of goddesses from those of priestesses or other women of high status.[600] Christou has attempted to demonstrate that the *Potnia Theron* is always one and the same deity being represented.[601] While it could be argued the *Potnia Theron* is a single figure with multiple aspects – much like the different forms of Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**) – there are specific examples where a *Potnia Theron* has a distinct identity. An example of this is the 6th century Medusa pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**), where the central figure is clearly identified by her appearance and context.

While animal attributes can be used to identify figures in some contexts, these identifications are not always certain due to the overlapping use of animals in iconography (see **Chapter 3**).Some figures may also have been worshipped alongside a principal deity, leading to a later adoption of the principal deity's attribute.[602] This ambiguity in the iconography means there is no consensus as to whether the *Potnia Theron* was intended to

[599] Motif: Barclay (2001) p.373; Barclay (2013) p.151; Simons (2014) p.9; Mazet (2017) p.17. Flanked by animals: Larson (2007) p.102; Kolia (2014) p.435; Budin (2016) p.15.
[600] Serwint (2002) p.344 n.10; Zouzoula (2007) p.273; Blakolmer (2009) p.33; Budin (2004) p.249; Gaugnerot-Driessen (2014) p.491; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.5.
[601] Schuhmann (2009) p.93; Christou (1968) p.170. 173. 209.
[602] Lebessi (2010) p.197.

represent a single figure or a range of figures.[603] In pre-Classical religion, goddesses were not well-differentiated and it took some time for individual identities to solidify.[604] Therefore, it would not be unexpected for the iconography of these goddesses to follow the same pattern and remain ambiguous to some extent until the early Classical period.

The *Potnia Theron* motif appears to have represented figures which shared various attributes and spheres of influence (animals, the wild, liminal places) but which were differentiated by their individual contexts. It has also been suggested that the *Potnia Theron* is not intended to represent any specific identity but is rather a decorative motif.[605] However, as will be discussed in the relevant sections, some *Potnia Theron* images appear to display iconography which strongly suggests they are intended to represent an identifiable figure.

7.2.1: Artemis

Artemis is the goddess most frequently associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif.[606] Some have suggested that the *Potnia Theron* always represents Artemis.[607] This oversimplification has led to some *Potnia Theron* figures being inaccurately described as Artemis when they display none of her iconography or are described as "Persian Artemis" (see **Section 1.2.3**) by earlier studies.[608] Even when there is some differentiation between the motif of the *Potnia Theron* and the identity of Artemis, some sources still discuss the *Potnia Theron* as a goddess of the wild who functions as a predecessor of the Classical Artemis.[609] The origins of Artemis are usually thought to be in the Near East, however there is also evidence for Minoan-Mycenaean worship of Artemis attested by double axes found at shrines to Artemis in Sparta and Lousoi.[610] Support for Minoan worship of Artemis is also found in Linear B tablets which use the name A-TE-MI-TO .[611]

The association between Artemis and animals continues throughout antiquity, and this association has often been used to connect the Classical Artemis with the Archaic *Potnia Theron.*[612] Many of the figures known to later syncretise with Artemis also share certain functions with the *Potnia Theron* such as roles associated with animals, boundaries and wild places.[613] A comprehensive overview of the original cult and role of Artemis is outside the remit of this study, however, there are existing studies which cover these topics in great

[603] "*Potnia"* referring to multiple identities: Nosch (2009) p.22. Bronze Age "Mistress of Animals" examples: Frothingham (1911) p.359; Coldstream (1977) p.5; Pomeroy (1999) p33.
[604] Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; Marinatos (2000) p.40; Schuhmann (2009) p.4.
[605] Cook (1997) p.72; Schuhmann (2009) p.15.
[606] Benko (2004) p.105; Childs (2003) p.64; Persson (1942) p.132; Budin (2004) p.235; Burkert (1985) p.171; Cohen (2006) p.217; Dexter (2011) p.193; Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.11; Prent (2005) p.373; Schuhmann (2009) p.8.
[607] Levi (1945) p.31.
[608] Waldstein & Hoppin (1898) p.178; Schuhmann (2009) p.4; Rose (1929) p.401; Nilsson (1949) p.28; Manning (1920) p.46.
[609] Hard (2004) p.187; Zolotnikova (2017) p.8.
[610] Near Eastern origin: Studniczka (1890) p.155; Purvis (2003) p.95. Minoan-Mycenaean origin: Smardz (1979) p.22; Rigoglioso (2010) p.52; Prent (2005) p.374; Nosch (2009) p.34. Double axes: Waites (1929) p.30.
[611] PY167 and PY Un 219. Ventris & Chadwick (1973) p.535.See also **Section 1.3**.
[612] Studniczka (1890) p.158.
[613] Zolotnikova (2017) p.9; Marinatos (2000) p.95; Studniczka (1890) p.158.

detail.[614] While there is significant evidence for Artemis as a *Potnia Theron*, Artemis is a complex goddess with multiple aspects, some of which are more closely related to the *Potnia Theron* than others. [615]

In visual culture, the clearest connection between Artemis and the *Potnia Theron* is their connection to animals, especially wild animals such as lions and deer. Dedications to Artemis often feature wild animals, such as those found at the sanctuary of Artemis Limnatis at Limnai.[616] The animal votives date as early as the Geometric period, however the connection between Artemis and animals continued to be known until the 2nd century AD.[617] While the association between Artemis and animals may have endured, it appears that the image of the *Potnia Theron* was no longer recognisable by Pausanias when he describes the chest of Kypselos.[618] While Pausanias recognises Artemis from the animals she holds, he does not understand why she is depicted with wings. Pausanias' account suggests that while the association with animals remained familiar, other aspects of the image of Artemis may have changed significantly.[619]

Artemis also had associations with animals which extended beyond her role as *Potnia Theron*. One example is a ritual called the Arkteia performed at Brauron where girls would "play the bear" for Artemis as part of a coming-of-age ritual (see **Section 7.6**).[620] This ritual is attested in *Lysistrata* as well as depictions of young girls taking part in the ritual found on ceramics nearby. [621] The nature of this ritual may indicate Artemis was originally worshipped here in the form of a bear; elsewhere worship of Artemis has been connected to the Arcadian princess Kallisto, who was turned into a bear.[622] However, in the period covered by this study, I have been unable to find any images of Artemis as a bear or with bears. A Lysistrata scholion suggests "playing the bear" was a ritual to placate Artemis.[623] The need to placate may show an aspect of Artemis as she was worshipped at Brauron – as a goddess with a protective role, specifically protection from the uncontrolled wild and dangerous animals. There are images of Artemis with animals at Brauron such as a terracotta tile from the 6th century (**Img. 7.1**). Where Artemis is depicted seated with a small deer.

[614] Some broader studies of Artemis include: Budin (2016); Sourvinou-Inwood (1998); Zolotnikova (2017).
[615] Different aspects of Artemis: Schuhmann (2009) p.5.
[616] Koursoumis (2014) p.216.
[617] Koursoumis (2014) p.197; Paus. 4.31.3.
[618] Paus. 5.17.5-5.19.10.
[619] Mazet (2017) p.18.
[620] Stehle (2012) p.197; Seaford (1988) p.121; Nosch (2009) p.33; Lawler (1942) p.351.
[621] Ar. *Lys*. 641-7. Ceramic finds: Neils (2013) p.504; Lee (2012b) p.33.
[622] Zolotnikova (2017) p.10; Larson (1995) p.104; Paus. 8.35.8.
[623] Stehle (2012) p.197.



Img. 7.1: Terracotta time depicting seated figure of Artemis with small deer, from Brauron. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis_and_doe,_painted_relief_on_terracotta_tile,_late_6th_century_BC,_AM_Brauron,_Bram25.jpg accessed 12/02/2025.

As part of the Arkteia at Brauron, the girls wore "saffron-coloured" dresses.[624] The saffron colour may suggest a connection to earlier Minoan figures such as the example of the Seated Goddess from the Xeste 3 wall painting, often identified as a goddess due to her enthroned pose and comparative size to other figures in the scene (see **Section 2.4.4**). The connection between the dresses of girls at the Arkteia and crocuses may also suggest that Artemis had influence over vegetation as well as her protection over the girls and connection to wild animals.

Artemis appears to have a contradictory role in terms of her relationship to animals. On one hand she appears as a fierce protector of animals and their habitat, while also being depicted as a hunter.[625] The association with hunting has led to the suggestion that Artemis may have origins in much earlier pre-Greek figures and reflect the values of earlier societies, possibly as early as the Palaeolithic.[626] A Mycenaean gem which depicts a *Potnia Theron* figure shooting a stag predates Homer, indicative of an Artemis-like figure being present already in this period.[627] In myth, Artemis was said to have taught hunting to Skamandrios

[624] Budin (2004) p.266; Rehak (2004) p.93.
[625] Hom. *Il*. 5.51-3, 21.485-6; Zolotnikova (2017) p.11-2; Marinatos (2000) p.99; Hom. *Il.* 5.51-3, 21.485-6; Zolotnikova (2017) p.12; Sergis (2010) p.70; Schuhmann (2009) p.8,74; Mazet (2017) p.18; Marinatos (2000) p.95; Kopaka (2000) p.17.
[626] Rigoglioso (2010) p.56; Nosch (2009) p.23; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90,100; Burkert (1985) p.172.
[627] Bevan (1986) p.64 n.88; Budin (2016) p.52.

and later is associated with the myth of Actaeon – transforming him into a stag and commanding his own dogs to tear him apart.[628] The clothing and attributes of Artemis also reflect her association with hunting, as some of her depictions represent her with a bow and arrows, hunting dogs or hunting boots.[629] However, a hunting context does not always necessarily point to Artemis, as other figures such as Atalante, Kallisto and Kyrene are also associated with hunting and may have been regarded as Artemis-like goddesses in their own right.[630] Artemis is also depicted with nymphs as part of her hunting party, in contrast to other contemporary depictions of hunting – where it was primarily depicted as a male activity due to its danger.[631] The longstanding connections between Artemis and hunting may have led to her associations with bloody sacrifice.[632] This could include substitutions for sacrifice, such as the whipping of youths at the sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta.

The goddess Orthia is frequently associated with Artemis but was originally a separate figure. Orthia became associated with Artemis in antiquity, with Artemis Orthia becoming a form of Artemis.[633] This is likely to have been due specifically to Orthia being a goddess of nature who was also associated with animals.[634] Orthia is thought to be depicted as a *Potnia Theron* in some finds from Sparta.[635] A comparable example is Artemis at Ephesus, who also takes on the name and some of the roles of Artemis, but remains distinct from the Olympian goddess. The Ephesian Artemis also has strong associations with animals – she is usually depicted in a tight-fitting garment decorated with friezes of animal decoration with animals by her side.[636] The cult at Ephesus later associated with Artemis is thought to have been established as early as the 11th Century.[637] Most of the cult images which survive are from the Roman period – Strabo mentions xoana at this site, so earlier cult images may have been wooden idols which do not survive.[638] Both Ephesian Artemis and Spartan Orthia are earlier goddesses who became so syncretised with Artemis that their original name has become lost or only survives as an epithet. Both goddesses also appear as *Potniai Theron* demonstrating their command of animals. Another parallel between Orthia and Ephesian Artemis is that both are thought to have been represented by *xoana.* While these goddesses differ significantly in their origins and cultural context, they can both be identified as *Potniai Theron* by their iconography, which in turn may have led to their syncretism with Artemis.

[628] Skamandrios: Hom. *Il.* 5.51. Actaeon: Paus. 9.2.3; Dio. Sic. 4.81.3-5.
[629] HH27; Bow and arrows: Bevan (1986) p.32; Budin (2004) p.263. Hunting dogs: Budin (2016) p.55; Zolotnikova (2017) p.17. Hunting Boots: Budin (2016) p.30.
[630] Studniczka (1890) p.163.
[631] Dowden (2007) p.51.
[632] Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.88.
[633] Woodward (1929) p.293; Wace (1929) p.283; Thompson (1909) p.295; Rose (1929) p.401; Richer (2007) p.238.
[634] Mazet (2017) p.18.
[635] Fitzhardinge (1980) p.56.
[636] Hjerrild (2009) p.42.
[637] Rogers (2012) p.33.
[638] Rogers (2012) p.38.

Artemis is also connected to figures depicted as a *Potnia Theron* which are not goddesses. A good example of this is the Gorgon. At Corcyra, the temple of Artemis is protected by images of Medusa as a *Potnia Theron* on one pediment and a gorgoneion on the other.[639] Elsewhere, masks which are usually identified as gorgons, are found as votives at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta.[640] In both examples, the gorgon is thought to function in an apotropaic role.[641] The difference between the two is that at Corcyra, the gorgon appears as a *Potnia Theron* while at Sparta the representations are in the form of masks.[642] There are also lead votive images of gorgons also from the sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta, however, like the masks these do not appear in the form of a *Potnia Theron*. So, while there is a demonstrable connection between Artemis and the gorgon, being depicted in the form of the *Potnia Theron* is only one expression of this link.

In addition to Gorgons, Artemis shares close associations with other figures who are sometimes associated with the *Potnia Theron* including Britomartis, Diktynna, Kybele and Hekate. These figures will be looked at in more detail in subsequent sections.[643] Other figures also associated with Artemis, such as Iphigeneia, do not appear to have a strong visual connection to Artemis' aspect as a *Potnia Theron*, so will not be covered in this study.

7.2.2: Demeter

Demeter is primarily associated with agriculture in a role close to that of the *Potnia Theron*'s control over wild animals and nature.[644] In addition to her general association with vegetation, Demeter is especially associated with grapevines. This may suggest a link to a specific *Potnia Theron* image on a relief amphora from Boeotia, shown with grapevine-like attachments on either side of her head (see **Fig. 38**). While Demeter is usually identified as the goddess at Eleusis, it is thought that the goddess originally worshipped here was under the name "*Potnia*".[645] Demeter has also been identified in some contexts as the Mother of Artemis, who also has close associations with the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Section 7.2.1**).[646] Demeter is better recognised as the mother of Persephone/Kore and both goddesses are thought to have originated from the same figure, which was a form of "Mistress of Wild Things" (see **Section 1.2.3**).[647]

Demeter also has close associations with Medusa, especially through their connections to Poseidon.[648] In mythology, Demeter is transformed into a horse and is raped

[639] Wilk (2000) p.39.
[640] Wilk (2000) p.36.
[641] Wace (1929) p.255; Wilk (2000) p.42; Budin (2016) p.28.
[642] Marinatos (2000) p.63; Rosenberg (2015) p.252.
[643] Association with Britomartis and Diktynna: Thompson (1909) p.304; Nilsson (1949) p.29; Nilsson (1950) p.509; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90; West (1990) p.101; Larson (1995) p.117; Sourvinou-Inwood (1998) p.83; Rigoglioso (2010) p.53. Association with Kybele: West (1990) p.96; Rigoglioso (2010) p.53. Association with Hekate: Warr (1895) p.393; West (1990) p.291-2, 301; Walker (2004) p.31; Strauss Clay (2009) p.133 n.16; Schuhmann (2009) p.86; Sergis (2010) p.65.
[644] Ulbrich (2010).
[645] Dietrich (1974) p.142.
[646] Hdt. 2.156; Thompson (1909) p.307; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.101.
[647] Harrison (1908) p.272; Rigoglioso (2010) p.103.
[648] Larson (2007) p.80.

by Poseidon who is also in the form of a horse. This myth shares strong similarities with the myth of Medusa, as both result in the birth of a horse or a horse with a human sibling.[649] However, representations of Demeter do not appear to control horses in a way consistent with the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Chapter 6**).

Another association Demeter shares with the *Potnia Theron* motif is the bee.[650] Again this is an association which is expressed very differently in images identified as Demeter and *Potnia Theron* figures. While the latter appears in a bee-bodied form in jewellery plaques from Rhodes (**Fig. 118-119**), Demeter is not shown to have any bee-like features, apart from her priestesses being referred to as "bees" (*Melissae*). However, hybridity is present in a form of Demeter depicted as a *xoanon* at Phigalia; which had serpents for hair and held a dove and a dolphin.[651] However, due to the late source, it is uncertain if this form of Demeter was known in the period covered within this study.

7.2.3: Kirke

While she is known as a figure from Homeric myth, it is thought Kirke may have originally been a goddess represented as a "Mistress of Animals"(see **Section 7.3**).[652] The depictions within the IC identified as Kirke (**Fig.44** and **63** – both identified as Kirke by the LIMC) show her to control boar-men; these would be familiar from the stories of Homer's *Odyssey*.[653] These scenes demonstrate a type of supernatural passive control (see **Section 6.2.2**) where Kirke does not physically touch the boar-men, but her control can be seen in the way they stand posed around her. Kirke's supernatural power is implied from the cup and wand that she holds – items used to turn the men into boars or boar-men.[654] Kirke's nudity may also be symbolic of apotropaic power, turning away the danger of the wild boar aspect of the hybrids which surround her.[655] Again, this apotropaic function is shared with other *Potnia Theron* figures (see **Section 7.5**). Female nudity vanishes almost completely from Greek art by the mid-6th century, so Kirke's nudity is likely to have been symbolic.[656]

While Kirke is depicted controlling animals, there are some differences to other *Potnia Theron* images. Firstly, the animals she controls are recognisably hybridised, often depicted as men's bodies with animal heads. The type of animal is also unusual for a *Potnia Theron* motif – boars do not typically appear with *Potniai Theron.* In literature, Kirke engages with animals more frequently associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif – she is said to turn her lovers into tame and castrated lions.[657] As the lions are not held but still shown to be under the control of Kirke, this is another example of her passive control over animals.

[649] Dietrich (1962) p.137; Vernant (1991a) p.133; Waugh (2012) p.6.
[650] Callim. *Hymn* 2.110-2.
[651] Paus. 8.42.3-4.
[652] Lawler (1952) p.317; Marinatos (2000) p.41.
[653] Hom.*Od.*10.236-42.
[654] Hom.*Od.*10.235-6.
[655] Apotropaic nudity in Greek art: Marinatos (2000) p.27.
[656] Nudity vanishing from Greek art: Marinatos (2000) p.43.
[657] Hom. *Od.* 10.210-14; Lonsdale (1979) p.157.

The context and iconography make images of Kirke easier to identify than many other types of *Potnia Theron* figures. The examples from the IC (**Fig. 44**, **63**, **158**, **159**) feature recognisable scenes from Homeric myth which are likely to have been known by a contemporary audience.

7.2.4: Gorgons/Medusa

Gorgons appear in Archaic art in the 8th century and are usually recognised by their large heads (when shown with a body) and exaggerated, monstrous or animal-like features.[658] Specifically, the large eyes which often form the focus of the face of the gorgon. The name Medusa refers to a specific gorgon from mythology – one of three gorgon sisters, Medusa was the only mortal sister and was beheaded by Perseus.[659] Both gorgons and Medusa are depicted as *Potniai Theron* in the IC. The name "Medusa" refers to a specific gorgon from Greek myth and images of Medusa are identifiable by their context, such as the scenes where she is beheaded by Perseus (e.g. a 6th century metope from Sicily - **Fig. 2**). In some scenes, Medusa is depicted with her sons, conceived when Medusa was raped by Poseidon in the form of a horse – leading to her son Pegasus taking the form of a horse while his brother Chrysaor is a giant, but human in his appearance.[660] The iconography and significance of gorgons and Medusa is covered in greater detail in **Section 5.5**. Therefore, this section will focus on the connection between the *Potnia Theron* motif and the identities of gorgons and Medusa.

The association of gorgons with the *Potnia Theron* image has been linked to their "demonic" nature further defining the identity of gorgons as being between human and animal.[661] As with other forms of the *Potnia Theron*, gorgons often display iconographic parallels with Near Eastern figures, notably Lamashtu and Humbaba.[662] This hybridity can be seen as a form of control (see **Chapter 5**) where gorgons are shown to control animals, it is often a passive form of control where animals are not held.[663] However, snakes appear to be an exception in the way they are controlled by gorgon figures. It is often difficult to tell if snakes are being worn or are part of the body, such as where snakes are shown to emerge from behind a gorgon (e.g. **Fig. 51**).[664]

Gorgons and Medusa also have connections to Artemis, another figure closely associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif (see **Section 7.2.1**). This connection can help illustrate the importance of separating image and identity for example, the pediment of the Temple of Artemis at Corcyra (**Fig. 51).** The context of this image provides a clear connection between Medusa and Artemis. However, it is Medusa, rather than Artemis who is represented in the form of a *Potnia Theron,* controlling two large felines It is the control of

[658] Date: Wilk (2000) p.31. Image: Vernant (1991a) p.144; Wilk (2000) p.31-2, 39; Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.4; Wengrow (2014) p.60.
[659] Wilk (2000) p.32.
[660] Vernant (1991a) p.123.
[661] Demonic nature of gorgons: Marinatos (2000) p.63; Tsiafakis (2003) p.97; Schuhmann (2009) p.77.
[662] West (1990) p.189-90; Wilk (2000) p.64; Ogden (2008) p.38. See **Section 2.3.2** for Lamashtu.
[663] Animal features of gorgon: Vernant (1991a) p.113; Wilk (2000) p.21; Ogden (2008) p.35. See also **Section 5.6**.
[664] Wilk (2000) p.46.

animals in visual representations which identifies Medusa as a *Potnia Theron*. Similarly, it is the presence of her children which differentiates Medusa from other gorgons. While the temple was dedicated to Artemis, she is not depicted on the pediment, so in this example, only Medusa can be considered a *Potnia Theron* as she is represented by the motif.

7.2.5: Britomartis/Diktynna

Britomartis and Diktynna are both early Cretan goddesses associated with the *Potnia Theron* through their associations with nature. Both goddesses have been called "Mistress of Animals" and were later syncretised or associated with Artemis.[665] Due to the similarity between these Cretan goddesses, they have been thought to be the same figure.[666] Britomartis and Diktynna may have both derived from an earlier Minoan goddess who hunted with a bow and arrows.[667] Later sources from antiquity suggest both of their names refer to the same goddess along with the name "Aphaea".[668] Later, both Diktynna and Britomartis become names of nymphs who accompany Artemis.[669]

The name Britomartis is not Greek and could be Semitic and perhaps Near Eastern in origin.[670] While this term covers a range of cultures, Near Eastern origins are also suggested for other identities and iconographic elements associated with the *Potnia Theron* (see **Section 2.3**).[671] Britomartis is a goddess whose association with the wild may be connected to the mountains where she was worshipped.[672] There may be a link to liminal places evidenced by an account of Artemis Issoria, whom Pausanias says was also called "Lady of the lake" but who was originally Britomartis.[673] This account also connects Britomartis to wetlands – such as lakes or marshland. The connection Britomartis has with liminal places such as mountains and wetlands may in turn explain how she became associated with Artemis, who is also known to have been worshipped in similar places.[674]

The worship of Britomartis was focussed in east Crete while Diktynna was worshipped in the west of the island; although Diktynna may take her name from Mount Dicte, which is in east Crete.[675] Like the *Potnia Theron*, Britomartis was a personification of nature, although the way this was expressed and the extent to which it resembled the *Potnia Theron* motif is less clear.[676] Diktynna seems to be more closely connected to the sea, although not specifically to the animals of the sea, which would have brought her role closer to that of the *Potnia Theron*.[677]

---

[665] Nilsson (1949) p.29; Guthrie (1961) p.870. For "Mistress of Animals" role see **Section 7.3**.
[666] Dio. Sic. 5.76.3; Persson (1942) p.128.
[667] Evans (1935).
[668] Paus. 2.30.3; Persson (1942) p.129.
[669] Guthrie (1961) p.884.
[670] Nilsson (1950) p.509. Semitic origin: West (1990) p. xxiv.
[671] Near Eastern iconography: Schuhmann (2009) p.63.
[672] Al (1944) p.213.
[673] Paus. 3.14.2; Thompson (1909) p.304
[674] Al (1944) p.213; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.90.
[675] Persson (1942) p.129; Nilsson (1950) p.511; West (1990) p.111.
[676] Galanakis (1984) p.127.
[677] Finkelberg (2006) p.107.

Diktynna's name may refer to fishing nets (*diktuon*), or to an association with Mount Dicte.[678] In one version of her myth, Britomartis jumps from a cliff while being pursued by Minos, she was caught in fishing nets, and became known as "Diktynna".[679] In another version of this myth, Britomartis vanished while being pursued by Minos and was replaced with a *xoanon* in the temple of Artemis.[680] The latter version of the myth links to Artemis, but not specifically to the *Potnia Theron* motif. A late source also suggests the site of Kydonia was guarded at night by Diktynna's sacred dogs.[681] These dogs could link Diktynna to both the *Potnia Theron* as a huntress and more directly to her control of animals. While this suggests a link to the *Potnia Theron* as a hunter of animals; this function is not as clearly defined in Britomartis.

7.2.6: Kybele

The goddess Kybele is likely to have originated in Phrygia and first became part of Greek religion in Ionia in the mid-7th century and of mainland Greek religion from the mid-6th century.[682] As with Artemis (**Section 7.2.1**), an in-depth examination of the origins, role, function and representations of Kybele would exceed the remit of this study, so this section will focus on those elements of Kybele which relate directly to the *Potnia Theron* motif.

Visual depictions of Kybele often share features with the *Potnia Theron* motif as defined in **Section 1.2.1**. Many of these depictions fall outside the scope of this study as her representations in Greek art only became standardised in the 5th century.[683] As with other identities discussed in this Chapter, Kybele has been likened to Artemis, due to her association with mountains and wild spaces.[684] However, it is more relevant to this study to look at how the identity of Kybele aligns with the iconography of the *Potnia Theron*.

Kybele is frequently depicted with lions, usually she is enthroned with one or two lions by her side.[685] In these representations, Kybele can also be identified by the *phiale* (libation bowl) and tympanon she holds as cult symbols.[686] A pitcher from Anatolia ca. 699-600 (**Fig. 131**) also shows a figure identified as Kybele hunting a large spotted feline with a bow and arrows.[687] This depiction demonstrates Kybele controlling animals in a hunting context (see **Section 7.3.1**), further supporting her connection to the *Potnia Theron* motif.

Kybele is also shown as a *kourotrophos,* a role shared with other identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif. However, the relationship between Kybele and children is significantly different to that of other *Potniai Theron*. While other *Potniai Theron* are protectors of children, they are often associated with the identities of virginal figures

[678] Association with Mt. Dicte: Persson (1942) p.129; Al (1944) p.213.
[679] Callim. *Hymn* 3.189; Fishing nets: Nilsson (1950) p.511. Hunting nets: Dio. Sic. 5.76.3.
[680] Larson (1995) p.117.
[681] Philostr. *VA.* 8.30.
[682] Dillon (2002) p.154; Bøgh (2007) p.307; Burkert (1985) p.203.
[683] Bøgh (2007) p.307.
[684] Harrison (1908) p.266; Ulbrich (2010) p.184. Artemis as a goddess of mountain tops: Guthrie (1961) p.902.
[685] Dillon (2002) p.154; Vassileva (2005) p.97; Dexter (2011) p.38.
[686] Bøgh, (2007) p.307.
[687] Identification as Kybele: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/155814 accessed 11/02/2025.

such as Artemis or Hekate, while Kybele appears in the role of a mother.[688] This interpretation of the figures is supported by the titles of Kybele including "Great Mother" or more simply "Mother".[689] She may have also been addressed as "Mother of the Gods" in Homeric Hymn 14, where she is accompanied by animals and represents the wild places.[690] If this Hymn refers to Kybele, it shows her to closely resemble the *Potnia Theron* motif in her association and control over nature and wildlife. The likely 7th century date of the Homeric Hymn may also bring her closer to the *Potnai Theron* within this study.

The dress of Kybele also often resembles that of other *Potniai Theron*. Kybele is usually depicted in the clothing of a mature woman, usually a long dress and *polos*, the latter of which may suggest her divinity (see **Section 4.2.1**).[691] Similarly, many of the *Potnia Theron* representations in the IC also wear a *polos* as an indication of their divinity, e.g. the alabastron from Delos ca.620-200 (**Fig. 15**). Given the origins of Kybele, it also suggests that this style of dress originated in or around Phrygia and came to Greece from the east.

7.2.7: Aphrodite

Aphrodite is less frequently associated with the title of *Potnia Theron* but some examples within the IC are identified with her name (e.g. **Fig. 193**, **195**, **239**-**42**). This section focuses on these examples and how they meet the iconographic criteria of the *Potnia Theron* motif.

Within the IC, figures identified as Aphrodite are associated with two main types of animals. The first is large water-birds (e.g. **Figs. 239**-**42**) however, these examples show the central figure controlling the birds in a different way to other *Potniai Theron*. The forms of control include riding or feeding the birds, rather than holding them by the neck as seen in other *Potnia Theron* representations e.g. the plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**). The birds being controlled in "Aphrodite" representations are usually identified as swans or geese and are always shown alive and active, again in contrast to other *Potnia Theron* representations.[692] Depictions of Aphrodite riding birds continue into the later Classical period, especially in red-figure pottery depiction, however, these extend beyond the scope of this study so will not be discussed in detail.[693]

The second category of animals shown with *Potniai Theron* identified as Aphrodite is small birds. These birds are usually identified as doves and are controlled by being held in the hand against the chest (e.g. East Greek alabastron, 6th century **Fig. 18**). Doves are more frequently associated with Aphrodite in literature, however these tend to be from later sources, and outside the scope of this study.[694] Doves also appear on coins of places known to have been cult centres for Aphrodite, such as Sicyon, Corinth, Cythera, Cassiope, Eryx,

[688] Virginity of Artemis: Hjerrild (2009) p.41; Budin (2016) p.20. Virginity of Hekate: Burkert (1985) p.196; Budin (2004) p.255. See also **Section 7.6.**
[689] Burkert (1985) p.186; Roller (1999) p.1; Budin (2016) p.21.
[690] Roller (1999) p.122.
[691] Dillon (2002) p.154
[692] Identification of birds: Bevan (1989) p.168.
[693] Papadopoulou (2010) p.227.
[694] Aphrodite and doves: Ael. *NA.* 10.33; Apul. *Met*. 6.6; Ov. *Met.* 14.597.

and Paphos.[695] In cult practice, images of doves were an appropriate sacrifice to Aphrodite and her sanctuary at Athens was purified with the blood of doves.[696]

A very different depiction of Aphrodite in terms of the animals she controls is the example on a 7th century bronze helmet from Delphi (**Fig. 193**) where she is shown riding a bull. The Delphi helmet image is more unusual in terms of both the animal and form of control but still conforms to the definition of a *Potnia Theron* representation (see **Section 1.2.1**). However, Cypriot coins also depict Aphrodite riding on bulls.[697]

Aphrodite's control of animals may also be connected to her association with the goddess Kybele (see **Section 7.2.6**).[698] Aphrodite's association with animals is thought to specifically link to the fertility of animals (see also **Section 7.6**), which may suggest a link to earlier Near Eastern goddesses such as Ishtar, who were also concerned with animal fertility and in some cases show iconographic parallels to the *Potnia Theron* (see **Section 2.2**).[699] Aphrodite's connection with the east was known as early as the Classical period, she was known to have been worshipped and to have had her earliest temples in Ascalon (modern Israel).[700] Other suggested origins for Aphrodite include other parts of the Levantine coast, likely in Phoenicia.[701]

Like Kybele, Aphrodite is sometimes depicted wearing the *polos* (see **Section 4.2.1**). The *polos* could suggest both Aphrodite's divine nature as well as her origins in the east, as discussed above.[702] However, unlike both Kybele and other *Potnia Theron* figures, Aphrodite is frequently depicted nude.[703] While nudity is not unknown in variations of the *Potnia Theron* motif, within the period covered by this study, nude images are less common (see **Section 4.8**).

Aphrodite is also depicted in a *kourotrophos* role, similar to other *Potnia Theron* figures (see **Section 7.6**).[704] When Aphrodite is shown in this role, the child being nurtured can usually be identified as Eros by the presence of his wings.[705] The dynamic between Aphrodite and Eros means that this is a significantly different *kourotrophos* role to that depicted by some *Potniai Theron*. While most *Potnai Theron* appear as protectors of children with no familial connection, Aphrodite is shown specifically as the mother as well as the protector of Eros. While the composition of the figures displays similarities to some *Potnia Theron* scenes, the relationship of the figures is significantly different. The role of Aphrodite as both mother and *kourotrophos* suggests a connection to human fertility and

[695] Breitenberger (2007) p.15.
[696] Pala (2010) p.209.
[697] Schuhmann (2009) p.92.
[698] Penglase (2005) p.137.
[699] Serwint (2002) p.325; Penglase (2005) p.146.
[700] Hdt. 1.105.
[701] Ammerman (1991) p.226.
[702] Ulbrich (2010) p.183.
[703] Mazet (2017) p.22.
[704] Ulbrich (2010) p.190.
[705] Ulbrich (2010) p.190.

reproduction. The latter of these functions do not usually intersect with the roles of the *Potnia Theron,* as discussed in **Section 7.6**.

7.2.8: Hekate

Hekate is infrequently associated with the image of the *Potnia Theron,* although the examples we have are notable. Hekate is a complex deity whose form and identity undergo significant changes from her first appearance in 8th century literature to her Classical form. This section focuses on Hekate as she appears within the period covered by this study and how she relates to the image of the *Potnia Theron*.

The earliest image connecting Hekate with the *Potnia Theron* is the 7th century amphora from Thebes now in the National Museum at Athens (**Fig. 27**)[706]. On this, the central figure is shown with extended wings – above these are long-necked water birds and below are a pair of confronted lions[707]. On her skirt, there is a fish incorporated into the complex geometric pattern[708]. The relevance of these animals could refer to her role as described in Hesiod – having been given a part of the land, sea and air by Zeus.[709] An element of cult practice is suggested by the bull's head and leg either side of the central figure. These motifs may represent parts of a sacrificed animal - the head allowing the sacrifice to be identifiable.[710] The ideas of protecting and sacrificing animals can appear to be in opposition, however, Artemis also received sacrifices of animals under her protection, and in later periods Hekate is known to have received sacrifices of dogs, which were closely associated with her[711].

Our earliest literary source for Hekate is Hesiod's *Theogony* in which there is a "hymn" to Hekate, detailing her role and lineage.[712] The Hekate described by Hesiod has a much more universal character. In addition to being given a share of the land, sea, and sky by Zeus, she is shown assisting men in farming, fishing and judgement.[713] Hekate's identity in Hesiod is difficult to reconcile with the later-known chthonic goddess, whose role is more limited to the underworld and the dead rather than with the living. Hesiod's Hekate has influence in many areas but is not given any connection to the underworld.[714] However, Hesiod's Hekate appears closer to the *Potnia Theron* as she is associated with the land and sea, as well as the animals which live there. Cook has attempted to show that lions also had a chthonic association as they protected tombs and attended deities of the underworld, although he gives no examples of this.[715] Another suggestion by Cook is that this chthonic association could originate from lions protecting springs and other sources of underground

[706] https://www.namuseum.gr/en/collection/archaiki-periodos-2/ accessed 12/02/2025.
[707] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.10.
[708] Harrison (1908) p.266.
[709] Hes. *Theog*. 411-15.
[710] Neumann (1963) p.276.
[711] Farnell (1896) p.24.
[712] Hes. *Theog.* 411-52; Berg (1974) p.129; Manoledakis (2012) p.293.
[713] Hes. *Theog.* 412-4. Farming: 444, Fishing:440-2, Judgement: 434.
[714] Griffith (1983) p.51.
[715] Cook (1894) p.112.

water.[716] This idea of a chthonic protector of spaces fits well with Hekate's identity as a guardian figure - a function which survives with her into the classical period when she is shown as a guardian of doorways. [717] Hekate's protective function was so considerable that the famed statue of Hekate Epipyrgida ("on the tower") by Alcamenes was placed as a ward at the gate if the Athenian acropolis.[718]

Another role of Hekate connected with the *Potnia Theron* motif is visible in a relief amphora ca.675 (**Fig. 38**), showing a central figure protecting two smaller figures. Several interpretations have been suggested for this scene – the first is that the larger figure is encircled by two smaller dancers.[719] While viewing the scene in this way would provide a link to the development of the trimorphic Hekate figure by Alcamenes, the position and pose of the smaller figures do not suggest that they are dancing or encircling the central figure.[720] The central figure could be identified as Hekate in the form of a *Potnia Theron* taking the role of a *kourotrophos,* a role she is shown to take on in the *Theogony.*[721] Like Artemis, Hekate is sometimes associated with Eileithyia as a goddess of childbirth[722]. This connection is supported by Hekate carrying torches as an attribute, which may have originally been associated with Eileithyia.[723]

Hekate is likely to have originally been a Carian (modern Turkey) goddess before her worship spread to Greece[724]. There is also some suggestion that the cult of Hekate was originally brought to Greece from Asia Minor, possibly by Hesiod's family[725]. We have very little evidence for Hekate in Asia Minor apart from records of personal names beginning in Hekat- (e.g. Hekataios the geographer who gave his name to the dynasty of Maussolus) - these occur primarily in Caria in 5th/4th century B.C.[726] The name "Hekate" is unlikely to be of Carian origin and may have been given to the goddess during her Hellenization, possibly by Rhodians visiting Lagina in Caria.[727] There is also a monumental Temple of Hekate at Lagina where she was worshipped as *sōteira, megistē* and *epophanestatē.*[728] Her rank and function here are unmatched in cults of Hekate elsewhere, suggesting this was an unusual or possibly unique cult to this region.[729] Hekate's connections with Asia Minor provide another example of an identity originating east of Greece which can be connected to the *Potnia Theron* motif.

[716] Cook (1894) p.112.
[717] Edwards, C. (1986) p.316.
[718] Ar. *Lys.* 63; Paus. 2.30.2; Faraone (1992) p.8.
[719] Harrison (1908) p.264.
[720]Trimorphic Hekate: Paus. 2.30.2; Warr (1895) p.392.
[721] Hes. *Theog.* 450.
[722] Edwards, C. (1986) p.315.
[723] Farnell (1896) p.35.
[724] Farnell (1896) p.22; Berg (1974) p.128; Manoledakis (2012) p.293.
[725] Boedecker (1983) p.80; Burkert (1985) p.171.
[726] Berg (1974) p.128.
[727] Berg (1974) p.137.
[728] Farnell (1896) p.22; Berg (1974) p.128; Burkert (1985) p.171; Manoledakis (2012) p.294.
[729] Berg (1974) p.128.

The role and image of Hekate undergo considerable change between her earliest description in Hesiod and her chthonic triplicate form in the Classical period and later. Looking specifically at Hekate up to the 6th century, she is a deity who has a considerable overlap with the *Potnia Theron* motif but is infrequently depicted in this way. Hekate is also closely associated with Artemis, sometimes appearing as one of her epithets (see **Section 7.2.1**), demonstrating not only a connection to the *Potnia Theron* motif, but to other identities associated with the same motif.

7.3: Mistress of Animals

Potnia Theron can be translated as "Mistress of (wild) Animals" and since the 19th century these terms have been used interchangeably in scholarship to describe the motif of female figures holding animals. The origins, definition and use of these terms is covered in more detail in **Section 1**, so this section will focus on "Mistress of Animals" when used to describe her function as a figure which has control over animals. Iconographically, this control over animals can be symbolic of a range of other roles and identities, depending on context. However, there is still a significant amount of information which can be obtained about the *Potnia Theron* by looking at the way she is shown to interact with animals.

Where animals are physically held by the *Potnia Theron*, this is usually a demonstration of superhuman strength. This can be seen most clearly in examples where large animals are held off the ground, such as on the krater handle from Chiusi ca.570 (**Fig. 137**) where the central figure lifts a pair of lions by the neck. The symmetrical composition and unnatural pose of the lions suggest that they may also be under a form of supernatural control by the central figure.[730] This type of control shows that the *Potnia Theron* has the power to control animals in a way that a human figure could not.[731] In Greek art, lions are often symbolic of power in the form of untamed savagery and aggression.[732] Therefore her role in these images is clear; she has power over animals which may be large or dangerous; those animals which pose a threat to humans and civilization. Other compositions are seen, where the central figure appears to be "petting" animals, rather than holding them (e.g. an Archaic terracotta figure from Boeotia - **Fig. 237**) or where she rides animals (e.g. A 6th century terracotta figure from Sparta, **Fig. 235**) or feeds them (e.g. a late 6th century statuette identified as Aphrodite **Fig. 240**). By controlling animals in a variety of ways, the *Potnia Theron* can encompass a range of functions through a single motif genre.

Large felines – usually identified as lions but sometimes leopards or other species – appear most frequently with 77 total examples including those shown alongside other animals (61 examples where only lions are shown). Not only are these animals "wild" in the sense that they are not domesticated, but they are animals found in the wild, distancing them from the civilized human world. In controlling large felines, the *Potnia Theron* demonstrates not only a link to the animal world, but in some images superhuman strength

[730] Supernatural control of lions: Schuhmann (2009) p.18.
[731] Schuhmann (2009) p.21.
[732] Lions: Persson (1942) p.143; Bevan (1986) p.293; Blakolmer (2016) p.61.

and size. One example of this is a jewellery plaque from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 101**) where she is shown to lift two lions. In other examples the *Potnia Theron* appears to demonstrate supernatural control of animals, such as on a 6th century Corinthian olpe (**Fig. 175**) where lions are kept at a distance by the control of the *Potnia Theron*. Both the "active" and "passive" forms of control (see **Section 6.2**) demonstrate power of the *Potnia Theron* as well as situating her between the wild and civilized worlds.

Water birds are another popular category of animals shown alongside the *Potnia Theron*. In contrast to large felines, water birds do not represent a threat. However, like large felines and other "wild" animals, water birds tend to live in marshes and other areas outside of civilization. Many of the animals depicted with the *Potnia Theron* reside in the water, air, under the ground (e.g. snakes) or in the realm of the fantastic (see **Section 3.1.4**), which may indicate the central figure has power in these places.[733] As discussed in **Section 7.4**, figures associated with the *Potnia Theron* were sometimes worshipped in liminal places thought to be between civilization and the wild, such as wetlands or marshy areas. Water-birds may be indicative of this, and their inclusion in these images may give some insight into the cult locations associated with the *Potnia Theron* image (see **Section 7.7**).[734]

Looking at the different ways animals are controlled by the *Potnia Theron,* a common theme is scenes where she is placed as a "barrier" between the chaotic and untamed animal world and the civilized human world (see **Section 7.4**). The concept of order over disorder is one which was already emerging in Archaic Greece. Hesiod's Theogony explores scenes such as Kronos intervening in the pregnancy of his mother, Ge, after his father, Ouranos had suspended order in the universe – preventing his siblings from being born.[735] The theme continues through the Theogony and we see the cosmos being shaped through successive generations until it reaches its final organizational structure – one which would be familiar to Greeks of Archaic and later periods – under the rule of Zeus.[736] In the case of the *Potnia Theron,* we see the same idea expressed in her "Mistress of Animals" role, where her iconography demonstrates her ability to act as a physical boundary between the "chaos" embodied by wild animals and the "order" of the human world.

7.3.1: Hunting

This relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and her animals can also be viewed in a hunting context. As well as controlling animals, several *Potnia Theron* representations are also shown to hunt them, usually with a bow and arrows, such as on an aryballos from Rhodes 600-575 (**Fig. 58**).[737] Representations of the *Potnia Theron* as a hunter also have connections to the identity of Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**).[738] As with other forms of control, the "active" and "passive" types (see **Section 6.2**) are expressed within the hunting subtype of the *Potnia Theron* motif. The "active" type being those examples where the *Potnia*

[733] Schuhmann (2009) p.71.
[734] Association of birds and marshlands: Pipili (1998) p.93.
[735] Hes. *Theog.* 159-79; Clay (1993) p.107.
[736] Clay (1993) p.107.
[737] Nilsson (1950) p.382; Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.88; West (1990) p.85; Budin (2004) p.264.
[738] Budin (2016) p.55; Zolotnikova (2017) p.17.

Theron actively holds animals, usually with a bow and arrows, while the passive type shows her holding animals which appear lifeless, suggesting these may be spoils of the hunt. [739] However, the latter category is more difficult to define, as lifeless animals could also suggest sacrifice (see **Section 7.7**), so it is important to consider the context of the image.

The hunting aspect of the *Potnia Theron* appears to present a paradox – in some respects she is a protector of animals while in other contexts she actively hunts them. These seemingly opposing aspects highlight the complexity and variety of the functions performed by the *Potnia Theron* motif, while some of these roles may appear contradictory, there are clear boundaries between which animals are hunted or controlled and which are protected or accepted as sacrifices.

7.4: Liminality/Boundaries

The *Potnia Theron* was often shown in a role which placed her between the human and animal worlds – this is just one way in which she was shown to inhabit a liminal space or boundary.[740] The term "liminal" coming from the Latin *limen* – referring to a stone threshold, comparable to the Greek *herma* – a stone placed at boundary lines to mark a limit.[741] This is a feature which can be observed in a number of examples of *Potnia Theron* figures. However, it is important to note that "liminality" as a term would not have been used by contemporary Greeks to describe these figures, and so the term should be used with caution.[742] It is also important to maintain a distinction between the *Potnia Theron* motif and the specific identities associated with this motif (see **Section 7.2**). The liminal nature of some of these identities are also explored in their relevant sections.

The liminal nature of the *Potnia Theron* can also be seen in the places associated with the animals she controls, where the *Potnia Theron* creates a boundary zone between the human and animal realms.[743] Sanctuaries to Artemis were often located in places on the boundaries of civilization, such as uncultivated land or near wetlands and swamps.[744] This is reflected in epithets such as Λιμναὶα "of the lake", Ἑλεὶα "of the marsh" and Ἀλφειαὶα "of the (river) Alpheios".[745] An instructive example is Artemis Limnatis who is known to have been worshipped in the form of a *Potnia Theron* and whose sanctuary displayed hybridised figures.[746] This demonstrates another way in which the goddess worshipped here is placed in a liminal position between human and animal. She may also have some connection with a bird-goddess originally worshipped at the site, who may date as early as the Neolithic.[747] Artemis is also associated with caves from the 1st Millennium.[748] Like swamps and wetlands,

[739] Bevan (1989) p.166.
[740] Mazet (2017) p.24.
[741] Szakolczai (2009) p.152.
[742] Endsjø (2000) p.235-6.
[743] Isler-Kerényi (2007) p.16.
[744] Budin (2004) p.266; Larson (2007) p.102; Nosch (2009) p.30; Mazet (2017) p.25.
[745] West (1990) p.77.
[746] Koursoumis (2014) p.216.
[747] Rigoglioso (2010) p.53.
[748] Nosch (2009) p.30.

caves are significant in that they are liminal spaces, between the earth and the underworld, suggesting they have chthonic significance. [749]

As well as physical spaces, certain animals can also indicate aspects of liminality in the iconography of the *Potnia Theron*.[750] Snakes appear in 40 examples in the IC and appear to take on a liminal character in Greek thought as they were perceived as liminal creatures – living both on the earth and underground. Snakes also shed their skin and lay eggs, making them ideal symbols of "rebirth".[751] Images of *Potniai Theron* with snakes are often associated with the underworld.[752] This interpretation supports the chthonic association of snakes but does not look at the wider context of these images. These associations would have made snakes an ideal attribute for chthonic deities or those who act as psychopomps – guiding souls between the realms of the living and dead. One *Potnia Theron* figure appears on a grave stele ca.525 (**Fig. 181**) and a short series of cinerary urns (**Fig. 248-51**) feature *Potniai Theron*, although none of these examples shows the *Potnia Theron* in an explicitly chthonic role. One cinerary urn (**Fig. 250-1**) displays a figure appearing on one side in spring with trees beginning to bloom, and on the other side in winter with bare trees. This has been interpreted as representing the seasonal cycle as a metaphor for the cycle of birth, death and rebirth.[753]

Some of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* also have specific liminal associations. Hekate is a figure who has chthonic associations and is especially associated with boundaries and liminal spaces such as doorways and crossroads.[754] She is a goddess who crosses the generational divide between Titan and Olympian and in the *Theogony* is awarded shares of the land, sea and air.[755] Hekate's role as a *Potnia Theron* is demonstrated by her strong association with specific animals – namely dogs and snakes.[756] She was also connected to other figures identified as *Potniai Theron*, such as Artemis (see **Section 7.2.1**).[757] The animals connected to Hekate were not only chthonic but again demonstrate transgressing boundaries. As discussed above, snakes were found on and below the earth and dogs were an animal which crossed the boundaries of human and animal worlds through domestication.[758] This association with dogs was originally part of the identity of the goddess Enodia, and only became part of Hekate's persona when the two became syncretised.[759] Like Hekate, Enodia was sometimes associated with Artemis – the three figures taking on overlapping roles and attributes.[760]

[749] West (1990) p.265.
[750] Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.2.
[751] Dexter (2011) p.185.
[752] Fitzhardinge (1980) p.60; Nilsson (1950) p.397.
[753] Coldstream (1984) p.99.
[754] Wilk (2000) p.62; Dillon (2002) p.139.
[755] Titan and Olympian: Hes. *Theog.* 410-15; Zeitlin (1995) p.63
[756] Dogs: Paus. 3.14.9; Day (1984) p.27; Burkert (1985)p.196; Dillon (2002) p.170. Snakes: Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 3. 119; Ov. *Met.* 10. 403: Berg (1974) p.135.
[757] Walker (2004) p.31.
[758] Sergis (2010) p.64-65.
[759] Burkert (1985) p.196; Manoledakis (2012) p.293.
[760] Artemis & Enodia: Berg (1974) p.139; Burkert (1985) p.196; West (1990) p.305.

Gorgons also occupy a liminal space - as discussed in **Section 5.5**, the gorgon (when shown as a *Potnia Theron*) often encompasses various hybridised features. Gorgons appear feminine but are sometimes shown with a masculine beard, they are mostly human in appearance but have animalistic features such as bird-like wings or boar-like tusks. [761] The winged appearance of many *Potnia Theron* figures can also be interpreted as a form of liminality. While not all *Potniai Theron* figures are shown winged, this is often a feature strongly associated with the image (see **Section 5.2**) and the meaning behind these should be considered here. Wings are a clear visual marker that the figure portrayed is not intended to be human but rather is a hybrid or deity. Wings can also indicate that a figure belongs outside the realm of the ordinary, e.g. Pegasus. The wings of the *Potnia Theron* may also connect to the realm of the air – if she can fly, she has access both the worlds of the land and the air.[762] Wings may also indicate a connection to an earlier bird-goddess associated with the cycle of birth and death, placing her close to these transitional points of life.

Artemis especially is associated with transitional stages in children's development in her role as a *kourotrophos*.[763] Artemis was also seen as the deity responsible for guiding "wild" children into becoming "civilized" adults.[764] There are different types of transitional rites of both boys and girls which came under the protection of Artemis, from social initiation to physical change such as the onset of menstruation.[765] Artemis' virginity can also be seen as part of this – placing her in a perpetual state between girl and woman.[766] This is likely the reason she appears as a protectress of pregnant women and childbirth, with pregnant women seen in a dangerous and transitional period between the roles of "woman" and "mother".[767]

Artemis was specifically a protectress of unmarried girls, such as the "little bears" at Brauron.[768] The ritual is well-attested and it is clear to see Artemis in the role of *Potnia Theron* here – as the mistress of young "bears".[769] At Sparta, Orthia (and later Artemis) was associated with rites of passage for young men; including the later practices where young men were flogged in front of a statue of Orthia, which became a spectacle for Roman tourists by Plutarch's time.[770] This practice has been explained as a substitute for human sacrifice, as young men would often be whipped until the point of bleeding.[771]

Both the iconography and roles associated with the *Potnia Theron* demonstrate links to liminality and boundaries. While this is not expressed in the same way across all figures

[761] Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.1. Beard and Tusks: Neumann (1963) p.170.
[762] Dexter (2011) p.185.
[763] Angell (2017) p.85; Vernant (1991a) p.111-2.
[764] Budin (2004) p.266; Mazet (2017) p.23.
[765] Budin (2004) p.296. Association with menstruation: Budin (2004) p.266.
[766] Langdon (2008) p.77.
[767] Lee (2012b) p.23,32.
[768] Cohen (2006) p.217.
[769] "ἄρκτος ἢ Βραυρωνίοις" Ar. Lys. 644-5.
[770] Plut. *Lyc.* 18.1; Mazet (2017) p.25.
[771] West (1990) p.78.

within the IC, aspects of liminality and protection of boundaries form an important part of the image of the *Potnia Theron*.

7.5: Apotropaic

Connected to the idea of liminal spaces and boundaries is forms of protection which reinforced those boundaries. The iconography employed here is a form of apotropaic protection; from the Greek αποτρέπειν - "to turn away", referring to turning away or averting evil.[772] This apotropaic nature may also be linked to the role of the *Potnia Theron* as a "Mistress of Animals" (see **Section 7.3**), demonstrating her control over dangerous animals.[773]

One of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* who had a specifically apotropaic function was Hekate. Some of the clearest examples of Hekate in this apotropaic role are guardian statues – placed close to doorways or in front of houses. [774] These tend to be later than the scope of my study and do not show Hekate as a *Potnia Theron*. As covered in **Section 7.4**, Hekate was also associated with liminal spaces such as crossroads and was a protective figure in these places.[775] Rituals to Hekate are often apotropaic and suggest connections to other chthonic and malevolent figures such as Gorgo, Mormo and Empousa.[776]

Another identity which has been associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif is that of the gorgon or gorgoneion (gorgon-head), which also would have been recognised as an apotropaic device.[777] In artistic representation, it is thought that the earliest gorgoneia in Greek art were simply apotropaic symbols and only later, likely at Corinth, did these become to the earlier literary conception of the gorgon.[778] Gorgons appear in literature as early as the *Iliad*, where they are shown as a monstrous face, worn on shields and the *aegis* of Athena.[779] Apotropaic motifs are appropriate to appear on shields as their primary function is protective and the idea of an additional form of protection is logical and practical. [780] The use of gorgoneia as shield motifs may also be practical as they were not only protective, but the large eyes would have been distracting to the approaching enemy.[781] The role of the gorgon face on shields suggests that where the *Potnia Theron* is shown on armour in the form of a gorgon, this protection may extend to battle contexts as well as the more literal interpretation of protection from animals.[782]

---

[772] Faraone (1992) p.4; Wilk (2000) p.42.
[773] Protection from plagues of animals: Dietrich (1969) p.268.
[774] Protective statues of Hekate: Dillon (2002) p.170.
[775] Wilk (2000) p.62.
[776] West (1990) p.401-2; Halliwell (1986) p.187.
[777] Marinatos (2000) p.52.
[778] Payne (1931) p.84; Hopkins (1934) p.356.
[779] Hom *Il.*5.741, 11.33; Ogden (2008) p.37.
[780] Schuhmann (2009) p.65.
[781] Ogden (2008) p.37.
[782] Schuhmann (2009) p.106.

This apotropaic function can also be seen in images of gorgons and gorgoneia which are placed at liminal or boundary locations such as doorways and windows.[783] The use of gorgoneia may be linked to earlier Babylonian images thought to represent the face of Humbaba, these had similar furrowed features and exaggerated eyes and were represented as decapitated heads.[784] These images of Humbaba are known to appear in the Aegean in the 8th and 7th Century, roughly preceding the development of the Archaic gorgon image.[785] Gorgoneia and Humbaba images both appear as disembodied heads – this may relate to an earlier Archaic tradition of displaying bucrania (bull skulls) or lion's heads close to doorways.[786] The apotropaic power of these images may be linked to the exaggerated or hybridised features of the gorgon face (see **Section 5.6**) by using their frightening appearance to "turn away" evil.[787]

Gorgons, and especially Medusa appear on architecture, bowls, cups, jugs and shields as a protective motif.[788] As an apotropaic motif, the gorgon was part of Dorian – specifically Corinthian - temple decoration, and this tradition can be seen to come from Corfu in the west via sites such as Thermon and Calydon.[789] In temple decoration, gorgoneia appear as acroteria and antefixes, but also appear on metopes and less frequently as pediment decoration, such as the 6th century temple pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**).[790] The pediment from Corfu shows a monumental gorgon, placed in an apotropaic position, guarding the temple of Artemis.[791] This gorgon is shown as a *Potnia Theron*, controlling a pair of large felines which also face the viewer – emphasising her protective an apotropaic role.[792] Like gorgons, other hybridised figures also take the role of *Potnia Theron* such as the sphinx on the 8th century oinochoe from Rhodes (**Fig. 169**). Monstrous and hybridised figures shown as *Potniai Theron* are discussed further in **Chapter 5**.

The final category of *Potniai Theron* figures which are associated with apotropaic protection are those depicted nude. While there are only 19 examples in the IC where the *Potnia Theron* appears to be depicted nude (see **Section 4.8**) there may be some significance to these images. Nude forms of the *Potnia Theron* are likely to have come to Greek art via Crete, where southern Levantine amulets showing a naked goddess in the role of a protectress have been found.[793] In these examples, the apotropaic element is not as obvious as it may be with figures such as the gorgon, where there are multiple frightening or super-human elements to the figure. However, as the nude figures often appear to control large animals such as lions without requiring any kind of protection or clothing, this may be

[783] Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.6.
[784] Howe (1954) p.217; Carter (1987) p.362; Wilk (2000) p.65; Dexter (2010) p.36;https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1923-1110-112 accessed 12/02/2025.
[785] Noegel (2007) p.30; Dexter (2010) p.35.
[786] Faraone (1992) p.38.
[787] Howe (1954) p.213; Marinatos (2000) p.48; Wilk (2000) p.150; Angell (2017) p.82.
[788] Skinner-LaPorte (2010) p.5; Kolia (2014) p.435.
[789] Payne (1931) p.89.
[790] Goldberg (1982) p.207; Frontisi-Ducroux (1989) p.159; Ogden (2008) p.37; Dexter (2010) p.29.
[791] Mack (2002) p.585.
[792] Homann-Wedeking (1966) p.85.
[793] Howe (1954) p.215; Marinatos (2000) p.84.

a way of demonstrating the power of their protection. The apotropaic role of the *Potnia Theron* is one of her most frequently referenced roles in scholarship.[794] However, little has been written so far regarding the diversity of ways in which this is expressed in her iconography. Looking closer at the way the apotropaic function is expressed in the *Potnia Theron* motif reveals more information regarding some of the perceived threats the *Potnia Theron* may have offered protection from and by extension, who may have sought this protection.

7.6: *Kourotrophos* and children

Another form of protection demonstrated by the *Potnia Theron* is the role of *Kourotrophos* or child-protector. The protection of children is a distinct role that is less often associated with the *Potnia Theron* but remains significant to the understanding of this figure. The idea of raising children is linked to that of taming animals in Greek thought, where children and adolescents are compared to wild animals, ranging from bears and wolves to cows and horses.[795] Many of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* have associations with protecting children – Artemis is a protectress of children and youths, Orthia has strong associations with the birth goddess Eileithyia, and images of gorgons are placed close to children to protect them.[796] Few of the images within the IC depict figures which could be identified as children, but where smaller figures appear they are usually protected by a larger central figure. The occasional connection between children and the *Potnia Theron* in Greek art may also tell us something about her origin. Earlier figures thought to be influential on the image of the *Potnia Theron* include "Great Mother" figures such as the Phrygian Kybele, who is frequently depicted with children and has been depicted as a "Mistress of Animals".[797]

The role of *kourotrophos* is distinct from that of a mother or parent and as such this would not conflict with the "virgin" aspect of some of the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* such as Artemis and Hekate.[798] As the virgin aspect of the *Potnia Theron* appears to be a later development, it is not something which is notable within the figures of this study.[799] Where *Potnia Theron* figures appear wearing a short chiton or crossbands, these can be taken as being associated with young women and virginity (see **Section 4.4**).[800]

Hekate is referred to as a *Kourotrophos* by Hesiod but is not generally associated with children.[801] This role came to Hekate through Zeus, who also allotted her a number of

[794] *Potnia Theron* as apotropaic: Langdon (2010) p.6; Angell (2017) p.38. "Mistress of Animals" as apotropaic: Marinatos (2000) p.17; Schuhmann (2009) p.106; Barclay (2013) p.148.
[795] Prent (2005) p.636. See also **Section 7.2.1** for the Arkteia and bears.
[796] Artemis and Orthia associated with Eileithyia: see **Section 7.2.1**. Gorgons protecting children: Zolotnikova (2016) p.358
[797] See **Section 7.2.6.** Penglase (2005) p.137,146; Prent (2005) p.374.
[798] Braund (2018) p.15.
[799] Schuhmann (2009) p.7.
[800] Short chiton: Burkert (1985) p.196. Crossbands: Lee (2015) p.138.
[801] Hes. *Theog*. 452; Dillon (2002) p.170.

other honours in the *Theogony*.[802] In some versions of her genealogy, Hekate is said to be the mother of Skylla but never interacts with Skylla in the role of her mother.[803] In other interpretations, Hekate bears no children and instead takes on a fostering role in the care of children.[804] This protection of children continues into sacrifices to Hekate. Dogs, specifically puppies are recorded as sacrifices to Hekate, and these may have been a proxy for children, sacrificed to ensure their safety. [805] Hekate also has strong associations with Artemis, the two goddesses sometimes referred to as the single figure "Hekate-Artemis".[806] This explains the similarities in the functions of these two goddesses in areas such as protection over children and childbirth.[807]

Some examples show Medusa flanked by her children, such as on a 6th century temple pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). Showing Medusa alongside her sons deviates from the myth narrative where her sons are born when she is beheaded.[808] Other images such as the amphora from Caere, ca.530-510 (**Fig. 40**) show Pegasus and Chrysaor emerging from Medusa's neck. While this composition is a more logical representation of the myth narrative, it does not permit Medusa to appear in the role of a "mother" as she is beheaded. She gives birth to her sons but provides no caring or protecting role to them in the example from this amphora. This representation is not unique, however, many of the representations of Pegasus and Chrysaor emerging from Medusa's neck do not fall within the chronological scope of this study, as they appear later.

Other images where the *Potnia* Theron could be seen in the role of a mother are less certain in their interpretation. An example of this can be found on a 7th century relief amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 38**), where the central figure has been interpreted as raising her arms in the pain of childbirth.[809]. The usual interpretation of this figure is that she is protecting the two smaller figures either side of her from the pair of large felines, which frame the central group. In this way, the *Potnia Theron* figure could be seen to be a *kourotrophos* as she protects the young from the threat of wild animals. This image has been associated with various identities including Artemis, Leto and Hera.[810] The unusual body shape may lend some support to the idea that this figure is associated with of childbirth. While highly stylised, the body shape may indicate maternity clothing to distinguish pregnancy. However, there is little else in the image to suggest a childbirth motif – the *polos*, vines, size of the central figure and position between large, posed felines all suggest a protective deity rather than a birth scene.

---

[802] Hes. *Theog.* 451; Berg (1974) p.129; Strauss Clay (2009) p.133.
[803] Hekate as mother of Skylla: Ap. Rhod. *Argon*.4.827; Karouzou (1972) p.66.
[804] Farnell (1896) p.20; Zeitlin (1995) p.63.
[805] Puppies in sacrifice: Porph. *Abst.* 3.17; Plut. *Quaest. Rom*. 52; Paus. 3.14; Farnell (1896) p.24; Reitler (1949) p.30; Dillon (2002) p.170. Links to children: Farnell (1896) p.31. Sacrifice to protect children: Warr (1895) p.392.
[806] Warr (1895) p.393; Walker (2004) p.33; Schuhmann (2009) p.91.
[807] Hekate as goddess of childbirth: Reitler (1949) p.30.
[808] Hes. *Theog.* 280; Strab. 8.6.21; Ov. *Met.* 4.770. Burkert (1985) p.158; Dexter (2010) p.27.
[809] Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.11.
[810] Leto, Hera, or Artemis: Caskey (1976) p.33. Leto: Schefold (1996) pl.12.

Several identities depicted as *Potniai Theron* also have strong associations with the birth goddess Eileithyia, however Eileithyia herself is not known to have been depicted as a *Potnia Theron*. Eileithyia's sanctuaries are often close to those of figures such as Orthia or Artemis.[811] Eileithyia is more specific in her role as a goddess of childbirth and is sometimes referred to in multiple form (Eileithiai).[812] While there is no direct connection between Eileithyia and the *Potnia Theron* motif, she remains relevant to the understanding of the function of the *Potnia Theron* through her association with identities strongly associated with the motif.

Connected to the idea of the *Potnia Theron* as a *kourotrophos* and her association with children and childbirth is the use of the term "fertility goddess". This is a term which appears repeatedly in the study of the *Potnia Theron.*[813] The first problem with the term "fertility goddess" is that it does not specify if "fertility" refers to the fertility of humans, animals, vegetation or some combination of these. The closest connection to the *kourotrophos* role can be seen in the idea of a fertility goddess concerned with human fertility. While the *Potnia Theron* motif is associated with some specific identities which had connections to childbirth (See **Section 7.3** for Childbirth as a liminal state), this is separate from the idea of human fertility. There do not appear to be any *Potniai Theron* in the IC whose iconography suggests they have any role in the conception or gestation of human children. The connection between the *Potnia Theron* and human fertility may be suggested by a possible predecessor of the *Potnia Theron* motif from Çatalhöyük (See **Section 2.1**). However, it is not clear if the Çatalhöyük figure is depicted in childbirth and her connection to the *Potnia Theron* is based on strong iconographic parallels which lack evidence of continuity.

In the case of fertility of animals, there could be some evidence suggested in Hesiod's depiction of Hekate who works with Hermes to increase or decrease flocks of sheep and goats.[814] A 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**) appears to be the closest match for Hesiod's description of Hekate (see **Section 7.2.8**), however, the iconography of this figure has little to suggest animal fertility. Instead, this figure appears to be presented in a cult context (see **Section 7.7**).

There appears to be slightly more evidence to support the *Potnia Theron* motif being connected with vegetal fertility. The first example is a 9th century cinerary urn from Fortetsa (**Fig. 250-251)** which depicts two *Potnia Theron* scenes. This has been interpreted by Coldstream as the cycle of seasons as a metaphor for birth, death and rebirth.[815] These scenes could represent ritual processions connected with the seasons – this would also explain the wheeled platform the central figure stands on.[816] A less certain example would be a 7th century relief amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 38**) where the central figure appears to

[811] Paus 3.17.1; Waugh (2012) p.4.See also **Section 7.2.1**.
[812] Willetts (1958) p.221; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.11; Schuhmann (2009) p.90; Salapata (2009) p.331.
[813] Frothingham (1911) p.375; Coldstream (1984) p.99; Bevan (1989) p.167; Laffineur (2001) p.389; Barclay (2013) p.161; Mazet (2017) p.18.
[814] Hes. *Theog.* 444-6.
[815] Coldstream (1984) p.99.
[816] Coldstream (1984) p.97. See also **Section 7.7**.

have vines emerging from either side of her head which bear some kind of fruit. However, it is difficult to be certain if these vines are attached to the *Potnia Theron*, to her *polos*, or if they are emerging from behind her. Even if we are to understand the smaller figures either side of the *Potnia Theron* as children, the scene does not appear to explicitly suggest vegetal fertility, nor that of human children.

While the role of *kourotrophos* and other related roles such as motherhood and fertility are not frequently associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif, where elements of these roles appear they provide useful nuance to our understanding of this image. Related identities such as Hekate and Artemis can be seen to have strong links to children, childbirth and the protection of the young, however this role does not appear to be strongly connected to the *Potnia Theron* motif. Instead, the roles associated with children appear to be functions which are more strongly linked to the identities associated with the *Potnia Theron*, rather than the motif or iconography.

7.7: Cult and Ritual

As the *Potnia Theron* image did not represent a single goddess (see **Section 7.1**), it is difficult to ascertain what – if any- role she had in cult practice. Some specific examples suggest that the *Potnia Theron* appeared in cult-related roles including initiation (see **Section 7.3**) and these will be discussed here.[817] In Archaic art, ritual can sometimes be difficult to interpret from images due to both the stylised artistic style and the need to attempt to reconstruct ritual before trying to discern it in visual media.

An example which may show some elements of ritual practice is a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) which shows a figure often referred to as a gorgon.[818] This figure is shown frontally in a dancing or striding pose, holding a pair of long-necked water-birds. However, there are noticeable differences between this image and other gorgon representations from the same period. Firstly, holding water-birds seems uncommon – other gorgon representations tend not to hold animals apart from snakes or Pegasus, who is only shown held by his mother, Medusa. When other animals appear with gorgons, they tend to be controlled from a distance, such as the large felines on the 6th century temple pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). The use of passive control could be indicative of the apotropaic power of the gorgon, especially where larger and more dangerous animals such as lions are shown.

As discussed in **Section 5.6** the face of the gorgon on the plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**) displays some unusual features suggesting this may be a gorgon mask. Archaic gorgons are typically depicted *en face* in contrast to human faces, which are usually shown in profile.[819] Masks identified as gorgons have been found at Sparta and Tiryns – however, nothing suggests these were associated with ritual performance and there are no

[817] Lloyd-Jones (1983) p.100; Prent (2005) p.636; Mazet (2017) p.25.
[818] Harrison (1908) p.194; Marinatos (2000) p.50; Paspalas (2013) p.92.
[819] Waldstein & Hoppin (1898) p.182; Vernant (1991a) p.115. Frontal gorgon faces: Korshak (1987) p.1; Ogden (2008) p.35.

contemporary depictions of them being worn.[820] There is also a band worn across the forehead of the Rhodes plate figure. While some gorgons are shown with a band or fillet in their hair, such as the 6th century statue from Paros (**Fig. 228**) this is usually pushed back into the hair rather than being worn across the forehead. The way this band is worn suggests it may be there to attach the mask to the wearer's face.

The hair of the gorgon from the Rhodes plate also seems to support this – the hair seems to be attached around the edges of face with a matching beard around the lower edge. Bearded gorgons are found elsewhere in Archaic Greek art, so this alone is not remarkable. However, the curls under the chin are unusual; they do appear elsewhere in Archaic art (e.g. a metope from Thermon **Img.7.2**) where the "beard" appears to be locks of hair hanging down from the back of the head showing the head to be disembodied and therefore identifying the gorgon as Medusa. The Rhodes plate figure is not decapitated but has a similar "beard" formed from hair which appears to start at the top of the head and continue down the back of the "mask".



Img. 7.2: Metope from Thermon showing gorgoneia with "beard". Payne (1931) p.80.

The body of the gorgon on the Rhodes plate also displays abnormalities from the usual appearance of Archaic gorgons. The upper set of wings do not appear to be part of the figure's body – they extend horizontally across the upper body as though they are being worn rather than being an organic part of the body. This corresponds with the idea of the figure wearing a mask – the wings may also be part of a gorgon-like costume. The dress could certainly be something worn by a gorgon – we see depictions elsewhere of gorgons wearing similar dresses with one leg exposed, such as an amphora from Eleusis (**Img. 3.2**); however, the sun-like markings on the figure's arms and cross-like marking on her leg are

[820] Gorgon masks at Sparta and Tiryns: Mazet (2017) p.26. Sparta masks and use in ritual: Ogden (2008) p.38.

not necessarily associated with gorgon representations. Their positioning suggests they may be tattoos – the sun-like motif appearing as part of the filler motif behind the central figure and the cross motif is found on the wing of the bird on the right side. The same symbol appearing on the central figure and bird may suggest a form of ownership in addition to the active control being demonstrated. It may be significant that the birds hang limply as though they are dead. In the context of this scene, it could be implied that the birds are sacrifices being offered to or by the main figure. The gorgon-like figure's feet extend beyond the frame of the plate – this appears to be a deliberate choice rather than a problem fitting the figure within the plane. "Breaking" the frame in this way might suggest that the figure is stepping out of the image, that she is crossing over between realms of human and divine. The dead birds and gorgon-like costume (if this is what is being shown) may support this. In which case, we see some evidence of ritual costume and practice being depicted.

There is also some suggestion of cult activity on an amphora from Thebes dating to the 7th century (**Fig. 27**). Here, the central figure is flanked by animals which is typical for a *Potnia Theron* but there are also additional elements in the composition which provide further context to her role. To the left, we see what appears to be a bucranium and on the right, there is another object which has been identified as the leg of a bull.[821] Elsewhere the latter object has been identified as a uterus.[822] The different interpretations of this object could produce significantly different interpretations for this scene. For example, a womb may lead us to interpret this figure as having additional significance as a figure associated with fertility or birth (see **Section 7.6**). However, the interpretation as an animal leg appears to make the most sense – the rest of the composition maintains symmetrical concepts – the lions are not identical but can be recognised as the same animal appearing on either side of the central figure. Following on from this, it would make sense of the head of a bull to be mirrored with another object either related to bulls or related to the function of the bull's head. A bull's leg would fit both criteria, especially if both the head and leg have been removed to signify the bull is intended as a sacrifice.[823] It should be noted that separated animal limbs should not always be associated with sacrifice as they appear in other contexts, such as votive offerings.[824] However, taken in combination with the other elements if the image, a sacrifice seems more likely. The head would identify the animal while the leg would identify the occasion of sacrifice. Animal heads and limbs also appear alongside female figures on some Minoan gems; these gems may be antecedents of the composition on the Thebes amphora.[825] The surrounding filler motifs (see **Section 6.6**) may also support this interpretation. The swastika has been suggested as symbolic of movement, this could suggest the idea of the central figure standing in high winds. This would accord with the idea of hilltop sanctuaries, where it would be appropriate to depict a goddess figure or items relating to her sacrifice. The triangles at the feet of the figure have also been interpreted as representing mountain peaks, reinforcing the idea of a hilltop setting.[826]

[821] Bull's leg: Schuhmann (2009) p.71. "Animal limb": Dietrich (1962) p.146.
[822] Uterus: Schuhmann (2009) p.72.
[823] Schuhmann (2009) p.71.
[824] Dietrich (1969) p.269.
[825] Nilsson (1950) p.75.
[826] Schuhmann (2009) p.71.

Identities associated with the *Potnia Theron* motif were also associated with mountain tops as places sacred to them.[827]

Another possible image depicting a ritual scene is an urn from Fortetsa which shows an unusual figure on a wheeled platform or cart.[828] Caution needs to be taken when attempting to interpret scenes as "ritual", ensuring that there is something to substantiate the claim rather than using this term as a fall-back for scenes which are otherwise difficult to interpret. In this instance, what suggests ritual activity is that the central figure appears to be a cult image. Compared to other *Potnia Theron* images, this figure's face and body have an unusual shape and appearance; it may be that this less naturalistic portrayal owes more to the Geometric style, or it may suggest the type of image depicted. This could be a depiction of a *xoanon* or plank-like wooden idol and would explain both the unusual and rigid appearance of the figure and the presence of the wheeled platform. A possible interpretation for this scene is that the *Potnia Theron* figure is part of a procession. On one side of the urn, the figure is flanked by curling branches, on the other they seem to be bare or fir trees – this could suggest spring and winter, suggesting the times of the year when these processions may have taken place.[829] The figure is shown to be almost the same height as the trees – this could either suggest a monumental *xoanon* which would certainly have required wheeled transport as it would be too large to carry, or the scale may reflect the importance of the deity represented.

Other cults also focus on figures which take on a "Mistress of Animals" role (see **Section 7.2**). While often related to the *Potnia Theron* motif, these cults do not always include the *Potnia Theron* as a recognised cult image. One example of this is the Arcadian Erinys cult where horse and snake representations were frequent.[830] Although animal representations do not always indicate a "Mistress of Animals" role, looking at the way animals are employed in cult-related iconography can clarify the role they serve.[831] Animal-shaped offerings are often associated with deities represented as a *Potnia Theron*. Some of these display a female figure which could be interpreted as the deity alongside animals – such as the horse votives from the sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta, which represent horse heads either side of a female face. Other animals such as lions are found represented alongside female figures from Orthia, but horses outnumber other animal representations.[832]

Cult images in the form of *Potniai Theron* are known but do not appear to have been widespread. One reason for this may be the use of the motif elsewhere as a decorative or protective image (see **Section 7.5**) The lack of evidence for cult images in the form of *Potniai Theron* may also be due to images not surviving – for example if the majority were wooden sculptures. It is complicated to solidly reconstruct the role that the *Potnia Theron* had in cult

[827] Dietrich (1969) p.269.
[828] Schuhmann (2009) p.90.
[829] Schuhmann (2009) p.90.
[830] Dietrich (1962) p.141.
[831] Dietrich (1969) p.268.
[832] Waugh (2012) p.3.

and ritual activity. While many *Potnia Theron* images represent goddesses, there are few examples where these figures appear in ritual or cult contexts.

7.8 Conclusion

The most definitive role of the *Potnia Theron* is as a "Mistress of Animals" – where she is depicted controlling animals by either direct or passive means (see **Section 6.2**). There is significant variety within the way this role is displayed – in the pose, the animals, and the position of the figures within each image. Each of these variations tells us something about the character and identity of the figure represented – for example, the different connotations of a *Potnia Theron* who holds lions compared to a *Potnia Theron* who holds birds. In some examples, animals can be used to link a *Potnia Theron* image to a specific identity, for example Aphrodite with doves (see **Section 7.2.7**). Although more frequently, the animals being held suggest the function of the *Potnia Theron* figure – such as the strength and protection associated with lions (see **Section 3.1.1**). So, while the identity of a specific image may be unclear, the iconography usually gives a clear idea of her role.

The range of functions suggested by the iconography of the *Potnia Theron* motif can appear to suggest opposing roles – the same figure being both protective and aggressive depending on the context. These apparent contradictions in the nature of the *Potnia Theron* have led to her identification as a liminal figure (see **Section 7.4**), appearing between the human and animal worlds or between the wild and the civilized. This role is often expressed in a literal way – placing a human figure between two animals, creating a physical "boundary" between the animals. The hybridised appearance of some of the *Potnia Theron* figures can also place them in a liminal space – many of the *Potniai Theron* who appear as gorgons display human and animal features as well as masculine and feminine, and mortal and mythological (see **Section 5.6**).

This association with liminality and boundaries can carry over into the apotropaic role of some *Potniai Theron*. The gorgon is the best known of these, with the gorgoneia appearing as an apotropaic symbol, from the Archaic period into Late Antiquity. Images where large or fierce animals are controlled by the *Potnia Theron* can also be interpreted as apotropaic. The control of dangerous animals suggests the power to "turn away" evil (apotropaic), expressed as the physical strength and bravery needed to bring these animals under control.

Looking at the role of the *Potnia Theron* in cult practice, some figures become more clearly identifiable as specific deities – especially in cases where the cult image may have been in the form of a *Potnia Theron*. Differentiating the cult roles of these figures can clarify how these figures were seen by a contemporary audience and in which contexts. Looking at connections between cult images and the *Potnia Theron* can also provide further information on the specific sanctuary or display attributes associated with individual deities.

It is difficult – and in some cases impossible – to identify which identity should be attached to each image. It has been suggested that the *Potnia Theron* motif is a decorative

element rather than representing a specific figure.[833] Some *Potnia Theron* images appear to have an appearance, attributes or context which connect the motif to a specific identity. When the context, attributes or iconography suggest a specific identity, these figures are either deities or female figures from Greek myth.

The significant variation displayed in the *Potnai Theron* within the IC attests to the difficulty of trying to assign specific identities. The broad chronological and geographic range of this study allows a good exploration of the broad variety of *Potnia Theron* images. This diversity not only covers the iconographic variety and different media of representation, but also the range of roles and identities expressible through the form of the *Potnia Theron* motif.

[833] Bevan (1989) p.168; Cook (1997) p.73; Blakolmer (2016) p.66; Angell (2017) p.91.

8. Conclusions

This study has demonstrated not only the varying identities of the *Potnia Theron* but also considered the religious, mythological and artistic landscape of which she was part. While the *Potnia Theron* has received some attention in previous studies, these findings address new and less explored areas of the motif's function. In turn, this gives us a more complete picture of the *Potnia Theron,* and a better understanding of how this motif can be understood.

8.1. Methodology and boundaries of research

A foundational stage in this research involved establishing clear parameters for defining the "*Potnia Theron*", alongside determining chronological and geographical boundaries. Within this study, the term "*Potnia Theron*" is restricted to representations of a female figure, while the male counterpart- commonly referred to as the "Master of Animals" or" *Potnios Theron"* is addressed separately in **Chapter 2.3.3**). Central to this definition is the requirement that the figure is seen to hold or exert control over the animals that flank her. Although depictions of women and animals are widespread in the visual culture of the period under discussion it is the specific configuration of pose and the relational dynamic between the female figure' and the animals that designate her as a *Potnia Theron*.

Methodologically, this study adopts an iconographic approach, treating and viewing the *Potnia Theron* primarily as an image type or motif rather than a fixed identity. By disentangling the image from any predetermined divine attribution, each example can be evaluated based on visual and contextual evidence – namely, object type, archaeological context, and the degree to which it conforms to the established characteristics of the *Potnia Theron* motif. This semiotically-informed framework method prioritises analysis of the image within its iconographic corpus, avoiding assumptions that may stem from automatic identification with specific deities. For example, many representations of the *Potnia Theron* have traditionally been identified as "Artemis" (see **Chapter 7.2.1** for a comprehensive discussion and critique of this attribution). Such identifications are only considered to be valid where contextual indicators, such as the presence of Apollo as her brother or the inclusion of animals closely associated with Artemis, particularly deer, support this interpretation.

This methodological approach is particularly well suited to the study the *Potnia Theron*, as both the visual form (sign) and attributed identity (signifier) are subject to contextual variation while the broader function of the motif remains consistent. Greek mythological systems provide a of symbolic framework through which the relationship between the civilised human sphere and the untamed natural world may be understood.[834]

[834] Segal (1986) p.175.

By applying this perspective, the present thesis facilitates a more nuanced interpretation of liminal figures that mediate these boundaries (**Section 7.4**), thereby clarifying the *Potnia Theron*'s role as an apotropaic device. The range of identities examined in **Chapter 7** further substantiates this argument: despite considerable variation, including both deities and mythological figures, all are represented through imagery that conforms to the formal criteria of the *Potnia Theron* type.

The chronological scope of this study encompasses the period during which the *Potnia Theron motif rose to* prominence in the Greek world and concludes with its subsequent decline. Geographically, the thesis extends beyond mainland Greece to Magna Graecia, specifically the regions of Italy and Sicily on the basis that these regions formed part of the Greek colonial sphere (e.g. Taranto; see **Fig.159**) or display mythological figures rendered in a style consistent with Archaic Greek examples (see **Fig.255**, depicting Kirke and a boar-man alongside a relief of Herakles and Triton).

No restrictions were imposed on the range of media included within the iconographic corpus, allowing for a comprehensive demonstration of the diversity of *Potnia Theron* representations and the breadth of contexts in which her image served as a protective and apotropaic force. The variety of object types – from domestic items such as cups and small vases to temple metopes, pediments, and alters - provides an initial indication of the motif's broad appeal, across both private and public, as well as secular and religious settings.

The analysis undertaken in this study has generated new insights into the dress and pose of the *Potnia Theron* (**Chapters 4** and **6**), aspects that have not been systematically addressed in earlier studies. The findings presented in these chapters reinforce the interpretation of the *Potnia Theron* as a highly adaptable visual form with multiple functional applications. In addition to her established protective and apotropaic roles (see **Section 7.5**), the evidence assembled here suggests further associations relating to gender, social identity and specific contextual frameworks including religious, hunting and martial settings. Consequently, the *Potnia Theron* may be understood not only as a protective motif but also as a reflection of the social and cultural circumstances in which her protective function was invoked.

8.2. Findings and Contributions of This Study

The primary purpose of this study was to provide a closer reading of the iconography of the *Potnia Theron* to develop a better understanding of the function of this figure in the Greek world. This more detailed reading of the visual elements that make up these images has revealed several new perspectives – highlighting various roles and identities associated with the *Potnia Theron*. Ultimately, this leads to a change in how we define the *Potnia Theron*. Discussion of the *Potnia Theron* as a single, undifferentiated figure is a concept which exists in modern scholarship, and one of the aims of this study was to move away from this lack of distinction within the motif. Rather than identifying her as a single figure, approximate to Artemis or merely an aspect of her, this study shows that *Potnia Theron* is

better defined as a genre of figures which can be analysed and explored in relation to its associated identities.[835] Some are Artemis-adjacent, while others are more appropriately identified as Medusa/gorgons, Kirke or even mortal figures. This closer reading of the iconography and attributes of the *Potnia Theron* has also allowed the differentiation of different "types" within the motif. This variation highlights different identities and provides scope for further research to build on the data within this study.

One of the main contributions of this study is a systematic and in-depth approach to understanding all parts of the image of the *Potnia Theron*. This process involved identifying the key elements defining the motif (animal or natural attributes, central female figure) to set the study's parameters. In addition, the roles, functions and identities of the *Potnia Theron* are investigated in terms of her appearance and iconography in **Chapter 7**. While previous studies have looked briefly at the find context and elements, such as gorgon faces, to identify figures as gorgons or Medusa, this study takes this approach further. A closer reading of the *Potnia Theron* iconography can facilitate understanding her functions, such as protective or apotropaic. A more nuanced approach to how these functions are expressed in specific *Potnia Theron* examples also supports the identification of some individual images with particular deities or mythological figures, such as Kirke who can be identified by her wand and cup as well as the presence of Odysseus and "pig men" (e.g., **Fig. 44**, **63**, **158**, **159**) or Artemis who can be more securely identified by the presence of her brother, Apollo (e.g., **Fig. 28** and **201**). While it is not always possible to assign a specific identity to every *Potnia Theron* image, a more thorough reading of the iconography ensures that identification is informed by the full context of the image rather than her role as a *Potnia Theron* alone.

While the animal attributes are perhaps the most notable feature of the *Potnia Theron*, the significance of which animals appear and where they appear with the central figure has received less attention.[836] Distinctions between "active" (physically holding or controlling animals) and "passive" (implied control of animals shown by their pose relative to the central figure) have previously been discussed. [837] However, this study elaborates on how these demonstrate the relationship between the *Potnia Theron* and her animals. Firstly, by looking at how often each type of control appears within the study and differentiating within these two broad categories. For example, looking at the "active" category (**Chapter 6.2.1**), there are eight different ways in which animals are held or controlled – the most common of these being by the neck and the least common being held by a leash. These comparisons reveal not only aesthetic trends within the *Potnia Theron* motif but also show differentiation and personality in the *Potnia Theron* herself. A figure which holds animals by the neck gives a significantly different impression and likely serves another function than a

[835] Approximations or precursor to Artemis: Levi (1945) p.31; Beazley (1986) p.33; Dillon (2002) p.54; Childs (2003) p.64; Walker (2004) p.30; Fisher-Hansen & Poulsen (2009) p.11; Langdon (2010) p.11; Zolotnikova (2016) p.362. Aspect or role of Artemis: Bevan (1986) p.31; Bevan (1987) p.18; Rigoglioso (2009) p.84; Neer (2012) p.109; Rehak (2007) p.208; Rogers (2012) p.182; Budin (2016) p.14; Angell (2017) p.2-3, 11; Mazet (2017) p.18; Lewis & Llewellyn-Jones (2018) p.527.

[836] Some discussion on animal attributes of the *Potnia Theron* can be found in: Bevan (1986) p.31-2; Bevan (1989) p.165-8; Marinatos (2000)p.96; Thomas & Wedde (2000)p.9; Budin (2004) p.264; Simons (2014) p.68; Budin (2016) p.17-18; Angell (2017) p.81; Lewis & Llwewllyn-Jones (2018) p.527; Flognfeldt (2019) p.75-6.

[837] Barclay (2001) p.378; Schuhmann (2009) p.6.

figure which holds animals by a leash. This finding also intersects with the animals which appear alongside the *Potnia Theron,* as explored in **Chapter 3**. **Chapter 6.2.1** details some of the differences in active control. The *Potniai Theron* which hold lions by the neck, demonstrates their protective ability through physical power, differentiating them from those images where long-necked water birds are held in similar positions, which would not require the same strength. **Chapter 3.1.1** emphasises the strength and power lions symbolised in Greek art. **Chapter 3.2.1** covers the role of water birds and their links to fertility, suggesting a different kind of control would be appropriate. Together, these facts show the *Potnia Theron* to be a versatile figure whose iconography was adapted to offer a variety of protective and apotropaic roles.

This systematic, in-depth approach to the composition of *Potnia Theron* images was also extended to the fill motifs, as discussed in **Chapter 6.6**. While these appear largely aesthetic in their function, they can be helpful – especially in fragmentary images (see **Section 8.3**). These aesthetic choices are often dismissed as not meaningful enough to merit inclusion when studying these images. However, **Chapter 6.6** emphasises how these motifs can enrich our understanding of the central figure – by connecting her to a specific role, a geographic region, or chronological trends in decoration. The findings regarding these fill motifs can also be applied to other examples from the Archaic period, providing new insight into images and iconography of this period. As well as situating *Potnia Theron* images in specific times and locations, they also tell us something about the original status of the object in question. For example, the 6th century krater known as the "François Vase" found in Chiusi (**Fig.136** and **137**) places *Potnia Theron* figures on the handles as part of a rich combination of mythological subjects. While the *Potnia Theron* panel itself has fewer fill motifs than other examples (such as **Fig. 171** – a 6th century oinochoe from Corinth, where all the free space around the central figure is filled with small motifs), the krater is a large vessel, richly decorated with bands of design. The intricacy of decoration tells us that this is an object associated with higher status - confirmed by the fact that the vase was left in a tomb known to have been robbed in antiquity for its other goods.[838] The tomb robbers appear to have mainly taken metal goods and smashed the pottery, leading to its fragmentary condition when it was discovered.[839] The vessel size, style, and rich burial context suggest that the *Potnia Theron* had associations with those of higher status.

Regarding the connection between the *Potnia Theron* and status, a contrasting picture is found in over a hundred thousand lead votive figurines discovered in Sparta (see **Fig.138-153**), including at the sanctuary of Orthia.[840] These lead votives are thought to have been inexpensive and produced in large numbers for those coming to worship at the sanctuary.[841] This large number of votives in cheaper material suggests that the *Potnia Theron* was not exclusively a figure for the elite and may have granted her protection to a wide range of social classes.[842] However, our view of this may be skewed by which artefacts

[838] Beazley (1986) p.24.
[839] Beazley (1986) p.24.
[840] Wace (1929) p.249; Gill & Vickers (2001) p.229.
[841] Wace (1929) p.250.
[842] Fitzhardinge (1980) p.119.

survive – metal and pottery often only come to us in fragments and images in wood or other perishable materials have decayed, so we can only conjecture what other images of the *Potnia Theron* may have looked like from examples such as the 9th-century urn from Fortetsa (**Fig. 250** and **251**. See **Chapter 7.6**). While the picture is incomplete, this brings us closer to understanding who may have owned or interacted with these *Potnia Theron* images and what this audience wanted or expected of her.

Another area covered in this study is the *Potnia Theron*'s attire – an aspect of her appearance that appears to have received little attention in previous studies. While previous studies of the *Potnia Theron* have noted trends, such as wearing the *polos*, this is often oversimplified as a marker of divinity. Less attention has been given to what else it can tell us – how it may reflect contemporary fashions and socioeconomic statuses – signifying that the *Potnia Theron* figure may have been a higher-status figure if not divine. The *polos* could suggest possible Eastern origins or influences but are equally likely to reflect a social connection to the artefacts where these images appear – women of higher status seeing their fashions reflected in images on aryballoi and alabastra.

A significant area of new research in this study is that of hybrid and monstrous forms of the *Potnia Theron,* as discussed in **Chapter 5**. While the wings of the *Potnia Theron* are often mentioned, they are usually suggested to be a feature of Archaic art and designate her as a divine figure.[843] However, wings are just one expression of human/animal hybridity displayed by the *Potnia Theron* and appear in a multitude of ways – attached to the back, appearing in place of her arms, multiple sets of wings – each of these variations suggesting a slightly different personality embodied by the figure in question. As well as wings, the faces and bodies of animal hybrid *Potnia Theron* images are examined to investigate what can be understood from these images. A good example is a 7th century amphora from Thebes (**Fig. 27**). The central figure depicted on this amphora has an unusually shaped face, which may be intended to resemble a bird, and her arms are wing-like. These bird-like features bring this *Potnia Theron* into a more liminal space between humans and birds. The function of this is three-fold: firstly, while wings are frequently depicted as part of the *Potnia Theron* motif (134 of 263 examples in the IC have wings) however, the amphora from Thebes shows a figure with wings in place of arms. The wings differentiate her from the majority of other *Potnia Theron* figures, with only one other example in the IC displaying wings instead of arms – a Geometric period seal from Melos showing the *Potnia Theron* with a gorgon-like face (**Fig. 74**). Secondly, it creates another level of connection between the *Potnia Theron* and the animal world. She does not simply hold or control the animals; she takes on the appearance and possibly the bodily form of these animals. The lack of arms, wings in place of arms, and bird-like face move the Thebes figure closer to the animal world and further from her human appearance. Thirdly, it may suggest a costume, performance or ritual. The eyes of the central figure are small circles without pupils. These are not unique within the IC, also appearing on a relief amphora from Boeotia, ca.675. However, here, the medium allows for a suggestion of pupils or possibly eyelids around the edge of the eyes. The unusual eyes combined with the frontality of the face may suggest it is a mask and that the

[843] Simons (2014) p.25.

"wings" may be sleeves of a garment covering the arms – in which case the central figure could be read as human in a costume. I have made a similar suggestion for a plate from Rhodes ca.600 (**Fig. 200**), where the eyes also appear unusual and do not resemble other contemporary examples (see **Section 5.6**).

The difference between hybridity and monstrosity is also explored in **Chapter 5**. For this study, "hybridity" refers to animal/human combinations such as the *Potnia Theron* with the bird-like features mentioned above. In contrast, "monstrosity" is used to discuss examples where the animal features of the *Potnia Theron* appear "dangerous" or "fierce", such as boar-like tusks (e.g., **Figs. 8** and **9**) or snakes in place of legs (**Fig. 135**). These "monstrous" features tend to be associated more closely with gorgons and an apotropaic function. Specifically in using their frightening appearance to "turn away" evil. Furthermore, while the *Potnia Theron* is generally thought of as a protective image, usually in an apotropaic sense, it is clear that the "monstrous" images seem to bear a level of threat which the "hybrid" images – while they may appear strange – do not.

This hybrid element of the *Potnia Theron* can be seen to tie into her liminal aspect, which is discussed in detail in **Chapter 7.4**. Even when the *Potnia Theron* takes on a more human appearance, she is most frequently depicted between animals. This positioning situates her between the wild and the civilised, human and animal, between the viewer and the mythological world she inhabits. Hybrid forms of the *Potnia Theron* take this further: especially in the case of gorgons who not only display a combination of human and animal features but sometimes combine masculine and feminine, giving us examples of bearded female gorgons. This combination of features visually places the *Potnia Theron* on the threshold of multiple boundaries –her human appearance, gender, and being mortal versus divine. The significance of boundaries and their reinforcement and protection in this period of Greek history is attested to in the attention paid to boundary stones and markers.[844] Similar attention is paid to places such as doorways, gates and crossroads, as these were areas associated with ghosts and the idea of moving between locations.[845] There are also cults established around wetlands and marshes – between water and land, or where land, water and air can all be seen to converge – such as that of Artemis Limnatis, who appeared in the form of a *Potnia Theron*.[846] This connection to liminal and boundary zones, combined with the hybrid appearance of some *Potnia Theron* figures and the positioning of most *Potniai Theron* between animals, solidifies her role as an apotropaic boundary figure. In this way, the *Potnia Theron* displays multiple manifestations of the same kind of protection she offers from the chaos of the wild animals she controls.

The apotropaic function of the *Potnia Theron* is one of her defining features. Significant variation exists in the form and media of the representations within the IC; however, all the examples seem to have been apotropaic in their function. The apotropaic function of the *Potnia Theron* is examined in greater detail in **Chapter 7.5**. In some instances, the apotropaic role of the *Potnia Theron* is further emphasised: examples where

[844] Bøgh (2007) p.329; Simons (2014) p.24. Boundaries and sacred space: Posthumus (2011) p.80.
[845] Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.6.
[846] Koursoumis (2014) p.216. Artemis sanctuaries near swamps and wetlands: Budin (2004) p.266.

the central figure appears nude, with a gorgon face or with animals with apotropaic associations outside of the *Potnia Theron* motif, such as lions and snakes.[847] The placement of many of these images is also significant.

Many examples come from temple pediments – notably the 6th century example from Corfu (**Fig. 51**). Similarly, the Lintel sculptures from Prinias (**Fig. 50**) would have been placed over the doorway of a temple. Both examples tie into the idea of boundaries and sacred space as discussed above and contextualise the apotropaic function of these *Potnia Theron* images. Apotropaic images would be placed near or over doorways to protect the boundary.[848] A similar idea can be seen in the eight examples from the IC in the form of antefixes and one metope – continuing the theme of protecting the building they were attached to. As well as this, there are four examples of perirrhanteria, which would have been used in sanctuaries for washing and purification. These images suggest a different kind of protection, which relies on removing pollution within a sacred space. The protective nature of the *Potnia Theron* was not limited to religious contexts, with examples from a cuirass (**Fig. 191**), as well as four examples from shields and three shield straps. These images' locations demonstrate that the *Potnia Theron* appears to have extended her protection over diverse population groups. This idea can also be seen in jewellery – such as in a large number of plaques from Rhodes ca.700-600 (**Fig. 98-111**). These *Potnia Theron* images suggest protection of the wearer, functioning as an amulet.[849] Most of the images not mentioned above are household items such as vases. The motif's placement in so many contexts displays the spectrum of situations where the apotropaic protection of the *Potnia Theron* was called on.

Although there is significant scope for further research into the antecedents and origins of the *Potnia Theron* (see **Section 8.3** below), this study has gone some way in exploring and furthering the connections to earlier figures. While the earliest examples discussed in **Chapter 2**, such as the seated figure from Çatal Höyük, have not shown adequate evidence to conclusively link them to the *Potnia Theron* of the Greek world, this study has shown there are significant iconographic similarities. These similarities continue with examples from the Near East, including the Queen of the Night plaque, images of Lamashtu and the male Master of Animals – again bearing strong iconographic similarities. The Minoan and Etruscan examples from the same chapter also have strong similarities. They are chronologically closer – making them more likely antecedents. While the origin of the *Potnia Theron* was not the primary enquiry of this study, the findings were an insightful contribution to the thesis and presented opportunities for further research into this topic.

The data presented in this study shows that by categorising the aesthetic and iconographic elements of each *Potnia Theron* image, we can identify the distinct roles and functions of different figures. This range appears to be supported by her various identities and attributes – such as her control of animals (see **Chapter 3**). Variations within the motif

[847] Lions associated with Kybele: Bøgh (2007) p.307. Snakes: Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.1.
[848] Wilk (2000) p.84; Skinner-La Porte (2010) p.6.
[849] *Potnia Theron* on amulets: Langdon (2010) p.6. Wearing of jewellery amulets: Hildburgh (1947) p.159; Marinatos (2000) p.67. Amulets and Artemis/*Potnia Theron*: Hoffmann (1964) p.186.

exist while still conforming to the definition of a *Potnia Theron* as defined in the introduction.

What has been shown is that both the visual elements (pose of the central figure, animal attributes, control of animals by central figure) and functions (protective, apotropaic) are inherent to the *Potnia Theron* image. Beyond this, there is significant variation in how the *Potnia Theron* may be depicted and the roles she may adopt. Understanding these complexities tells us a significant amount of information regarding both the character and identity (or identities) of the *Potnia Theron,* the people who called upon her protection and the circumstances appropriate for her involvement. The benefit of recognising this complexity and variation within the motif is a more complete picture of how the *Potnia Theron* can be understood as a part of ancient visual culture and religious practice.

8.3. Suggestions for further research

While this study has furthered understanding of the image and function of the *Potnia Theron* in the Greek world, it has also provided openings for further research. While many possible examples of antecedents of the *Potnia Theron* were suggested in **Chapter 2**, these mainly relied on stylistic and iconographic similarities with the *Potnia Theron* as she appears in the main body of the study. While much has been written about earlier figures which bear similarities to the *Potnia Theron,* scholarship connecting the antecedents to the Archaic and Classical Greek *Potnia Theron* tends to simplify her origins to "the East" with little elaboration.[850] This study has looked at possible antecedents from Çatal Höyük (modern Turkey), Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), Ugarit (Syria), and Minoan Crete. Future studies could build on the material from **Chapter 2** to not only distinguish specific areas within "the East" where antecedents of the *Potnia Theron* are found but also look at other examples, such as the Etruscan materials (see **Chapter 2.4**). Future studies could progress this and more confidently identify the antecedents of the *Potnia Theron,* focussing not only on the figure's image and iconography but on her functions within religion, mythology and culture. In addition to the antecedents of the *Potnia Theron,* there is scope to build on this study's work on *Potnia Theron* figures from the edges of the Greek world and neighbouring areas - such as the Etruscan examples (e.g., **Figs. 1**, **43**, **61**, **64**, **80**, **96**, **97**, **121**, **122**, **168**, **174**, **199**, **254**) and those from the Scythian (e.g., **Fig. 167**) and Pontic (e.g., **Figs. 161-5**) regions.

[850] Gordon (1932) p.191; Christou (1968) p.15; Coldstream (1977) p.4; Barclay (2001) p.373; Prent (2005) p.638; Fisher-Hansen & Poulsen (2009) p.13; Hjerrild (2009) p.42; Schuhmann (2009) p.94; Ogden (2013) p.8; Simons (2014) p.5; Angell (2017) p.76; Flognfeldt (2019) p.67.



Img.8.1: Marble statue of Kybele as Potnia Theron from Latium. 3rd century AD. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cybèle_Potnia_theron.jpg accessed 28/02/2025.

Analysis of the form and iconography of the *Potnia Theron* in this study could also help identify or reconstruct fragmentary finds, which may be *Potnia Theron* images. Within this study, there are already some reconstructed images, such as the 6th-century temple pediment from Corfu (**Fig. 51**) and a 7th century metal sheet from Athens (**Fig. 192**) – in both cases, these images have been reconstructed to understand better how the full *Potnia Theron* image originally looked with the complete central figure flanked by her animals (and surrounding figures in the case of **Fig. 51**). There are also more fragmentary examples such as a 7th century votive plate from Thasos (**Fig. 207**), where we can identify that the central figure is likely to be a *Potnia Theron* due to her pose and what may be an animal's spiralling tail in the lower left fragment. Similarly, the small fragment from Samos, ca.625, gives us little information. However, comparisons to the dress of other *Potniai Theron* and what seem to be the paws of a large feline resting against her legs suggest strong similarities to images of female figures holding lions. The position and scale of the animal also suggest the pose seen in many *Potnia Theron* images. However, the fact that she holds a large feline would be enough to identify her as such.

Another area which may prove interesting for future study is further exploration into the *Potnia Theron* as a *xoanon*. A *xoanon* may be depicted in **Fig. 250** and **251**, where the figure's body is shown in an unusually rigid pose, suggesting this is a plank-like wooden idol on a wheeled platform. (see **Chapter 7.7** for a detailed discussion). While no *xoana* survive, using experimental archaeology to attempt a reconstruction of one of the Fortetsa images

would provide valuable insight into now-vanished artefacts. Wace suggested that some of the ivory images of Orthia found at Sparta may have been made to resemble a *xoanon;* this finds some support in Pausanias, who mentions a *xoanon* of Orthia at the Spartan Limnaum.[851] While they are both earlier and different in style, the Fortetsa urn images may be similar representations of cult images which do not survive.

There is also scope to expand this research into the post-classical reception of the *Potnia Theron* - this can be seen in examples such as a 3rd century A.D. representation of Kybele with lions from Latium (**Img. 8.1**).[852] Examples of the *Potnia Theron* can also be found in modern art, such as the cover of Hawkwind's 1973 *Space Ritual* album (**Img. 8.2**) by Barney Bubbles (real name Colin Fulcher), where Statia Blake is depicted in the role of a *Potnia Theron,* flanked by a pair of large felines and backed by the band's logo - two opposed hawks. The psychedelic style used for the record sleeve ties the image to the music.[853] It could be argued that the *Potnia Theron* maintains her role as a liminal figure here as an intermediary between the band and the audience. This continuation ultimately asks why the image of women controlling animals this way reappears in such varied but recognisable iterations.



Img.8.2: Hawkwind "Space Ritual" L.P. Cover by Barney Bubbles from the Nik Turner Archive. Showing iconographic parallels to the *Potnia Theron* figure in the placement of the central figure and animal attributes. Turner & Thompson (2016) p.286.

[851] Paus. 3.16.7. Orthia as *xoana*: Wace (1929) p.267; Kolia (2014) 437.
[852] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cybèle_Potnia_theron.jpg accessed 05/07/23; https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/statua-di-cibele/igEajHMl9L3TDQ accessed 05/07/2023.
[853] Clerk (2009) p.133; Ihde (2015) p.11.

This thesis presents a more secure framework for identifying the *Potnia Theron* motif, its related subtypes, and associated identities. Although the detailed discussion of the iconographic elements of the *Potnia Theron* primarily aims to clarify the issues outlined in **Section 1.5,** it also promotes further research into the origin, function, and later reception of the motif.

Bibliography

Ahlberg, G. (1971) Prothesis and Ekphora in Greek Geometric Art (Göteborg).

Akurgal, E. (1966) *The Art of Greece. Its Origins in the Mediterranean and Near East.* (New York).

Al, B. (1944) “Cretan Religion in Relation to Greek Religion.” *Mnemosyne* Vol.12 No.3 p.208-222.

Albenda, P. (2005) "The “Queen of the Night” Plaque: A Revisit." *Journal of the American Oriental Society* Vol.125 No.2 p.171-190.

Ammerman, R. (1991) "The Naked Standing Goddess: A Group of Archaic Terracotta Figurines from Paestum." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.95 No.2 p.203-230.

Amyx, D. & Lawrence, P. (1975) *Archaic Corinthian Pottery and the Anaploga Well.* (Princeton).

Amyx, D. & Lawrence, P. (1996) *Studies in Archaic Corinthian Vase Painting.* (Princeton).

Angell, A. (2017) *Images of Divinities in Functional Objects: A Study of Seventh-Century BCE Perrhanteria in Greek Sanctuary Contexts.* (Austin – thesis) https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/items/d181063b-573e-4043-a81b-40e9640a06f6 accessed 19/02/2024.

Antonaccio, C. (2006) “Religion, basileis and heroes.” S. Deger-Jalkotzy & I. Lemos (eds.) *Ancient Greece: from the Mycenaean Palaces To The Age of Homer* (Edinburgh) p.381-396.

Arnold, B. & Counts, D. (2010) "Prolegomenon: The Many Masks of the Master of Animals” D. Counts & B. Arnold (eds.) *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography.* (Budapest) p.9-24.

Asăndoae, E. R. (2016) "Fantastic Representation on Clazomenian Sarcophagi." V. E. Sîrbu (ed.) *Funerary Practices of the Bronze and Iron Ages in Central and South-Eastern Europe: Proceedings of the 14th International Colloquium of Funerary Archaeology in Čačak, Serbia, 24th – 27th September 2015* (Čačak) p.209-224.

Aston, E. (2011) *Mixanthrôpoi.* (Liége).

Avaramidou, A. (2012) *The Codrus Painter. Iconography and Reception of Athenian Vases in the Age of Pericles.* (London).

Balter, M. (2006) *The Goddess and the Bull.* (Oxon).

Barclay, A. (2013) "Influence, Inspiration or Innovation? The Importance of Contexts in the Study of Iconography: The Case of the Mistress of Animals in 7th-century Greece." F. De Angelis (ed.) *REGIONALISM AND GLOBALISM IN ANTIQUITY Exploring Their Limits* (Leuven) p.143-176.

Barclay, A. (2001) “The Potnia Theron: Adaptation of a Near Eastern Image.” R. Laffineur & R. Hägg (eds.) *Potnia: deities and religion in the Aegean Bronze Age: proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference/8e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Göteborg, Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000.* (Liége & Austin) p.373-86.

Barnett, R. (1948) “Early Greek and Oriental Ivories.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.68 p.1-25.

Barnett, R. (1980) "A Winged Goddess of Wine on an Electrum Plaque." *Anatolian Studies* Vol.30 p.169 – 178.

Barringer, J. (2014) “Hunters and Hunting on the François Vase.” H. A. Shapiro, M. Iozzo, & A. Lezzi-Hafter (eds.) *The François Vase: New Perspectives: Papers of the Intern. Symposium, Villa Spelman, Florence, 23-24 May, 2003* (Zürich) p.154-167.

Barrow, R. (2018) *Gender and the Body in Greek and Roman Sculpture.* (Cambridge).

Beazley, J. (1913) “The Master of the Dutuit Oinochoe.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.33 p.106-10.

Beazley, J. (1986) *The Development of Attic Black Figure.* (Berkeley).

Benko, S. (2004) *The Virgin Goddess. Studies in the Pagan and Christian Roots of Mariology.* (Leiden).

Belcher, E. & Croucher, K. (2017) "Prehistoric Figurines in Anatolia (Turkey)." T. Insoll (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Prehistoric Figures* (Oxford) p.481-508.

Belson, J. (1981) *The Gorgoneion in Greek Architecture.* (Bryn Mawr – Thesis). https://repository.brynmawr.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1143&context=dissertations accessed 19/02/2024.

Benson, J. (1970) *Horse, Bird and Man.* (Amherst).

Berg, W. (1974) "Hecate: Greek or “Anatolian”?" *Numen* Vol.21 No.2 p.128-40.

Berndt-Ersöz, S. (2006) *Phrygian Rock-Cut Shrines.* (Leiden).

Bevan, E. (1986) *Representations of Animals in Sanctuaries of Artemis and Other Olympian Deities (part 1).* (Oxford).

Bevan, E. (1987) “The Goddess Artemis, and the Dedication of Bears in Sanctuaries.” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.82 p.17-21.

Bevan, E. (1988) "Ancient Deities and Tortoise-Representations in Sanctuaries." *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.84 p.1-6.

Bevan, E. (1989) “Water-Birds and the Olympian gods.” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.84 p.163-9.

Blakolmer, F. (2009) “A Pantheon Without Attributes? Goddesses and Gods in Minoan and Mycenaean Iconography.” J. Mylonopoulos (ed.) *Divine Images and Human Imaginations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Leiden) p.21-61.

Blakolmer, F. (2016) “Hierarchy and Symbolism of Animals and Mythical Creatures.” E. E. Alram-Stern (ed.) *Metaphysis. Ritual, Myth and Symbolism in the Aegean Bronze Age.* (Leuven) p.61-68.

Boardman, J. (1970) *Greek Gems and Finger Rings.* (London).

Boardman, J. (1978) *Greek Sculpture. The Archaic Period.* (Oxford).

Boardman, J. (1991) *Athenian Black Figure Vases. A Handbook.* (London).

Boardman, J. (1998) *Early Greek Vase Painting 11th-6th Centuries B.C.* (London).

Boedeker, D. (1983) “Hecate: A Transfunctional Goddess in the Theogony?” *Transactions of the American Philological Association* Vol.113 p.79-93.

Bøgh, B. (2007) "The Phrygian Background of Kybele." *Numen* Vol.54 No.3 p.304-339.

Bonfante, L. (1989) "Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art." *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol.93 No.4 p.543-570.

Bonney, E. (2011) "Disarming the Snake Goddess: A Reconsideration of the Fiance Figurines from the Temple Repositories at Knossos." *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology*, Vol.24 No.2 p.171-190.

Bosana-Kourou, P. (1979) *The Sphinx in Early Archaic Greek Art.* (Oxford - thesis). https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:7909c709-069f-49b6-b7ab-2f9f1ce8b981 accessed 03/02/25.

Boutsikas, E., & Ruggles, C. (2011) "Temples, Stars, and Ritual Landscapes: The Potential for Archaeoastronomy in Ancient Greece." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.115 No.1 p.55-68.

Bouzek, J. (1997) *Greece, Anatolia and Europe: Cultural Interrelations During the Early Iron Age.* (Göteborg).

Braun-Holzinger, E. (2000) "Apotropaic Figures at Mesopotamian Temples." T. Abusch & K. V. Toorn (eds.) *Mesopotamian Magic: Textual, Historical and Interpretative Perspectives* (Leiden) p.149-172.

Braund, D. (2018) *Greek Religion And Cults In The Black Sea Region. Goddesses in the Bosporan Kingdom From the Archaic Period to the Byzantine Era.* (Cambridge).

Breitenberger, B. (2007) *Aphrodite and Eros. The Development of Erotic Mythology in Early Greek Poetry and Cult.* (Oxon).

Buchanan, B. (1971) "A Snake Goddess and Her Companions a Problem in the Iconography of the Early Second Millennium B.C." *Iraq* Vol.33 No.1 p.1-18.

Budin, S. (2002) “Creating a Goddess of sex” D. Bolger & N. Serwint (eds.) *Engendering Aphrodite. Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus.* (Boston) p.315-24.

Budin, S. (2004) *The Ancient Greeks. New Perspectives.* (Oxford).

Budin, S. (2016) *Artemis.* (London).

Burkert, W. (1985) *Greek Religion.* (Oxford).

Burkert, W. (1986) *Homo Necans.* (Berkeley).

Burkert, W. (1988) “Katagōgia – Anagōgia and the Goddess of Knossos.” R. Hägg, N. Marinatos, & G. Nordquist (eds.) *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of the fifth international symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26-29 June, 1986* (Stockholm) p.81-88.

Burkert, W. (1990) "Oriental and Greek Mythology: The Meeting of Parallels." J.Bremmer (ed.) *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London) p.10-40.

Burkert, W. (1992) *The Orientalising Revolution.* (London).

Burn, L. (2003) "Terracottas." T. Smith & D. Plantzos (eds.) *A Companion to Greek Art. Volume 1* (Oxford) p.221-234.

Carpino, A. (2013) “Portraiture.” J. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World* (London & New York) p.1007-1016.

Carter, J. (1987) "The Masks of Orthia." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.91 No.3 p.355-383.

Caskey, M. (1976) "Notes on Relief Pithoi of the Tenon – Boeotian Group." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.80 No.1 p.19-41.

Catling, H., & Robertson, M. (1966). Antique Vases (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford). *The Burlington Magazine* Vol.757 No.108 p.196-201.

Caubet, A. (2002) "Animals in Syro-Palestinian Art." B. Collins (ed.) *A History of the Animal World in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden) p.211-236.

Cavanagh, W., & Mee, C. (1995) "Mourning Before and After the Dark Age." C. Morris (ed.) *Klados: Essays in Honour of J.N. Coldstream* (London) p.45-62.

Chadwick, J. (1957) “Potnia.” *Minos* p.117-19.

Chapin, A. P. (2004) "Power, Privilege, and Landscape in Minoan Art." A. Chapin (ed.) *Charis. Essays in Honour of Sara A. Immerwahr* (Princeton) p.47-64.

Chapin, A. (2010) “Frescoes.” E. H. Cline (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of The Bronze Age Aegean (ca.3000-1000 BC)* (Oxford) p.223-238.

Chiaro, M. (1964) “Classical Vases in the Santa Barbara Museum of Art.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.68 No.2 p.107-112.

Childs, W. (2003) “The Human Animal: The Near East and Greece.” J. Padgett (ed.) *The Centaur’s Smile. The Human Animal in Early Greek Art* (New Haven & London) p.49-73.

Chittenden, J. (1947) “Master of Animals.” *Hesperia* Vol.16 No.2 p.89-114.

Christou, C. (1968) *Potnia theron: Eine Untersuchung über Ursprung, Erscheinungsformen und Wandlungen der Gestalt einer Gottheit.* (Thessaloniki).

Clay, J. (1993) "The Generation of Monsters in Hesiod." *Classical Philology* Vol.88 No.2 p.105-116.

Clerk, C. (2009) *The Saga of Hawkwind.* (London).

Cohen, B. (2006) *The Colours of Clay. Special Techniques in Athenian Vases.* (Los Angeles).

Coldstream, J. (1977) *Deities in Aegean Art before and After the Bronze Age.* (London).

Coldstream, J. (2008) *Greek Geometric Pottery. A Survey of Ten Local Styles and Their Chronology. (Updated Second Edition).* (Bristol).

Coldstream, J. N. (1984) “A Protogeometric Nature Goddess from Knossos.” *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* Vol.31 No.1 p.93-104.

Cole, S. (2007) "Finding Dionysus." D. Ogden (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford) p.327-341.

Collins, B. (2002) “Animals in the Religions of Ancient Anatolia.” B. Collins (ed.) *A History of the Animal World in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden) p.309-334

Cole, S. (2004) *Landscapes, Gender, and Ritual Space.* (Berkeley).

Collon, D. (2007) "The Queen Under Attack - a Rejoinder." *Iraq* Vol.69 p.43-51.

Cook, A. (1894) “Animal Worship in the Mycenaean Age.” *Journal of Hellenistic Studies* Vol.14 p.81-169.

Cook, A. (1940) *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion. Vol. III Part II.* (Cambridge).

Cook, R. M. (1997) *Greek Painted Pottery.* (Oxon).

Cook, R., & Dupont, P. (1998) *East Greek Pottery.* (London).

Cosmopoulos, M. (2014) “Cult, Continuity, and Social Memory: Mycenaean Eleusis and the Transition to the Early Iron Age.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.118 No.3 p.401-27.

Costello, S. (2010) "The Mesopotamian "Nude Hero": Context and Interpretation." D. Counts & B. Arnold (eds.) *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography* (Budapest) p.23-33.

Counts, D. (2010) "Divine Symbols and Royal Aspirations: The Master of Animals in Iron Age Cypriote Religion." D. Counts & B. Arnold, *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography* (Budapest) p.135-150.

Crouwel, J. (1991) "Another Mycenaean Horse–Leader?" *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.86 p.65-68.

Crowley, J. (2010) "The Aegean Master of Animals: The Evidence of the Seal, Signets, and Sealings." D. Counts, & B. Arnold (eds.) *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography.* (Budapest) p.73-91.

Culican, W. (1971) "A Foreign Motif in Etruscan Jewellery." *Papers of the British School at Rome* Vol.39 p.1-12.

D'Albiac, C. (1995) "The 'Diagnostic' Wings of Monsters." C. Morris (ed.) *Klados: Essays in Honour of J.N. Coldstream* (London) p.63-72.

Dawkins, R. M. (1929) "Terracotta Figures." R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.145-162 .

Dawkins, R. M. (1929) "Ivory and Bone." R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.203-248.

Dawkins, R. M. (1929) "Lead Figurines." R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.249-284.

Day, L. (1984) "Dog Burials in the Greek World." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.88 No.1 p.21-32.

DeGrummond, N. T. (2008) "Moon over Pyrgi: Catha, an Etruscan Lunar Goddess?" *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.112 No.3 p.419-28.

De Puma, R. (2000) *The J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu. Etruscan Painted Pottery.* (Malibu).

Dexter, M. (2010) "The Ferocious and the Erotic: "Beautiful" Medusa and the Neolithic Bird and Snake." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Vol.26 No.1 p.25-41.

Dexter, M. (2011) "The Monstrous Goddess: The Degeneration of Ancient Bird and Snake Goddesses into Historic Age Witches and Monsters." *The Journal of Archaeomythology* Vol.7 p.181-202.

Dickens, G. (1929) "Terracotta Masks." R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.163-186.

Dietrich, B. (1962) "Demeter, Erinys, Artemis." *Hermes* Vol.90 No.2 p.129-148.

Dietrich, B. (1965) "Some Eastern Traditions in Greek thought." *Acta Classica* Vol.8 p.11-30.

Dietrich, B. (1967) "Light from the East on Cretan Cult Practice." *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* Vol.16 No.4 p.385-413.

Dietrich, B. (1969) “Peak Cults and Their Place in Minoan Religion.” *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* Vol.10 No.3 p.257-275.

Dietrich, B. (1974) *The Origins of Greek Religion.* (Berlin).

Dillon, M. (2002) *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion.* (London & New York).

Dowden, K. (2007) “Olympian Gods, Olympian Pantheon.” D. Ogden (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford) p.41-55.

Downing, M. (1985) "Prehistoric Goddesses: The Cretan Challenge." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* Vol.1 No.1 p.7-22.

Dubcová, V. (2015) “The Near Eastern “Hero” and “Bull-Man” and Their Impact on the Aegean Bronze Age Iconography.” J. Mynářová, P. Onderka, & P. Pavúk (eds.) *There and Back Again – the Crossroads II Proceedings of an International Conference Held in Prague, September 15–18, 2014* (Prague) p.221-244.

Düring, B. (2011) *The Prehistory of Asia Minor.* (Leiden).

Eason, C. (2008) *Fabulous Creatures, Mythical Monsters, and Animal Power Symbols.* (London).

Edwards (1986) “The Running Maiden from Eleusis and the Early Classical Image of Hekate.' *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.90 No.3 p.307-18.

Elderkin, G. (1939) “The Bee of Artemis.” *The American Journal of Philology* Vol.60 No.2 p.203-213.

Eliopoulos, T. (2018) "The “Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms” today." G. Vavouranakis, K. Kopanias, & C. & Kanellopulos (eds.) *Popular Religion and Ritual in Prehistoic and Ancient Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean.* (Oxford) p.85-97.

Endsjø, D. Ø. (2000) “To lock up Eleusis: A question of Liminal Space.” *Numen* Vol.47 No.4 p.351-386.

Ercan, A. (2013) "From Mother-Goddess to the Pandora’s Box: Glass Ceiling Myth." *European Journal of Research on Education* Vol.2 No.2 p.37-44.

Evans, A. (1901) *The Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult and its Mediterranean Relations.* (London).

Evans, A. (1921) *The Palace of Minos I.* (London).

Evans, A. (1930) *The Palace of Minos Vol.III.* (London).

Evans, A. (1935) *The Palace of Minos at Knossos Vol.IV part 1.* (London).

Faraone, C. (1992) *Talismans and Trojan Horses.* (Oxford).

Farnell, L. (1896) “Hekate’s Cult.” S. Ronan (ed.) *The Goddess Hekate. Studies in Ancient Pagan and Christian Religion and Philosophy. Volume 1.* (Hastings) p.17-35.

Ferrari, G. (1986) "Eye-Cup." *Revue Archéologique* Vol.1 p.5-20.

Finkelberg, M. (2005) *Greeks and Pre-Greeks.* (Cambridge).

Finkelberg, M. (2006) “Ino-Leukothea between East and West.” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* Vol.6 No.1 p.105-121.

Fischer-Hansen, T. & Poulsen, B. (2009) “Introduction.” T. Fischer-Hansen & B. Poulsen (eds.) *From Artemis to Diana. The Goddess of Man and Beast* (Copenhagen) p.11-17.

Fitzhardinge, L. (1980) *The Spartans.* (London).

Flognfeldt, Y. (2019) S*anctuaries and votive offerings from the Early Iron Age.* (Bergen - Thesis.) https://bora.uib.no/bora-xmlui/bitstream/handle/1956/4129/69631870.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y accessed 19/02/2024.

Fontenrose, J. (1980) *Python: A Study of Delphic Myth and Its Origins.* (Berkeley).

Foster, K. (2016) "Animal Hybrids, Masks and Masques in Aegean Ritual." E. E. Alram-Stern (ed.) *Metaphysis. Ritual, Myth and Symbolism in the Aegean Bronze Age* (Leuven) p.69-76.

Frankfort, H. (1937-1939) "The Burney Relief." *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Vol.12 p.128-135.

Frontisi-Ducroux, F. (1989) “In the Mirror of the Mask.” C. E. Bérard (ed.) *A City of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece* (Princeton) p.150-166.

Frothingham, A. (1911) “Medusa, Apollo, and the Great Mother.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.15 No.3 p.349-377.

Fullerton, M. (1986) "The Archaistic Perirrhanteria of Attica." *Hesperia* Vol.55 No.2 p.207-217.

Gadolou, A. (2011) “A Late Geometric Architectural Model With Figure Decoration From Ancient Helike, Achaea.” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.106 p.247-273.

Gaifman, M. (2010) "Aniconism and the Noton of the "primitive" in Greek Antiquity." J. Mylonopoulos (ed.) *Divine Images and Human Imaginations in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Leiden) p.63-86.

Galanakis, K. (1984) "The “Goddess From Beyond The Sea”: Iconographical Analysis And Interpretation Of A Group Of Narrative Scenes Involving Female Divinities In Minoan-Mycenaean Glyptic." *Platon* Vol.65 p.124-30.

Gantz, T. (1996) *Early Greek Myth: A Guide To Literary And Artistic Sources.* (Baltimore).

Gaugnerot-Driessen, F. (2014) "Goddesses Refusing to Appear? Reconsidering the Late Minoan III Figures with Upraised Arms." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.3 p.118.

Gaultier, F. (2013) "Etruscan Jewellery." J. Turfa (ed.) *The Etruscan World* (London & New York) p.914-27.

Gesell, G. C. (2004) "From Knossos to Kavousi: The popularizing of the Minoan palace goddess." *Hesperia Supplements* Vol.33 p.131-150.

Gill, D. & Vickers, M. (2001) "Laconian Lead Figurines: Mineral Extraction and Exchange in the Archaic Mediterranean." *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.96 p.229-236.

Giuliano, L. (2004) "Odysseus and Kirke. Iconography in a Pre-Literate Culture." C. Marconi (ed.) *Greek Vases: Images, Contexts and Controversies* (Leiden) p.85-96.

Goldberg, M. (1982) "Archaic Greek Akroteria." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.86 No.2 No.193-217.

Gordon, A. (1932) "On the Origin of Diana." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* Vol.63 p.177-92.

Grace, F. (1969) *Archaic Sculpture in Boeotia.* (Cambridge).

Greaves, A. (2010) *The Land of Ionia.* (Oxford).

Guggisberg, M. (2010) "The Mistress of Animals, the Master of Animals: Two Complementary or Oppositional Religious Concepts in Early Celtic Art?" D. Counts and B. Arnold (eds.) *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography* (Budapest) p.223-236.

Gunter, A. (2002) "Animals in Anatolian Art." B. Collins (ed.) *History of the Animal World in the Ancient Near East* (Leiden) p.79-96.

Guthrie, W. (1975) "The Religion and Mythology of the Greeks." I. Edwards, C. Gadd, N. Hammond, & E. Sollberger (eds.) *Cambridge Ancient History* (Cambridge) p.851–905.

Halliwell, S. (1986) "Where Three Roads Meet: A Neglected detail in the Oedipus Tyrannus." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.106 p.187-190.

Hard, R. (2004) *The Routledge Handbook of Greek Mythology.* (London).

Harden, A. (2013) *Animals in the Classical World.* (New York).

Harper, P.O. (1984 – 1985) "Ancient Near Eastern Art" *Notable Acquisitions (Metropolitan Museum of Art) No. 1984/1985* p.4.

Harrison, J. (1908) *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion.* (Cambridge).

Hatzaki, E. (2009) "Structured Deposition as Ritual Action at Knossos." *Hesperia Suppliments* Vol.42 p.19-30.

Hatzivassiliou, E. (2013) "Hekate Becomes Skylla." *Bulletin Of The Institute Of Classical Studies* Vol.56 p.1-5.

Havelock, C. (1965) “The Archaic as Survival versus the Archaisitic as a New Style.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.69 No.4 p.331-40.

Hedreen, G. (2007) "Involved Spectatorship in Archaic Greek art." *Art History* Vol.30 No.2 p.217-246.

Hersom, S. (1952) “Fragment of an Archaic Vessel with Stamped Decoration.” *The Journal of the American School of Classics at Athens* Vol.21 No.3 p.275-278.

Hildburgh, W. (1947) "Apotropaism in Greek Vase Paintings (continued)." *Folklore* Vol.58 No.1 p.208-225.

Hinks, R. (1938) "The Master of Animals." *Journal of the Warburg Institute* Vol.1 No.4 p.263-265.

Hjerrild, B. (2009) “Near Eastern equivalent to Artemis.” T. Fisher-Hansen & B. Poulsen (eds.) *From Artemis to Diana. The Goddess of Man and Beast* (Copenhagen) p.41-50.

Hodder, I. (2006) *The Leopard's tale: revealing the mysteries of Çatalhöyük.* (New York).

Hodder, I. (2014) "Probing religion at Çatalhöyük: an interdisciplinary experiment." I. Hodder (ed.) *Religion in the Emergence of Civilization: Çatalhöyük as a Case Study* (Cambridge) p.1-31.

Hodder, I., & Meskell, L. (2014) "The Symbolism of Çatalhöyük in its Regional Context." I. Hodder (ed.) *Religion in the Emergence of Civilization : Çatalhöyük as a Case Study* (Cambridge) p.32-72.

Hoffmann, H. (1964) “Two Unknown Greek Bronzes of the Archaic Period.” *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol.68 No.2 p.185-88.

Homann-Wedeking, E. (1966) *The Art of Archaic Greece.* (New York).

Hopkins, C. (1934) “Assyrian Elements in the Perseus-Gorgon Story.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.38 No.3 p.341-358.

Hopman, M. (2012) *Scylla. Myth, Metaphor, Paradox.* (Cambridge).

Howe, T. (1954) “The Origin and Function of the Gorgon-Head.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.58 No.3 p.209-221.

Hughes, J. (1990) "Artemis: Goddess of Conservation." *Forest and Conservation History* Vol.34 No.4 p.191-7.

Hurwit, J. (1977) "Image and Frame in Greek Art." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.81 No.1 p.1-30.

Hurwit, J. (2006) "Lizards, Lions and the Uncanny in Early Greek Art." *The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* Vol.75 No.1 p.121-36.

Ihde, E. (2015) "Do not panic: Hawkwind, the Cold War and “The Imagination of Disaster”." *Cogent Arts & Humanities* Vol.2 No.1 p.1-15.

Immerwahr, H. (2009) *Corpus of Attic Vase Inscriptions.*(Chapel Hill, N.C.).

Isler-Kerényi, C. (2007) *Dionysos in Archaic Greece: An Understanding through Images.* (Leiden).

Izzet, V. (2011) *The Archaeology of Etruscan Society.* (Cambridge).

Jackson, D. (1976) *East Greek Influence on Attic Vases*. (London).

Jacobsthal, P. (1951) "The Date of the Ephesian Foundation-Deposit." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.71 p.85-95.

Jenkins, I. (2001) "Archaic Kouroi in Naucratis: The Case for Cypriot Origin." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.105 No.2 p.163-179.

Johnson, B. (1981) *Lady of the Beasts. Ancient Images of the Goddess and Her Sacred Animals.* (San Fransisco).

Jones, B. (2001) "The Minoan 'Snake Goddess'. New Interpretations of Her Costume and Identity." R. Laffineur & R. Hägg (eds.) *Potnia. Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age: Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000* (Göteborg) p.259-65.

Kahil, L. (1984) *Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae Vol.II.* (Zürich).

Kantor, H. (1947) "The Aegean and the Orient in the Second Millennium B.C." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.51 No.1 p.1-15+17-103.

Kantor, H. (1962) "A Bronze Plaque with Relief Decoration from Tell Tainat." *The Journal of Near Eastern Studies* Vol.21 No.2 p.93-117.

Karageorghis, V. (2000) *Ancient Art From Cyprus: The Cesnola Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art.* (New York).

Karoglou, K. (2018) *Dangerous Beauty. Medusa in Classical Art.* (New York).

Karouzou, S. (1972) "An Underworld Scene on a Black-Figred Lekythos." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.92 p.64-73.

Koç, B., & Temür, A. (2014) "The Superstitious Mystery behind the Eye: The Symbol of Eye and the Way the Evil Eye Bead is Reflected in Turkish Society from the Ancient History to the Present." *Journal of History* p.11-50.

Kolia, E. (2014) "Archaic Terracotta Reliefs from Ancient Helike." *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* Vol.83 No.3 p.409-445.

Konstantinou, A. (2016) "Hestia and Eos: Mapping Female Mobility and Sexuality in Greek Mythic Thought." *American Journal of Philology* Vol.137 No.1 p.1-24.

Kopaka, K. (2001) "A Day In Potnia's Life. Aspects of Potnia and Reflected "Mistress" activities in the Aegean Bronze Age." R. Laffineur & R. Hägg (eds.) *Potnia. Deities and*

Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age: Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000 (Göteborg) p.15-27.

Korshak, Y. (1987) *Frontal Faces in Attic Vase Painting of the Archaic Period.* (Chicago).

Koursoumis, S. (2014) "Revisiting Mount Taygetos: The Sanctuary of Artemis Liminatis." *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.109 p.191-222.

Krzyszkowska, O. (2005) "Aegean Seals: An Introduction." *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement No.85 Aegean Seals And Introduction (2005), P. IIIA, VI – VI I, IX – XX VII, XXIX – XXX.* p.1-429.

Laffineur, R. (2001) "Seeing is believing: Reflections on Divine Imagery in the Aegean Bronze Age." R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds.) *Potnia : deities and religion in the Aegean Bronze Age : proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference/8e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Göteborg, Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000* (Austin & Léige) p.387-392.

Langdon, S. (1989) "The Return of the Horse-Leader." *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol.93 No.2 p.185-201.

Langdon, S. (2008) *Art and Identity in Dark Age Greece 1100-700 B.C.E.* (Cambridge).

Langdon, S. (2010) "Where the Wild Things Were: The Greek Master of Animals in Ecological Perspective." D. Counts & B. Arnold (eds.) *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography* (Budapest) p.119-134.

Larson, J. (1995) *Greek Heroine Cults.* (Madison).

Larson, J. (2002) *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore.* (Oxford).

Larson, J. (2007) *Ancient Greek Cults. A Guide.* (London & New York).

Lawler, L. (1942) "The Dance of the Holy Birds." *The Classical Journal*, Vol.37 No.6 p.351-61.

Lawler, L. (1946) "The Geranos Dance - A New Interpretation." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol.77 p.112-130 .

Lawler, L. (1947) "A Lion among Ladies (Theocritus II, 66-68)." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol.78 p.88-98.

Lawler, L. (1952) "Dancing Herds of Animals." *The Classical Journal* Vol.47 No.8 p.317-24.

Lebessi, A. (2010) "Hermes as Master of The Lions at Syme Sanctuary, Crete." *British School at Athens Studies* Vol.18 p.195-202.

Lee, M. (2012a) "Dress and Adornment in Archaic and Classical Greece." S. James & S. Dillon (eds.) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Oxford) p.179-90.

Lee, M. (2012b) "Maternity and Miasma. Dress and the transition from Parthenos to Gune." P.B.Salzman-Mitchell & L.H.Petersen (eds.) *Mothering And Motherhood In Ancient Greece And Rome.* (Austin) p.23-42.

Lee, M. M. (2015) *Body, Dress, and Identity in Ancient Greece.* (Cambridge).

Lesure, R. (2011) *Interpreting Ancient Figurines: Context, Comparison, and Prehistoric Art.* (Cambridge).

Levi, D. (1945a) "Early Hellenic Pottery of Crete." *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* Vol.14 No.1 p.1-32.

Levi, D. (1945b) “Gleanings from Crete.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.49 No.3 p.270-329.

Lewis, S., & Llwewllyn-Jones, L. (2018) *The Culture Of Animals In Antiquity. A Sourcebook with Commentaries.* (Oxon).

Llewellyn-Jones, L. (2003) *Aphrodite’s Tortoise. The Veiled Women of Ancient Greece.* (Swansea).

Liddell, H. and Scott, R. (1940) *A Greek-English lexicon.* (Oxford).

Lloyd-Jones, H. (1983) “Artemis and Iphigeneia.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.103 p.87-102.

Lonsdale, S. (1979) "Attitudes towards Animals in Ancient Greece." *Greece and Rome* Vol.26 No.2 p.146-159.

Lupack, S. (2010) “Minoan Religion.” E. Cline (ed.) *The Bronze Age Aegean (ca. 3000-1000 B.C.)* (Oxford) p.251-262.

Mack, R. (2002) “Facing Down Medusa (An Aetiology of The Gaze).” *Art History* Vol.25 No.5 p.571-604.

Manning, C. (1920) “The Tauric Maiden and Allied Cults.” *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* Vol.51 p.40-55

Manoledakis, M. (2012) “Hekate with Apollo and Aremis on a Gem from the Southern Black Sea Region.” *Istanbuler Mitteilungen* Vol.62 p.289-302.

Marinatos, N. (2000) *The Goddess and The Warrior: The Naked Goddess and Mistress Of Animals In Early Greek Religion.* (London & New York).

Markoe, G. (1989) "The “Lion Attack” in Archaic Greek Art: Heroic Triumph." *Classical Antiquity* Vol.8 No.1 p.86-115.

Marquardt, P. (1981) “A Portrait of Hekate.” *American Journal of Philology* Vol.102 No.3 p.243-260 .

Mazet, C. (2017) “La πότνια θηρῶν ou les frontières de l’Autre. Réflexion archéologique sur la signification d'une image homérique en Grèce orientalisante.” *Kentron* Vol.32 p.17-58.

Mazet, C. (2019) “Rhodian Orientalizing Jewellery in 19th Century Collecting Europe.” S. Schierup (ed.) *Documenting Ancient Rhodes: Archaeological Expeditions and Rhodian Antiquities* (Aarhus) p.133-144.

Mayor, A. (2014) *The Amazons. Lives And Legends Of Warrior Women Across The Ancient World.* (Princeton).

Meece, S. (2006) "A Bird’s Eye View — of a Leopard’s Spots: The Çatalhöyük ‘Maps’ and the Development of Cartographic Representation in Prehistory." *Anatolian Studies* Vol.56 p.1-16.

Mellaart, J. (1978) *The Archaeology of Ancient Turkey.* (London).

Mertens, J. (2002) “An Early Bronze Spinx Support.” *Metropolitan Museum Journal* Vol.37 p.23-33.

Meskell, L. (2007) "Refiguring the Corpus at Catalhöyük." C. Renfrew & I. Morley (eds.) *Material Beginnings: A Global Prehistory of Figurative Representation.* (Cambridge) p.143-156.

Mitten, D. (1962-1963) “A Gorgon at the Fogg.” *Acquisitions (Fogg Art Museum)*. p.11-16.

Moore, D. (2018) "The Etruscan Goddess Catha." *Etruscan Studies* Vol.21 No.1-2 p.58-77.

Morford, M., & Lenardon, R. (1985) *Classical Mythology.* (New York and London).

Morgan, L. (1995) "Of Animals and Men: The Symbolic Parallel." C. Morris (ed.) *Klados: Essays in Honour of J.N. Coldstream.* (London) p.171-184.

Morris, C. (2017) "Minoan and Mycenaean Figurines." T. Insoll (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Prehistoric Figures* (Oxford) p.701-718.

Murray, O. (1980) *Early Greece.* (Brighton).

Murray, S. (2004) "Reconsidering the Room of the Ladies at Akrotiri." A. Chapin (ed.) *Charis. Essays in Honour of Sara A. Immerwahr* (Princeton) p.101-130.

Neer, R. (2012) *Art and Archaeology of the Greek World.* (London).

Neils, J. (2013) “Age, Gender and Social Identity.” T. Smith & D. Plantzos (eds.) *A Companion to Greek Art. Volume 2.* (Oxford) p.498-509.

Neumann, E. (1963) *The Great Mother. An Analysis of the Archetype.* (New York).

Nikolaïdou, M. (2002) “Looking for Minoan and Mycenaean Women: Parts of Feminist Scholarship Towards the Aegean Bronze Age.” S. James & S. Dillon (eds.) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Oxford) p.38-53.

Nilsson, M. (1923) “Fire-Festivals in Ancient Greece.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.43 No.2 p.144- 148.

Nilsson, M. (1949) *A History of Greek Religion.* (Oxford).

Nilsson, M. (1950) *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion.* (Lund).

Noegel, S. (2007) “Greek Religion and the Ancient Near East.” D. Ogden (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford) p.21-88.

Norris, S. (2003) “Development of the Triangular Pediment Space in Archaic Greek Temples.” *Explorations: An Undergraduate Research Journal* p.65-75.

Nosch, M. (2009) “Approaches to Artemis in Bronze Age Greece.” T. Fischer-Hansen & B. Poulsen (eds.) *From Artemis to Diana. The Goddess of Man and Beast.* (Copenhagen) p.21-39.

Ogden, D. (2008) *Perseus.* (London).

Ogden, D. (2013) *Drakōn: Dragon Myth and Serpent cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds.* (Oxford).

Osbourne, R. (1996) *Greece in the Making 1200-479 B.C.* (London).

Osbourne, R. (1998) *Archaic and Classical Greek Art.* (Oxford).

Padgett, J. (2003) "Horse Men: Centaurs and Satyrs in Early Greek Art." J. Padgett (ed.) *The Centaur’s Smile. The Human Animal in Early Greek Art* (New Haven & London) p.3-48.

Page, D. (1951) *Alcman. The Partheneion.* (Oxford).

Pala, E. (2010) “Aphrodite on the Akropolis.” A. C. Smith & S. Pickup (eds.) *Brill’s Companion to Aphrodite* (Leiden) p.195-216.

Palagia, O. (2013) "Architectural sculpture." T. Smith & D. Plantzos (eds.) *A Companion to Greek Art. Volume 1.* (Oxford) p.153-170.

Panagiotaki, M. (1991) *The Central Palace Sanctuary at Knossos* (London - PhD Thesis). https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/10121538/ accessed 03/02/2025.

Papadopoulou, C. (2010) “Aphrodite and the Fleet in Classical Athens.” A. C. Smith & S. Pickup (eds.) *Brill’s Companion to Aphrodite* (Leiden) p.217-34.

Paspalas, S. (2013) “Greek Decorated Pottery II: Regions and Workshops.” T. Smith & D. Plantzos (eds.) *A Companion to Greek Art. Volume 1.* (Oxford) p.62-104.

Payne, H. (1931) *Necrocorinthia. A study of Corinthian Art in the Archaic Period.* (Oxford).

Penglase, C. (2005) *Greek Myths and Mesopotamia.* (London & New York).

Persson, A. (1942) *The Religion of Greece in Prehistoric Times.* (Berkeley).

Pfaff, C. (2003) “Archaic Corinthian Architecture, ca. 600 to 480 B.C.” *Corinth* Vol.20 p.95-140

Pieraccini, L. (2016) "Sacred Serpent Symbols: The Bearded Snakes of Etruria." *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* Vol.10 p.92–102.

Pinney, M. (1925) "Votive Gifts to Artemis Orthia." *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol.20 No.6 p.157-159.

Pipili, M. (1998) “Archaic Lakonian vase-painting: some iconographic considerations.” S. Walker & W. G. Cavanagh (eds.) *British School at Athens Studies Vol.4, SPARTA IN LACONIA: Proceedings of the 19th British Museum Classical Colloquium held with the British School at Athens and King’s and University Colleges, London 6-8th December 1995 (1998)* (London) p.82-96.

Pirenne-Delforge, V. (2010) “Flourishing Aphrodite: An Overview.” A. C. Smith & S. Pickup (eds.) *Brill’s Companion to Aphrodite* (Leiden) p.3-16.

Pomeroy, S. (2002) *Spartan Women.* (Oxford).

Pomeroy, S. (1999) *Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History.* (New York).

Posthumus, L. (2011) *Hybrid Monsters in the Classical World. The Nature and Function of Hybrid Monsters in Greek Mythology, Literature and Art.* (Stellenbosch - MAThesis). https://scholar.sun.ac.za/items/55af013c-7239-42c8-8cd0-003bb05161a8 accessed 03/02/2025.

Prent, M. (2005) *Cretan Sanctuaries and Cults. Continuity and Change from Late Minoan IIIC to the Archaic Period.* (Leiden).

Prent, M. (2009) "The Survival of the Goddess with Upraised Arms: Early Iron Age Representations and Contexts." *Hesperia Suppliments, Vol.42: Essays on Ritual and Cult in Honour of Geraldine C. Gesell.* p.231-238.

Prent, M. (2014) “Ritual and Ideology in Early Iron Age Crete: The Role of the Past and the East.” A. B. Knapp, & P. Dommelen (eds.) *The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean.* (Cambridge) p.650-664.

Purvis, A. (2003) *Singular Dedications – Founders and Innovators of Private Cults in Classical Greece.* (London).

Reed, N. (1976) "Griffins in Post-Minoan Cretan Art." *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* Vol.45 No.4 p.365-79.

Rehak, P. (2004) “Crocus Costumes in Aegean Art.” A.P. Chapin (ed.) *Essays in Honor of Sara A. Immerwahr* (Hesperia Supplement 33) (Princeton NJ) p.85–100.

Rehak, P. (2007) “Children’s Work: Girls as Acolytes in Aegean Ritual and Cult.” A. Cohen and J.B. Ruttre (eds.) *Constructions of Childhood in Ancient Greece and Italy* (Hesperia Suppliment 41) (Princeton NJ) p.205-227.

Rehak, P., & Younger, J. (1998) “Review of Aegean Prehistory VII: Neopalatial, Final Palatial and Postpalatial Crete.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.102 No.1 p.91-173.

Reitler, R. (1949) "A Theriomorphic Representation of Hekate-Artemis." *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.53 No.1 p.29-31.

Richardson, E. (1962) "The Recurrent Geometric in the Sculpture of Central Italy and Its Bearing on the Problem of the Origin of the Etruscans." *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* Vol.27 p.153-199.

Richer, N. (2007) “Religious System at Sparta.” D. Ogden (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford) p.236-252.

Richter, G. (1987) *A Handbook of Greek Art.* (Oxford).

Rigoglioso, M. (2009) *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece.* (New York).

Rigoglioso, M. (2010) *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity.* (New York).

Robertson, N. (1982) “Hittite Ritual at Sardis.” *Classical Antiquity* Vol.1 No.1 p.122-40.

Rogers, G. (2012) *The Mysteries of Artemis of Ephesus.* (New Haven and London).

Roller, L. (1991) "The Great Mother at Gordion: The Hellenization of an Anatolian Cult." *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*. Vol.111 p.128-43.

Roller, L. (1999) *In Search of God the Mother.* (Berkeley).

Roller, L. (2011) “Phrygian and the Phrygians.” S. Steadman & J. McMahon (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Ancient Anatolia* (Oxford) p.560-578.

Romano, I. (1988) “Early Greek Cult Images and Cult Practices.” R. Hägg, N. Marinatos, & G. Nordquist (eds.), *Early Greek Cult Practice: Proceedings of The Fifth International Symposium at the Swedish Institute at Athens, 26-29 June, 1986* (Stockholm) p.127-134.

Rose, H. (1929) “Cult of Orthia.” R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.399-408.

Rosenberg, J. (2015) “The Masks of Orthia: Form, Function and the Origins of Theatre.” *The Annual of the British School at Athens*, Vol.110 No.1 p.247-261.

Roscoe, W. (1996) "Priests of the Goddess: Gender Transgression in Ancient Religion." *History of Religions*. Vol.35 No.3 p.195-230.

Rousioti, D. (2000) "Did The Mycenaeans Believe in Theriomorphic Divinities?" R. Laffineur & R. Hägg (eds.) *"Potnia. Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age" Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000* (Göteborg) p.305-314.

Rutherford, I. (2013) "Mycenaean Religion." M. Salzman (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Religions in the Ancient World* (Cambridge) p.256-279.

Sabetai, V. (2001) *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum. Greece. Thebes Archaeological Museum.* (Athens).

Sakellarakis, J.A. (1984) *Herakleion Museum: Illustrated Guide to the Museum* (Athens).

Salapata, G. (2009) “Female Triads on Laconian Terracotta Plaques.” *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.104 p.325-340.

Schachter, A. (1994) *Cults of Boeotia 3. Potnia to Zeus. Cults of Deities Unspecified by Name.* (London).

Schefold, K. (1966) *Myth and Legend in Early Greek Art.* (London).

Schefold, K. (1992) *Gods and Heroes in Late Archaic Greek Art.* (Cambrdge).

Schuhmann, K. (2009) *Die Schöne und die Biester. Die Herrin der Tiere im bronzezeitlichen undfrüheisenzeitlichen Griechenland.* (Heidelberg).

Scott, W. (1974) *The Oral Nature Of The Homeric Simile.* (Leiden).

Seaford, R. (1988) “The Eleventh Ode of Bacchylides: Hera, Artemis, and the Absence of Dionysos.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.108 p.118-136.

Seaford, R. (2006) *Dionysos.* (London).

Segal, C. (1986) “Greek Myth As A Semiotic And Structural System And The Problem Of Tragedy.” *Arethusa* Vol.16 No.1/2 p.173-198.

Serfontein, S. (1991) *Medusa: From Beast to Beauty in Archaic and Classical Illustrations from Greece and Italy.* (New York).

Sergis, M. (2010) ”Dog Sacrifice in Ancient and Modern Greece: From the Sacrifice Ritual to Dog Torture (kynomartyrion).” *Folklore: Electronic Journal of Folklore* Vol.45 p.61-88.

Serwint, N. (2002) "Aphrodite and her Near Eastern Sisters: Spheres of Influence." D. Bolger & N. Serwint (eds.) *Engendering Aphrodite. Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus.* (Boston) p.325-50.

Simantoni-Bournia, E. (2017) “On Women and Lions.” X. Charalambidou & C. Morgan (eds.) *Interpreting the Seventh Century BC.Tradition and Innovation* (Oxford) p.31-34.

Simon, E. (2006) "Gods in Harmony. The Etruscan Pantheon." N. T. de Grummond & E. Simon (eds.) *The Religion of the Etruscans* (Austin) p.45-65.

Simons, E. (2014) *A Gripping tail. Re-interpreting the Archaic Potnia Theron schema.* (Wellington-thesis.) https://openaccess.wgtn.ac.nz/articles/thesis/A_Gripping_Tail_Re-interpreting_the_Archaic_Potnia_Theron_Schema/17008168/1 accessed 19/02/2024.

Skinner-La Porte, M. (2010) “Snakes on a Mane: Medusa, the Body and Serpentine Monstrosity.” J. Allan and E. Nelson (eds.) *Inversions of Power and Paradox* (Oxford) p.1-12.

Smardz, K. (1979) *The Sacred Tree in Ancient Greek Religion.* (Ontario - thesis) https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/handle/11375/9198 accessed 19/02/2024.

Smith, C. (1884) ”Four Archaic Vases from Rhodes.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* Vol.5 p.220-240.

Sommerstein, A. (1996) *Frogs.* (Warminster).

Sørensen, L. (2002) "Cypriot Women of the Archaic Period: Evidence from Sculpture." D. Bolger & N. Serwint (eds.) *Engendering Aphrodite. Women and Society in Ancient Cyprus.* (Boston) p.121-132.

Sourvinou, C. (1970) “A-TE-MI-TO AND A-TI-MI-TE.” *Kadmos* Vol.9 No.1 p.42-47.

Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1990) “Myth as History: The Previous Owners of the Delphic Oracle.” J.Bremmer (ed.) *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London) p.215-241.

Sourvinou-Inwood, C. (1998) “Artemis.” S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (eds.) *The Oxford Companion to Classical Civilization* (Oxford) p.83-4.

Spier, J. B. (1988) *Minor Arts and Regional Styles in East Greece 700 – 500 BC.* (Oxford – thesis). https://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:76ecad5c-367b-4ea2-9f5d-ec248ddd1b31/files/m804411647ac1a6c1e63997153a7b9938 accessed 19/02/2024.

Starr, C. (1961) *The Origins of Greek Civilisation 1100-650 B.C.* (London).

Stehle, E. (2012) “Women and Religion in Greece.” S. James & S. Dillon (eds.) *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World* (Oxford) p.191-203.

Stillwell, A. (1952) “The Potters’ Quarter: The Terracottas.” *Corinth* Vol.15 No.2 p.3-300.

Strauss Clay, J. (2009) *Hesiod’s Cosmos.* (Cambridge).

Studniczka, F. (1890) *Kyrene. Eine Altgrieohische Göttin.* (Leipzig).

Szakolczai, A. (2009) “Liminality and experience: Structuring transitory situations and transformative events.” *International Political Anthropology* Vol.2 No.1 p.141-172.

Thomas, C. (2009) "The Mediterranean World in the Early Iron Age." K. Raaflaub & H. Van Wees (eds.) *A Companion to Archaic Greece* (Chichester) p.22-40.

Thomas, C. (2009) "The Mediterranean World in the Early Iron Age." K. Raaflaub & H. Van Wees (eds.) *A Companion to Archaic Greece* (Chichester) p.22-40.

Thomas, C., & Wedde, T. (2001) “Desperately Seeking Potnia.” R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds.) *"Potnia. Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age" Proceedings of the 8th International Aegean Conference Göteborg University, 12-15 April 2000* (Göteborg) p.3-14.

Thomas, N. (2014) "A Lion's Eye View of the Greek Bronze Age." T. Gilles, R. Laffineur, & F. Rougemont (eds.) *Physis: l'environnement naturel et la relation homme-milieu dans le monde égéen protohistorique. Actes de la 14e Rencontre égéenne internationale, Paris, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art (INHA), 11-14 décembre 2012, Aegaeum 37.* (Leuven & Liege) p.375-389.

Thompson, M. (1909) “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*. Vol.29 p.286-307.

Todd, I. (1976) *Çatal Huyük in Perspective.* (Menlo Park).

Topper, K. (2010) “Maidens, Fillies and the Death of Medusa on a Seventh-Century Pithos.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*. Vol.130 p.109-119.

Treister, M. (2005) “Archaic Bronzes. Greece – Asia Minor – North Pontic Area.” S. Solovyov (ed.) *Archaic Greek Culture: History, Archaeology, Art & Museology Proceedings of the International Round-Table Conference June 2005, St-Petersburg, Russia* (St. Petersburg) p.109-120.

Turner, L. (1998) “New Daedalics: a figured lead pendant from the Kastro at Kavousi.” *British School at Athens Studies*. Vol.2 p.69-74.

Turner, N. & Thompson, D. (2016) *The Spirit of Hawkwind.* (Los Angeles).

Tsiafakis, D. (2003) ""Pelora": Fabulous Creatures And/Or Demons Of Death?" J. Padgett (ed.) *The Centaur’s Smile. The Human Animal in Early Greek Art* (New Haven & London) p.73–104.

Tzedakis, Y. (1967) "A Minoan ‘Goddess’ Idol from Sakhtouria." *The Annual of the British School at Athens* Vol.62 p.203-205.

Ulbrich, A. (2010) “Images of Cypriot Aphrodite In Her Sanctuaries During the Age Of City Kingdoms.” A. C. Smith & S. Pickup (eds.) *Brill’s Companion to Aphrodite* (Leiden) p.167-94.

Van Wijngaarden, G. J. (2002) *Use and Appreciation of Mycenaean Pottery in the Levant, Cyprus and Italy: (ca. 1600-1200 BC).* (Amsterdam).

Vassileva, M. (2005) "The Belt of the Goddess: Phrygian Tombs Versus Greek sanctuaries." K. Rabadzhiev, M. Milcheva, & L. Getov (eds.) *Stephanos Archaeologicos In Honorem Professoris Ludmili Getov* (Sofia) p.91-101.

Ventris, M., & Chadwick, J. (1973) *Documents in Mycenaean Greek (Second Edition).* (Cambridge).

Vernant, J. (1991)a. "Death in the Eyes: Gorgo, Figure of the Other." F. Zeitlin (ed.) *Mortals and Immortals. Collected Essays J.P. Vernant.* (Oxford) p.111-38.

Vernant, J. (1991)b. "From the "Presentification" of the Invisible to the Imitation of Appearance." F. Zeitlin (ed.) *Mortals and Immortals: Collected essays* (Oxford) p.151-164.

Vlachopoulos, A. (2008) "The Wall Paintings from the Xeste 3 Building at Akrotiri: Towards an Interpretation of the Iconographic Programme." N. Brodie, J. Doole, G. Gavalas, C. Renfrew.(eds) *Ορίζων / Horizon. a Colloquium on the Prehistory of the Cyclades* (Cambridge) p.491-505.

Von Bothmer, D. (1985) *The Amasis Painter and His World.* (New York and London).

Wace, J. (1929) “Lead Figurines.” R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.249-84.

Wace, A.J.B. (1934) “The Veil of Despoina” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.38 No.1 p.107-111.

Waldstein, C., & Hoppin, J. (1898) “Terra-Cotta Reliefs from the Argive Heraeum.” *American Journal of Archaeology,* Vol.2 No.3/4, p.173-86.

Waites, M. (1929) ”The Deities of the Sacred Axe.” *American Journal of Archaeology* Vol.27 No.1 pp.25-56.

Walker, K. G. (2004) *Archaic Eretria: a political and social history from the earliest times to 490 BC.* (London).

Walters, H. (1905) *History of Ancient Pottery.* (New York).

Warr, C. (1895) "The Hesiod Hecate." *The Classical Review* Vol.9 No.8 p.390-393.

Waugh, N. (2012) “Contextual Iconography. The Horses of Artemis Orthia.” V. Coltman (ed.) *Making Sense of Greek Art* (Exeter) p.1-21.

Wengrow, D. (2014) *The Origins of Monsters. Image and Cognition in the First Age of Mechanical Reproduction.* (Oxford).

West, D. (1990) *Some Cults of Greek Goddesses and Female Daemons of Oriental Origin.* (Glasgow – thesis). https://theses.gla.ac.uk/1263/ accessed 19/02/2024.

West, M. (1985) “Hesiod’s Titans.” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies,* Vol.105 p.174-5.

West, M. (1997) *The East Face of Helicon : West Asiatic Elements in Greek Poetry and Myth.* (London).

Wilk, S. (2000) *Medusa: solving the Mystery of the Gorgon.* (Oxford).

Willetts, R. (1958) “Cretan Eileithyia.” *The Classical Quarterly*, Vol.8 No.3/4 p.221-223.

Wilson, L. (1920) "Contributions of Greek Art to the Medusa Myth." *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol.23 No.3 p.232-240.

Wiman, I. (2013) "Etruscan environments." J. M. Turfa (ed.) The Etruscan World (Oxon) p.11-28

Winbladh, M. (2012) *The Bearded Goddess. Androgens, Goddesses And Ancient Monsters In Ancient Cyprus.* (Nicosia).

Wittkower, R. (1939) "Eagle and Serpent. A Study in the Migration of Symbols." *Journal of the Warburg Institute* Vol.2 No.4 p.293-325.

Wolff, T. S. (2021) “Mistress of the Fantastic: Hybridity and Monstrosity of the Πότνια Θηρῶν” S. Béthume & P. Tomassini (eds.) *Fantastic Beasts in Antiquity. Looking For the Monster, Discovering the Human.* (Louvain-la-Neuve) p.123-140

Woodward, A. (1929) “Inscriptions.” R. M. Dawkins (ed.) *The Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta* (London) p.285-377.

York, H. & Schlossman, B. (1981) ""She Shall Be Called Woman": Ancient Near Eastern Sources of Imagery." *Women's Art Journal* Vol.2 No.2 p.37-41.

Younger, J. (2009) ""We Are Woman": Girl, Maiden, Matron in Aegean Art.” K. Kopeck (ed.) *Engendering Prehistoric 'Stratigraphies' in the Aegean and Mediterranean. Proceedings of an International Conference University of Crete, Rethymno 2-5 June 2005* (Liège and Austin) p.207-12.

Zeitlin, F. (1995) “Signifying difference: the myth of Pandora.” R. Hawley & B. Levick (eds.) *Women in antiquity: new assessments* (London & New York) p.58-70.

Zolotnikova, O. (2017) “Becoming Classical Artemis: A Glimpse at the Evolution of the Goddess as Traced in Ancient Arcadia.” *Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Vol.6 No.5 p.8-20.

Zolotnikova, O. (2016) "A Hideous Monster Or A Beautiful Maiden? Did The Western Greeks Alter The Concept Of Gorgon?" H. Reid, & D. Tanasi (eds.) *Philosopher Kings and Tragic Heroes* (Fonte Aretusa) p.352-70.

Zouzoula, E. (2007) *The Fantastic Creatures of Bronze Age Crete.* (PhD Thesis - Nottingham). https://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/11787/1/438382_VOL1.pdf accessed 03/02.2025.

Image Catalogue



Figure 1: Terracotta antefix, Etruscan, 6th century. (Simon (2006) p.49) image. Identified as Usil, a Mistress of Horses (Simon (2006) p.49). Central figure shown frontally, holding two standing, winged horses by their necks. Central figure wears short dress with legs and feet.



Figure 2: Limestone metope, Sicily, mid-6th century.(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:DSC00401_-_Tempio_C_di_Selinunte_-_Perseo_e_Medusa_-_Sec._VI_a.C._-_Foto_G._Dall%27Orto_crop.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Decapitation of Medusa by Perseus with Athena observing. Medusa shown kneeling, holding small, winged horse, identifiable as Pegasus under right arm. She wears a short dress with legs and feet uncovered. Face is shown frontally with large eyes and wide, open mouth.





Figure 3: Terracotta antefix, Syracuse, Sicily, ca.620-10. (Marinatos (2000) p.52) drawing (Schefold (1966) p.55) image. Antefix depicting gorgon in *knielauf* pose wearing short *chiton*, holding small, winged horse, identifiable as Pegasus under left arm (Wilk (2000) p.38).



Figure 4: Antefix, Capua, 6th century. (https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/gorgoneionrelief-170653 accessed 12/03/2025) image. No date given in source, dated by comparison.
Gorgoneion shown frontally with decorative motifs - palmettes and arches behind head. Above are sheep and feet directly above gorgoneion.



Figure 5: Gorgon antefix, Capua, 6th century. (https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/gorgoneion-relief-172033 accessed 12/03/2025) image. No date given in source, dated by comparison. Gorgoneia shown frontally with open mouth and long hair. Lions shown reclining above, with what may be column base.



Figure 6: Gorgon antefix, Capua, 6th century. (https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/gorgoneion-relief-172035 accessed 12/03/2025) image. No date given in source, dated by comparison. Gorgoneia shown frontally with open mouth and long hair. Lions shown reclining above, with what may be column base. Damage to upper right corner, most of lion is missing.



Figure 7: Terracotta antefix, Campania, ca.500-480. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=463577&partId=1&searchText=artemis&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 26/05/2019) left image (LIMC Artumes 10a https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/ySdGEZyuXT2NxuXnVtIA1gK.20160506T000024 Z accessed 12/03/2025). Figure identified as Artemis or Artumes (LIMC Artumes 10a) fragmentary, missing head and most of wings, holding two lions. Central figure wears long dress, feet appear to have been uncovered. Hair worn long in braids.



Figure 8: Antefix, Taranto, late 6th or early 5th century. (LIMC Gorgo 67b https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/6tTdykCuWQCR_P3318EDzgD.20160506T00230 5Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Antefix showing frontal gorgon face surrounded by snakes.
Gorgoneion shown with exaggerated features including protruding tusks, and earrings.



Figure 9: Antefix, East Greece, ca.550. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Prague_Kinsky,_UKA_60-26,_140799.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image. Clay antefix showing gorgon holding snakes. Gorgon shown frontally with arms raised - upper part of dress shown with bands or bracelets around wrists. Face shows exaggerated features with tusks, protruding tongue and lines over nose and forehead. Gorgon wears earrings and row of four snakes on top of head. Two more snakes held in hands. Two snakes emerge from chin and curve around front of shoulders.



Figure 10: Alabastron, Tocra, Early Corinthianising period. (Boardman (1998) p.190) image. Alabastron by Taucheira painter showing female figure wearing long dress and *polos* holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Fill motifs include rosettes.



Figure 11: Alabastron, Corinth, ca. 640-625. (https://www.photo.rmn.fr/archive/09-5762192C6NU0KR6A98.html accessed 10/03/2025) image. Corinthian polychrome Aryballos showing standing winged female figure holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure wears long dress and band or fillet in her hair. Fill motifs include small rosettes.



Figure 12: Alabastron, Corinth, ca.550. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?assetId=141662001&objectId=406402&partId=1 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Alabastron from Corinth showing winged female figure holding long-necked water birds, both facing left. Central figure wears long dress with bands crossing over the chest, she also has a band or fillet in her hair. Fill motifs are large and small rosettes.



Figure 13: Alabastron, Corinth, ca.625-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=399334&partId=1&searchText=gorgon&from=bc&fromDate=900&to=bc&toDate =500&page=1 accessed 10/03/2025) image. alabastron showing winged gorgon in *knielauf* position with long-necked water bird. Central figure appears frontally, wearing short *chiton*. Fill motifs include rosettes.



Figure 14: Alabastron, Corinth, Early Corinthian period. (Boardman (1998) p.191) image. Alabastron by the Taucheira painter (Amyx (1988) p.41). Winged female figure shown holding pair of long-necked water birds - identified as swans (Simons (2014) p.61). Central figure wears long dress with patterned skirt, head appears to be uncovered but uncertain due to damage. Fill motifs include large and small rosettes.



Figure 15: Alabastron, Delos, ca.620-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Delos_M_0502297.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Polychrome alabastron from Delos showing winged female figure holding longnecked water birds. Central figure wears long dress with horizontal banded skirt and *polos* - may also have two sets of wings (only visible on right side). Fill motifs include large and small rosettes.



Figure 16: Alabastron, Corinthian, ca. 620–590. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Terracotta_alabastron_(perfume_vase)_MET_DP 119945.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Alabastron showing winged female figure holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure shown wearing tall *polos* and tightly belted long dress with vertical decoration on skirt. Fill motifs are wheel-like crossed circles. See also: LIMC Potnia 15



Figure 17: Alabastron, Corinth, ca.630-615 (Bosana-Kourou (1974) pl.87b) image.
Alabastron from Corinth showing Sphinx wearing *polos* with snake. Showing sphinx in *Potnia Theron*like role, posed with snake which appears to stand vertically. Sphinx shown in profile, wearing *polos*. Fill motifs include dotted crosses.



Figure 18: Terracotta alabastron, East Greek, mid-6th Century. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/253050 accessed 10/03/2025) image.
Double-sided Greek alabastra showing standing female figure holding a small bird, identified as a dove. Figure is janiform, both sides appear to be identical, wearing long dress with feet uncovered. Opening may be intended to resemble *polos* or similar head covering.



Figure 19: Polychrome Alabastron, Corinth, Early Corinthian period. (https://maacollections.missouri.edu/ArgusNET/Portal.aspx?lang=en-US accessed 10/03/2025) image. Winged female figure shown holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure shown wearing long dress with horizontal bands of decoration on skirt, appears to wear *polos* in red. Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 20: Alabastron, Corinth, third quarter of 7th century. (https://art.thewalters.org/detail/35219/transitional-corinthian-alabastron-vase/ accessed 10/03/2025) image. Winged female figure shown in profile, holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Appears to wear small *polos* with band around head, dressed in long dress with horizontal bands of decoration on skirt.



Figure 21: Polychrome Alabastron, Corinth, ca.630-620. (https://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/69259 10/03/2025) image. Winged female figure holding long-necked water birds. Central figure wears *polos* with band around head, dressed in long dress with horizontal bands of decoration. Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 22: Alabastron, Corinth, ca. 620-590. (https://www.penn.museum/collections/object/89128 accessed 10/03/2025) images. Polychrome frontal gorgoneion with long teeth and shell-like curls. Framed between two sphinxes on alabastron neck. Sphinxes shown in profile wearing *poloi.* Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 23: Figure Alabastron, Etruria, ca.570-560.
(https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010267799 accessed 10/03/2025) image.
Alabastron in the form of female figure holding a small bird. Figure appears to be wearing long dress - base is rounded so no feet are shown. Head is covered with veil, opening of vase may be intended to resemble *polos*.



Figure 24: Alabastron, Corinth, Ca.640-625.
(https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010254949 accessed 10/03/2025) image.
Alabastron likely to be from Corinth (on comparison in style to other alabastra e.g., Figs.1017, 18-22) showing winged female figure holding pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure shown wearing long dress with horizontal bands of decoration on skirt, also wears band or fillet in hair. Fill motifs are small rosettes.



Figure 25: Alabastron, Kythnos, ca.640-625. (Mazet (2017) p. 52 fig.3) image. Alabastron from Kythnos (possibly from sanctuary of Artemis) showing what appears to be standing figure which may be winged, either side of the figure are long-necked water birds. Difficult to discern details due to damage - figure appears to wear *polos* and long dress.



Figure 26: Alabastron, Corinth, ca.600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wilan%C3%B3w_Painter_Potnia_Theron.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Corinthian alabastron with upper register showing winged female figure holding long-necked water birds. Central figure shown wearing long dress, feet appear to be uncovered. Densely packed fill motifs including rosettes. Lower register includes two figures identified as padded dancers.



Figure 27: Amphora, Thebes, 7th Century. (Dubhros (2019)p.350) left image; (https://www.namuseum.gr/en/collection/archaiki-periodos-2/ accessed 10/03/2025) right image. Large Boeotian amphora depicting a standing female figure, appearing to have wings in place of arms (Budin (2016) p.52). Her face is pointed, giving it a heart or beak-like shape (heart-shaped face: Grace (1969) p.12). Figure is flanked by lions and long-necked water birds (Coldstream, 2008 p.208; Thomas & Wedde (2000) p.9) and a fish appears on the front of her dress (Harrison (1908) p.266). Above is a band of water birds. Either side of figured panel is snake-like motif. Opposite panel of Amphora depicts water bird (Benton (1961) p.53).



Figure 28: Amphora, Melos, second half of 7th century. (Mazet (2017) p.55 img.1) left image; (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Large_Cycladic_krater_(7th_cent._B.C.)_in_the_National_Archaeological_Museum_on_21_June_2018.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) right image. (image). Amphora body panel showing scene of Artemis holding a deer by the antlers as she greets Apollo (Boardman (1998) p.128; Studniczka (1890) p.34). Artemis waers a long dress and carries a bow and quiver of arrows. Fill motifs include dotted crosses, swastikas, palmettes and rosettes. Panel above shows combat scene of two warriors with shields (Schefold (1966) pl.10).



Figure 29: Amphora, Melos, ca. 670-660. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis_on_amphora_of_Naxos,_Delos,_700675_BC,_AM_Mykonos,_IA_401,_177226.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Female figure in profile holding two lions by their rear legs, with decorative antennae on her head (Simons (2014) p.96). Central figure wears long dress with patterned skirt. Fill motifs are dotted crosses.



Figure 30: Relief Amphora, Prinias, Archaic period. (Levi (1945a) pl. XXXII) image. Low relief carving depicting winged female figure holding two horses which stand on their hind legs, facing her and resting front legs on triangular stands. Central figure appears to wear long dress - head appears to be missing due to damage.



Figure 31: Amphora, Eretria, middle Euboean period. (Boardman (1998) p.234) image. Amphora depicting winged female figure facing right, holding lion and long-necked waterbird. Female figure identified as goddess, wears long belted dress with feet and head uncovered. Figure to the right of this identified as Aristaios.



Figure 32: Chalcidian neck amphora, Vulci, Archaic Period. (Boardman (1998) p.236) image.
Amphora painting depicting female figure surrounded by snakes standing behind Herakles.
Female figure wears a long dress with feet and hair uncovered, also carries a spear.



Figure 33: Chalcidian neck amphora, Vulci, Archaic Period (now lost). (Boardman (1998) p.236) image. Illustration of amphora panel depicting battle scene with female figure surrounded by snakes. Female figure holds a spear and wears a long dress with feet uncovered. Head is uncovered with band or fillet in hair.



Figure 34: Black figure amphora, Athens, ca.550-500. (https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/96/Amasis_Painter_-_ABV_151_extra_-_wrestlers_-_Artemis_with_lions_between_youths_-_Basel_ASuSL_BS_497_-_02.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image; Amphora showing winged female figure holding a pair of lions by their hind legs, flanked by pair of standing youths with spears on either side (Simons (2014) p95). Central figure shown wearing long dress vertical band of decoration on skirt, feet are uncovered. Head is uncovered with band or fillet in hair. Neck panel depicts wrestling scene.

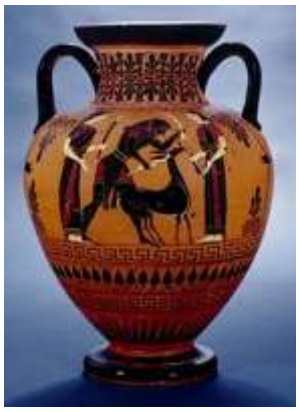


Figure 35: Black-figure neck amphora, Attica, ca.540-530. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1843-1103-80 accessed 10/03/2025) Amphora depicting Heracles and the Keryneian stag. Behind is Athena and in front is Artemis, to whom the stag is sacred; while Herakles holds the antlers of the stag, Artemis demonstrates control in the way the deer looks to her. Figure of Artemis is shown wearing long dress with vertical band of decoration on skirt, her hair is uncovered, and she holds a bow.



Figure 36: Black-figure panel amphora, Attica, Archaic period. (Von Bothmer (1985) p.85) image. Panel amphora depicting winged figure identified as Artemis holding a lion and a fawn by their necks. Central figure wears long dress with decorated central panel on skirt, feet are uncovered. Head is uncovered with fillet or band worn in the hair.



Figure 37: Black-figure amphora, Attica, Archaic period. (Von Bothmer (1985) p.120) image. Panel amphora depicting winged female figure identified as Artemis holding a pair of lions by their necks. Central figure wears long dress with vertical panel decorating skirt, feet and head uncovered. Two male figures stand either side of the central figure, the panel above shows a wrestling scene.



Figure 38: Relief amphora, Boeotia, ca.675. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pithos_102972.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Relief amphora depicting female figure with stylised body dressed in patterned long dress, leaving feet uncovered ("bell-shaped" body: Grace (1969) p.13). Figure is being embraced by two smaller figures and flanked either side by large felines. (Caskey (1976) p.33) Central figure wears a *polos* with vines or branches emerging from either side ("antler-like foliate elements" Budin (2016) p.17).



Figure 39: Amphora, Attica, ca.550 BC. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Anfora_attica_del_pittore_del_louvre_E826_con_amazzoni,_da_tomba_T2_di_marmaro,_550_ac_ca..JPG accessed 10/03/2025) left image (opposite side); (https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/record/A9ED9DB4-BAAC-423B-899F0A64ADD7DD77 accessed 10/03/2025). Amphora showing figure identified as an Amazon between two sphinxes. (Beazley (1956) p.90). Central figure appears to wear short *chiton* with feather-like decoration in hair and holds a bow. Opposite side of vase shows similar figure with shield between two cocks.



Figure 40: Amphora, Caere, ca.530-510. (De Puma (2000) p.23) images. Neck amphora depicting Medusa and one of her sisters - Medusa (right) is shown beheaded and falling with her sons Chrysaor and Pegasus emerging from her neck. Pegasus is shown as a horse while Chrysaor is shown riding a horse. Medusa is shown unwinged in contrast to the gorgon next to her and can only be identified by the presence of her sons. Medusa wears a long dress with feet uncovered.



Figure 41: Relief amphora, Crete, 7th century. (LIMC Despotes Theron (S) 7 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/lqvBvqQNWZW8LRT_s67Y5Az.20160505T23562 5Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Amphora relief depicting standing figure (possibly winged) between a pair of winged horses. Central figure is shown frontally with head resembling daedalic style, wearing short *chiton* with curving wing-like attachments from the waist.



Figure 42: Amphora, Cerveteri, ca.660-640. (LIMC Medeia 3 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/j1l1KvXHVyaPLTbWV8nSlwx.20160506T000647Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Amphora depicting figure in profile identified as Medea, controlling three-headed snake. Figure is shown wearing long patterned garment which covers head, but feet are uncovered.

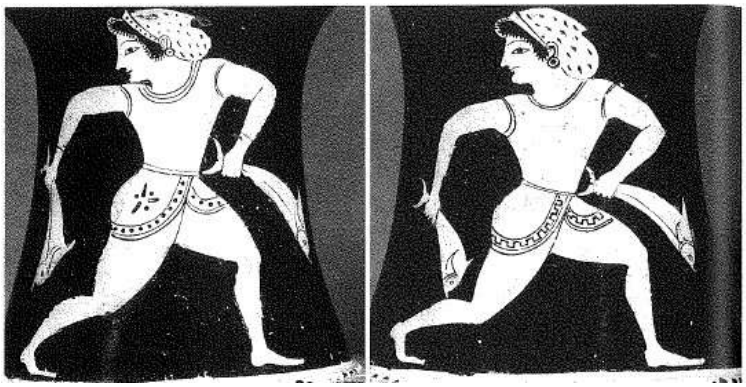


Figure 43: Amphora, Etruscan, ca.520. (LIMC Nereid 2) image. Amphora depicting figures identified as Nereids holding fish or dolphins. Both figures shown in running or dancing pose moving to the right, looking backwards, they wear short *chitons* with decorated hems - one has a sun-like motif on the skirt. Both figures are barefoot and wear spotted caps which cover their hair.

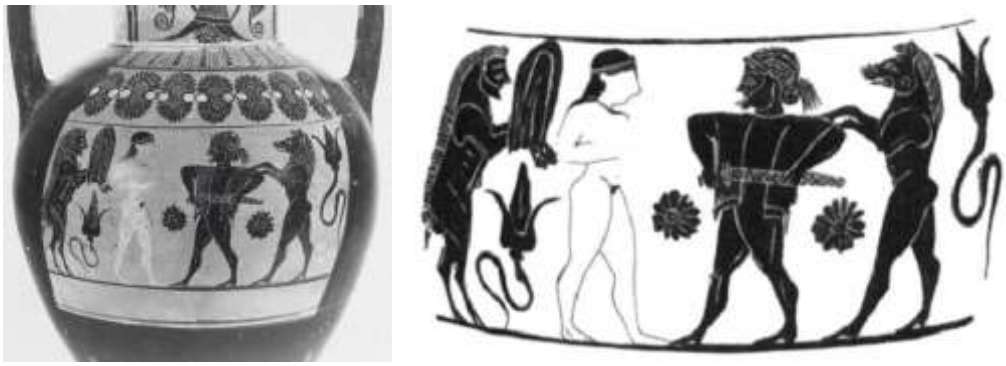


Figure 44: Amphora, Vulci, ca.530. (LIMC Kirke 19 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/L9UUi3OmUCK5MVsgVrMqYQm.20160506T000 723Z accessed 12/03/2025) left image (Marinatos (2000) p.45) right image. Amphora depicting female figure identified as Circe, with male figure and two "pig men" - upright boars, one of which appears to have a human-like face (Marinatos (2000) p.45). Kirke appears in white in contrast to other (male) figures, shown in black. She appears nude apart from a band around her head. Fill motifs include rosettes and other floral images.

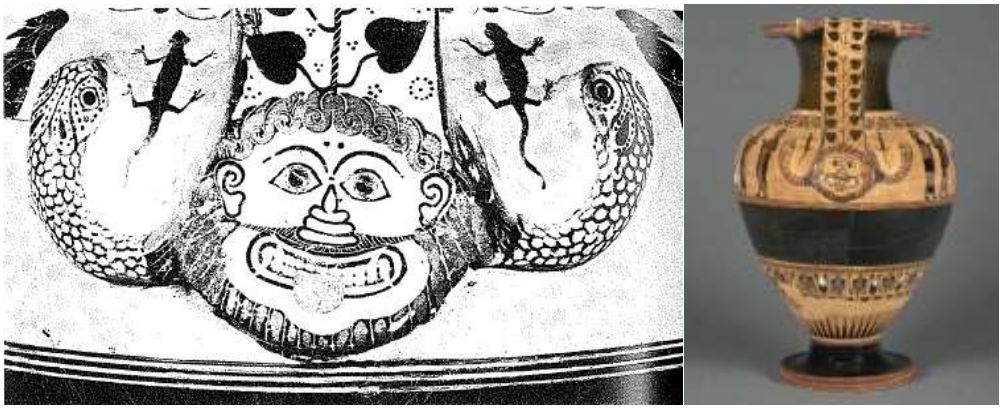


Figure 45: Amphora handle, Cerveteri, 6th century. (LIMC Gorgo 39) left image (https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010269967 accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Detail of amphora handle showing face identified as a gorgon with snakes emerging from either side. Gorgoneion is shown bearded with boar-like tusks. Above is a vine-like motif and two lizards.



Figure 46: Amphora, Lakonia, ca.540-530. (LIMC Gorgo 155a https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/9RRbIuffX=6kIs01KNLHQwZ.20160506T002312Z accessed 12/03/2025) left image (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hydria_gorgon_BM_B58.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) right image. Amphora depicting gorgoneion with boar-like teeth and palmettelike motif on forehead flanked by sphinxes with birds below them.

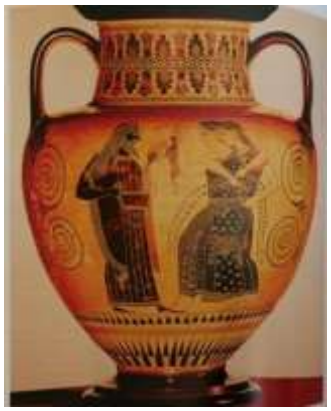


Figure 47: Amphora, Athens, mid-6th century. (Osbourne (1998) p.104) image. Amphora showing two women, likely to be maenads as one wears a leopard skin, and both carry ivy. Both are wearing long, patterned dresses with garlands in their hair. The women face a bearded male figure holding a cup, who may be Dionysos. One of the women holds a rabbit or hare by the ears.



Figure 48: Amphora, Marathon, ca.580. (LIMC Artemis 30 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/D1ZUWaBaVr2kGpG9HDVHYw8.20160505T235 628Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Amphora depicting damaged figure, shown winged with lion visible to the left and a second animal to the right. Central figure shown wearing long dress with decoration on hem of skirt, feet are shown uncovered.



Figure 49: Amphora fragment, Melos, ca.670-640 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fragment_einer_gro%C3%9Fen_ostgriechischen_Halsamphore.JPG accessed 10/03/2025) image. Polychrome amphora fragment depicting a winged female figure, identified as Artemis (Boardman (1998) p.130; Frothingham (1911) p375), holding a lion by the tail (Studniczka (1890) p.162). Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered wings extend across the front of the body. Head is uncovered, with a band or fillet in the hair.



Figure 50: Stone Sculptures, Prinias, ca.625. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Daedalic_Lintel_complete_Heraklion_museum_NM231_Greece.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Stone lintel depicting pair of enthroned female figures above a frieze of lions (Marinatos (2000) p.76). Female figures wear long dresses with decoration on lower part of skirts, feet are left uncovered. Both figures wear decorated *poloi*.



Figure 51: Temple pediment, Corfu, mid-6th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:West_Pediment_from_the_Temple_of_Artemis_in_Corfu.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Pediment relief depicting Medusa (identified by presence of her sons (Junker (2012) p.82 suggests this is Perseus) entwined by snakes and flanked by large felines. Central figure shown frontally in *knielauf* pose, wearing short *chiton* belted with snakes (Wilk (2000) p.39).



Figure 52: Aryballos, Corinth, ca.580-575. (Simons (2014) p.99) image. Aryballos depicting figure identified as Artemis, shown winged holding long-necked water birds by the neck. Central figure wears long dress with split skirt showing right leg uncovered. Horizontal bands of decoration on skirt. Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 53: Aryballos, Corinth, ca.575. (https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/292559?position=0 access ed 10/03/2025) image. Aryballos depicting figure identified as the Winged Mistress of Animals, shown holding two water birds by the neck. Figure wears long dress, tightly belted with vertical bands of design on skirt.



Figure 54: Aryballos, Corinth, ca.625-600. (http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/10932/unknown-maker-corinthianaryballos-greek-corinthian-625-600-bc/ accessed 10/03/2025) image. Polychrome aryballos depiction of winged female figure holding a pair of water-birds by the neck. Central figure wears long dress with horizontal bands of decoration on the skirt. Fill motifs include rosettes and lotus-flowers.



Figure 55: Aryballos, Delos, ca.640-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Delos_M_Delm018.jpg accessed 10/03/2025) image. Figure identified as Artemis holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure shown wearing long dress with horizontal bands of decoration on skirt. Fill motifs include rosettes of differing sizes.



Figure 56: Aryballos, Bayraklı, ca.640-625. (Mazet (2017) p.58) image. Winged female figure shown holding a pair of water-birds by the neck. Central figure wears long dress and may wear *polos*. Reverse shows Typhon. (Mazet (2017) p.18) Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 57: Aryballos, Corinth, 600-575. (LIMC Potnia 12 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/JFy2TPC8Xo=z67dQ1Eplmw2.20160505T235924 Z 12/03/2025) image. Winged female figure shown holding animals which may be goats (based on hooves, short tails, and possible beard on animal on the right). Central figure wears long dress with decoration on upper and lower parts, tightly belted at the waist, appears to wear a band or fillet in her hair. Fill motifs difficult to discern, may be floral.



Figure 58: Aryballos, Rhodes, ca.600-575. (LIMC Artemis 19) image. Aryballos depicting female figure with bow, identified as Artemis (Payne (1931) p.304) confronting a large feline. Female figure wears long dress with contrasting vertical panel on skirt, appears to wear band or fillet in her hair. Fill motifs densely packed and include rosettes and cloud-like shapes.

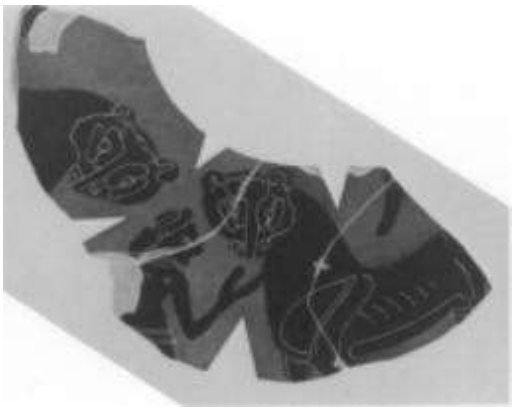


Figure 59: Aryballos fragment, Corinth, ca.595-570. (Amyx & Lawrence (1975) p.32) image. Aryballos fragment depicting a figure (identified as male, possibly a padded dancer) between two large felines. Figure seems to wear short *chiton* and a band or fillet in the hair, the right hand is raised towards one of the large felines.



Figure 60: Cup, Attica, Late Archaic Period. (Hedreen (2007) pl. IV) image. Cup depicting maenad (centre - identified by thyrsus) holding a snake. Central figure wears long, pleated dress with legs and feet bare, head is covered with a cap. To the left of this figure is a satyr and to the right is another figure, also wearing a cap and long garment.



Figure 61: Kotyle, Etruscan, early 6th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Etruscan-Corinthian_Kotyle_(cup)_with_Gorgon,_from_Pontecagnano,_beginning_6th_century_BC,_Monsters._Fantastic_Creatures_of_Fear_and_Myth_Exhibition,_Palazzo_Massimo_alle_Ter me,_Rome_(12818177694).jpg accessed 10/03/2025) left image; (LIMC Gorgo 288 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/nE86LH5OVn2ptwYQp3AoLAj.20160506T00231 9Z 12/03/2025) right image; Marinatos (2000) p.53 . Polychrome cup depicting a gorgon (identified by frontal face with large eyes, protruding tongue, and snakes in hands) flanked by wolves. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered and vertical bands of decoration or fringe on skirt.



Figure 62: Black figure cup, Orvieto, 6th century. (LIMC Potnia 17 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/GN62Hd0MWQqZSMcLpclgeg3.20160505T2359 25Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Tondo of cup depicting winged female figure identified as Artemis (Beazley (1932) p.180) holding a pair of lions by the necks. Central figure appears to wear long dress with vertical panel of decoration, lower part of skirt missing due to damage.
Dress belted tightly at waist. Head is uncovered with band or filled worn in her hair.





Figure 63: Kylix, Athens, ca.550-525.(https://collections.mfa.org/objects/153469/drinkingcup-kylix-depicting-scenes-from-the-odyssey?ctx=202393c6-7eb3-44f8-9c49-0c5e3b89312a&idx=0 accessed 10/03/2025) left image; (Marinatos (2000) p.43) right image. Black figure cup depicting female figure identified as Circe offering a cup to a figure with a pig's head. Figure of Kirke is shown nude holding a cup and wand - around her are men with animal heads and a dog sits in front of her.



Figure 64: Terracotta cup, Etruscan, ca.520-510. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/247218?&searchField=All&sortBy=Dat e&when=1000+B.C.-A.D.+1&ao=on&ft=artemis&offset=160&rpp=80&pos=221 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Cup depicting female figure holding a bow with lion raising its front leg towards her. Female figure wears a long dress, lifting the skirt so feet are visible. Her head is covered with a cap. Below the lion is a sun motif and to the left is another figure, also holding a bow.



Figure 65: Cup, Miletus, ca.560. (Mazet (2017) p.55) image. Fragment depicting female figure, appearing to hold a large feline by the tail or leg (left). Female figure wears a long dress, belted at the waist, with leg and feet uncovered, may be in *knielauf*-style pose. Visible fill motifs are dotted suns, either side of the central figure.



Figure 66: Cup, Miletus (Samian production) second quarter of 6th century. (Mazet (2017) p.55 fig.9) image. Fragments which appear to show a figure with arms in a position typical of a *Potnia Theron*, with animals - deer and rabbit. Too fragmentary to discern clothing or pose. Fill motifs may include dotted suns and floral designs.



Figure 67: Cup, Sparta, 6th century. (Fitzhardinge (1980) p.40 fig.10) image. Figure in *knielauf*-like pose between two winged horses. Central figure is shown moving to the right, head turned backwards. Wears short *chiton* belted at the waist, with legs and feet uncovered. Hair is worn long, and head is uncovered.



Figure 68: Hematite seal, Sardis, 6th century. (Simons (2014) p.99) image. Seal depicting standing winged figure holding animals identified in LIMC as goat and lion (lion: Boardman (1970) p.27; goat and lion: Simons (2014) p.110) although both animals appear to be the same, and horns are visible so most likely to be goats. Central figure wears long unbelted dress with diagonal bands of decoration, feet are uncovered. Hair is worn long and appears to be uncovered.



Figure 69: Chalcedony scarab, East Greece, ca.580-540. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462823&partId=1&searchText=gorgon&from=bc&fromDate=900&to=bc&toDate =500&page=1 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Scarab depicting winged gorgon shown in *knielauf* pose with snakes rising above her head. Figure identifiable as gorgon by large head, exaggerated features, and snakes. Figure wears knee-length dress with diagonal bands of decoration visible on the skirt, the legs and feet are uncovered. Two sets of wings are visible, forming an x-shape behind the figure.



Figure 70: Gem, Mycenae, 7th century. (LIMC Artemis 20 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/8MYn1juIUZKL2OLpMhvLIA7.20160506T003325 Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Gem depicting figure identified as Artemis holding bow and arrow, accompanied by an animal which may be a deer. Highly stylised representation, head is shown as a dot with no facial features indicated. Appears to wear long dress with diagonal pattern, belted at waist. Figure wears a *polos* with either veil or long hair visible below, indicated as diagonal lines.



Figure 71: Haematite scarab, Aegina, early 6th century. (LIMC Artemis 36 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/ZtuhhqOHU2CmGtHZEX=_MQb.20160506T0033 25Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Scarab depicting winged figure identified as Artemis holding deer and lion. Central figure wears long dress belted at the waist with vertical bands of decoration or folds indicated, feet are shown uncovered. Head appears to be uncovered with hair worn long.



Figure 72: Intaglio gem, Lydia, 7th-6th century. (https://collections.carlos.emory.edu/objects/24768/intaglio-with-a-mistress-of-the-wildanimals?ctx=c5d20f253af346d337f889f9b6c1830c935aac8a&idx=0 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Gem depicting winged female figure holding pair of lions by their tails. Central figure wears long skirt with herringbone pattern or folds, shown nude from the waist upwards. Figure appears to be wearing curling footwear. Head is uncovered, with hair worn in a bun at the back of the head.



Figure 73: Carnelian scarab, Greek, 7th century. (LIMC Gorgon 284 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/uGt5ut1UV9WuzI13b829cwU.20160506T00231 9Z accessed 12/03/2025). Scarab showing winged figure identified as a gorgon (due to large head with what may be snakes), holding a lion by the neck. Gorgon figure appears to be nude - no clothing can be discerned. Appears to be winged, at least one set (upper), possibly two, forming an x-shape. The gorgon figure is in *knielauf*-like pose, with one arm extended to hold the feline in front of them.



Figure 74: Green Steatite seal, Melos, Geometric period. (Boardman (1970) pl.265a) image. Seal depicting winged gorgon with wheel and dolphin (Boardman (1970) p.137). Figure likely to be a gorgon on basis of large head with exaggerated eyes and mouth. Single set of wings shown - arms are not visible. Figure wears short dress with legs and feet shown uncovered below.





Figure 75: Scaraboid gem, Greece, 6th Century. (https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/scaraboidal-gem-with-gorgon-as-winged-centaurseizing-a-lion-171444 accessed 10/03/2025) left image; (Boardman (1970) pl.282) right image (seal impression). Gem depicting Hippogorgon holding lion by front legs. Hippogorgon identifiable by large face with snakes around the top of the head and horse-like body. Shown winged in this example, holding front legs of standing lion.



Figure 76: Hydria, Taranto, ca.570. (Simons (2014) p.84) image. Hydria decoration depicting standing winged figure in relief flanked by rabbits or hares and lions. Above her are snakes, lions, and an eagle (Frothingham (1911) p.365; LIMC Artemis 47). Central figure wears a long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Her hair is similar to that of Daedalic-style figures, and she wears a low *polos* with eagle perched on top (Hoffmann (1964) p.186).



Figure 77: Hydria, Caere, 6th century. (http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?id=5429B9FF-3DFB-443C-BF59437A477B5287&noResults=&recordCount=&databaseID=&search= accessed 10/03/2025) left image; (Boardman (1998) p.252) right image. Hydria depicting female figure (right) who may be a maenad based on spotted garment. Figure carries a dotted snake and wears long spotted dress with feet uncovered. The head is also uncovered. Behind this figure is a satyr playing pipes and in front is a smaller figure riding a donkey and a bearded figure resembling Dionysos, holding a cup.



Figure 78: Hydria, Cerveteri, ca.550. (LIMC Sphinx 222 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/ZNRO9L2yUuaXs_BSPle5jgw.20160506T000011 Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Hydria depicting winged gorgon carrying a snake. Gorgon is shown with a single set of wings, wearing a short *chiton* with legs and feet uncovered. Standing sphinxes stand either side of the panel.



Figure 79: Bronze cauldron handle, East Greek, last quarter of 6th century. (https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010258315 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Bronze krater handle in the form of winged gorgon with griffins. Gorgon shown in *knielauf*-pose with double set of wings forming x-shape behind her. Gorgon wears short *chiton* with belt, legs and feet are uncovered. Either side of the gorgon are large griffin-heads with open beaks and long ears. See also: (Spier (1988) fig.95).



Figure 80: Bronze Hydria handle, Etruscan, last quarter of 6th century. (https://www.pop.culture.gouv.fr/notice/joconde/08120037227 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Bronze handle in the form of winged female figure with fawns. Main figure appears with double set of wings and bird-like tail which may suggest she is a siren; arms are raised in line with upper set of wings, so they appear wing-like. Difficult to discern any dress but may wear a low *polos*. Fawns appear above, with their upper bodies emerging either side of the hydria handle.



Figure 81: Bronze hydria handle, Italy, Archaic period. (Hoffmann (1964) pl. 63) image. Female head shown between two horse heads, above are two recumbent lions. Female head wears *polos* with bands of decoration and hair is shown in locks or braids either side of the head.



Figure 82: Bronze hydria handle, Corinth, 6th century. (https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/304127?position=29 accessed 10/03/2025) image. Hydria handle depicting Gorgonion (Wilk (2000) p.40). Surmounted by rams and lions. Head is identifiable as a gorgon from exaggerated eyes and mouth, with protruding tongue. Both the rams and the lions appear recumbent, extending outwards from the handle.



Figure 83: Ivory fibula, Sparta, ca.750-700. (Simons (2014) p.90) image. Ivory fibula depicting winged female figure holding bird and large feline (Frothingham (1911) p.287). Central figure shown wearing long dress, belted at the waist. Skirt decorated with geometric patterns. Wings of figure appear to connect across front of body, with similar triangular patterns to those seen on skirt. Figure wears *polos* with vertical bands of decoration, hair is visible, worn long.



Figure 84: Ivory plaque, Sparta, ca.750-700. (Simons (2014) p90) left image; (Thompson (1909) p.286) right image. "First style" Ivory fibula depicting winged female figure holding pair of birds by the neck. Central figure shown wearing long dress, belted at the waist. Skirt decorated with geometric patterns. Wings of figure appear to connect across front of body, with similar triangular patterns to those seen on skirt - also resemble the wings of birds. Figure wears *polos* with vertical bands of decoration, hair visible worn long below this.



Figure 85: Ivory plaque, Sparta, ca.700-650. (Simons, (2014) p.91) image. "Second style" Ivory plaque (Dawkins (1929) p.208). Female figure holding long-necked water birds by the neck with smaller birds perched on her shoulders (Thompson (1909) p.289). Figure wears long dress tightly belted at the waist with crosshatched design over whole of dress. Feet and head uncovered, with hair worn long.



Figure 86: Ivory plaque (damaged), Sparta, ca.700-650. (Simons (2014) p.91) image. “Second style" ivory fragment (Dawkins (1929) p.208). Depicting winged female figure holding a bird in her left hand, with snake descending from her wrist (Thompson (1909) p.288). Figure wears long dress, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated all over with crosshatched pattern. Wings appear to connect across front of figure's body. Unclear if figure wears any kind of headwear, but long hair is visible at the back of the head.



Figure 87: Ivory fibula, Syracuse, ca.630. (LIMC Artemis 56 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/r7TvqAabW=a3fpnRRQpLpAZ.20160506T00332 7Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Ivory Fibula depicting winged female figure identified as Artemis with a goat. Difficult to discern details of dress due to composition, likely to wear long dress due to comparison with similar figures (e.g. Fig.86) Unclear if figure wears a cap over hair or if hair is unusually stylised.

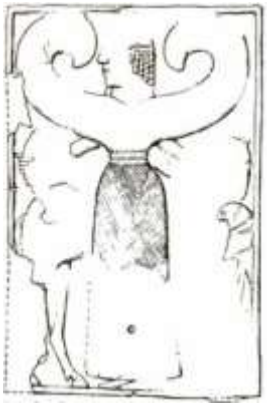


Figure 88: Ivory plaque, Sparta, 7th century. (LIMC Artemis 638) image. Ivory plaque depicting winged female figure. Appears to wear long dress from reconstructed detail - this can visibly belted at the waist. Appears to wear cap or band around head. May hold either one or two animals - feet suggest hooved animal such as horse or a goat.



Figure 89: Ivory plaque Smyrna, ca.660-650. (LIMC Artemis 45 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/LiHSIt2XW4mwRiS3fer33A=.20160506T003930Z accessed 12/03/2025) left image; (Bevan (1985) pl.20) right image. Ivory plaque depicting winged female figure holding long-necked water bird and dog(?) by their necks. Figure wears long skirt with horizontal bands of decoration, tightly belted at the waist and tightlyfitted or nude from the waist upwards. Above the figure is a crescent moon, 5 small rosettes and a larger rosette or sun motif.

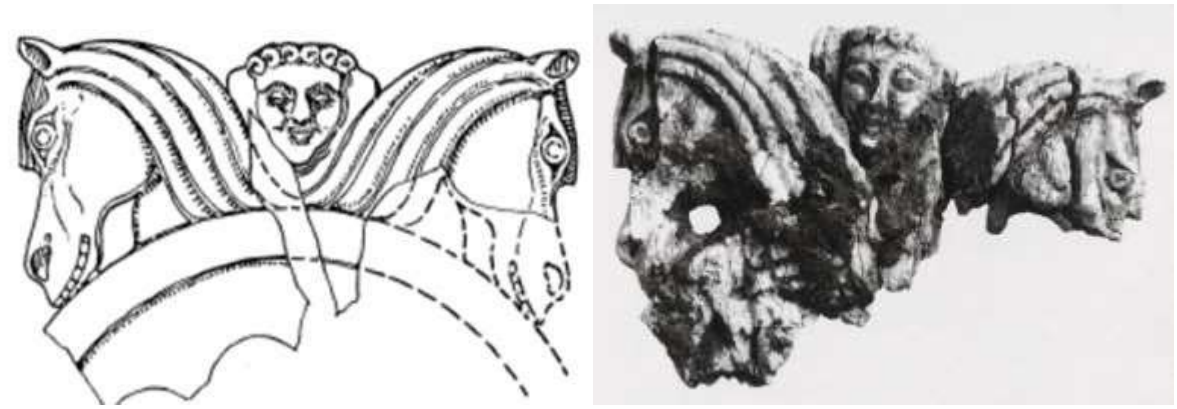


Figure 90: Ivory plaque, Sparta, ca.700-500. (Thompson (1909) p.290) left image. (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/mNiiMeoNVNG5D62ZyCsdSwA.20160505T2359 27Z accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Ivory plaque depicting female head thought to be a goddess between two horse heads (Waugh (2012) p.9). Female head shown with tight "snail-shell" curls across the front of the face, which appears frontally; horses shown in profile.

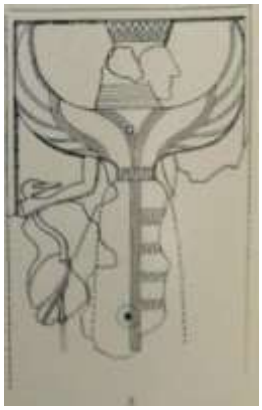


Figure 91: Ivory plaque (damaged), Sparta, ca.700-650. (Simons (2014) p.91 (image). Second style ivory plaque (Dawkins (1929) Pl.XCVIII.3) depicting winged female figure holding water bird by the neck. Plaque is damaged, pose suggests likely to be symmetrical with another bird originally on the opposite side. Central figure wears long dress with horizontal and vertical bands of pattern. Dress is tightly belted at the waist. Wings of central figure meet across the front of the body. The central figure wears a low *polos* with horizontal bands of decoration and hair worn long below this.



Figure 92: Gold Earrings, Argos, 3rd quarter of 7th century. (Louka (2009) p.406) image.
Earrings depicting standing female figures holding a pair of lions by the forelegs (pair). Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist. Central figure stands in centre of a cone made up of decorative balls, from here she dangles the lions off the edge.



Figure 93: Gold jewellery plaque, Cyprus, ca.700. (https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010134596 accessed 10/03/2025) image.
Gold plaque depicting female figure above or riding a lion (Serwint (2002) p.337. Female figure appears to be nude or nude from the waist upwards. Head is uncovered although there is a floral motif above the head - this may be part of the wing-like decoration which is part of the upper frame.



Figure 94: Bronze pendant, Cyprus, late 8th century. (Serwint (2002) p.341) image. Bronze horse pendant depicting nude female figure holding multiple animals with water birds above her head. Figure shown standing among various animals with arms raised.



Figure 95: Electrum pendant, Rhodes, second half of 7th century. (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/rehdmNonX5qmjACaStuuigu.20160506T00320
6Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Electrum pendant depicting female figure identified as Aphrodite, below lion head. Female figure shown nude with hair uncovered. Two daedalicstyle heads above. Rosette motifs at the top of the pendant and suspended below the daedalic-style heads.



Figure 96: Amber pendant, Etruscan, ca.600-550. (http://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/7945/unknown-maker-pendant-divinityholding-hares-etruscan-or-italic-600-550-bc/ accessed 11/03/2025) image. Amber pendant in the shape of a figure holding two hares, which face downwards. Central figure wears knee-length garment, with legs and feet uncovered. Head of central figure is covered by a cap or band around the head.



Figure 97: Silver pendant, Etruscan, ca.675-650. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=466824&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Silver pendant depicting winged female figure between two winged lions. Central figure appears to wear long dress, belted at the waist, with pleated skirt and feet shown below. Wings or arms extend upwards to the lions' faces. Parts of three additional figures may be visible below, although these are fragmentary.



Figure 98: Silver or electrum jewellery plaque, Rhodes, Rhodes ca.700- 600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Staatliche_Antikensammlungen_M%C3%BCnche n_629.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of lions by the tail. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, worn tightly belted at the waist. Above the figure are two rosettes and fill motif is repeated raised dots.



Figure 99: Jewellery plaques, Rhodes, ca.660-620. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1861-1111-3 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Series of 7 jewellery plaques depicting winged female figures controlling pairs of large felines. Each plaque identical, suggesting they were stamped. The central figure wears a long dress with horizontal bands of dotted decoration which covers the feet, the head is left uncovered with hair worn long. Large rosettes appear either end of the string and a row of small, round attachments (perhaps pomegranates or poppy-heads) are below.



Figure 100: Silver jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462824&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025.) image. Silver jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of birds by the neck. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered at the bottom, belt shown at the waist. No indication of feathers on the wings. Band of dotted decoration around edge of plaque.



Figure 101: Silver jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462825&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Silver jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of lions by the tails. Figure wears long dress covering the feet, shown belted at the waist. Below each of the lions is a rosette motif. Double band of granulation making up a frame. Four small attachments below - possibly poppy-heads or pomegranates.



Figure 102: Silver or electrum jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=399452&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of lions by the tails. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with daedalic-style hair with horizontal divisions. Below each of the lions is a floral motif. Double band of granulation makes up a frame. Loops for four attachments can be seen - only two survive (one damaged) these appear to be round and may be poppy-heads or pomegranates.



Figure 103: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462827&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of lions by the tail. Central figure wears long dress, feet may be uncovered - unclear due to damage. Dress worn belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with hair worn long.
Floral motifs below each of the lions. Frame is made up of double band of granulation.



Figure 104: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462828&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding two large felines by the tail. Central figure wears long dress which covers her feet, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with hair worn long. Below each of the lions is a floral motif. Frame is made up of double-band of granulation, damage to edges and corners.



Figure 105: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462830&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding large felines by the tails. Figure wears long dress which covers her feet, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with hair worn long, daedalic-style horizontal divisions can be seen in the hair. Below each of the lions is a floral motif. Granulated band makes up frame. Damage to edge, especially on right side.



Figure 106: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=399453&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large felines by their forepaws. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered dress is decorated with granulated zigzag pattern. Small granulation "platform" below her feet. Head shown uncovered with hair worn long. Lions shown to lie on the face of the plaque, in contrast to most examples. Triple band of granulation makes up frame of plaque. Large rosette or sun motif at top of plaque, with two birds at either top corner. the lower corners have loops which may have had suspended attachments and holes - possibly for attachment - can be seen towards the centre, above the frame at the bottom.



Figure 107: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462829&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large felines by the tail. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with hair worn long with daedalic-style horizontal divisions visible in the hair. Below each of the lions is a floral or sun motif. row of dotted decoration along the bottom of the plaque, below figure. Double band of granulation making up a frame. Damage to edges, especially upper-left corner.



Figure 108: Five gold jewellery plaques, Rhodes, ca.660-620. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462593&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Series of five gold jewellery plaques depicting winged female figures controlling large felines. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated with horizontal bands of granulated decoration. Hair is uncovered, with daedalic-style horizontal divisions. Felines also decorated with spotted pattern in granulation. double band of granulation makes up frame. Four attachments below each of the plaques, likely to be poppy-heads or pomegranates.



Figure 109: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca. 660-620. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462591&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure controlling a pair of large felines. Central figure wears long dress which covers her feet, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated with horizontal bands of decoration. Head is uncovered with hair worn long, shown with daedalic-style horizontal divisions in hair. Felines are covered with spotted pattern. Double band of granulation around frame. Large rosette on top of frame. Five small circular attachments on short chains below plaque - these could be pomegranates or poppyheads.



Figure 110: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=430117&partId=1&searchText=mistress-of-animals&images=true&page=1 11/03/2025) image. Damaged gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large felines. Central figure wears long dress, details cannot be discerned due to damage. Below each of the large felines is a sun or rosette motif. Row of raised dots along bottom of plaque. Frame is single band of granulation.



Figure 111: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462822&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=3 accessed 11/03/2025) image Gold plaque depicting winged goddess with two rosettes. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered, belted at waist. Hair worn long with band across head. Holds two flower or sun motifs. Frame is single band of granulation.



Figure 112: Gold plaque, Cyprus, ca.800-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=429719&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting nude female figure identified as possibly Astarte, with pine-cones. Frame is twisting ropelike decoration.



Figure 113: Gold jewellery plaques, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462818&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=3 accessed 11/03/2025) image. string of five gold jewellery plaques depicting winged female figures with rosettes. Central figures wear long dress with feet uncovered, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered, hair is shown with daedalic-style horizontal divisions. Each figure holds rosette or sun-like motif. Raised border around each plaque.



Figure 114: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=397341&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure identified as a goddess with rosettes. Central figure wears long dress - feet cannot be seen due to damage. Dress is belted at waist. Hair is worn with band across head and daedalic-style horizontal divisions in hair. Wings are given circular shape. Sun or rosette motifs flanking figure. Single band of raised dots in border.



Figure 115: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=397340&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure identified as a goddess with rosettes. Central figure wears long dress - feet cannot be seen due to damage. Dress is belted at waist. Hair is worn with band across head and daedalic-style horizontal divisions in hair. Wings are given circular shape. Sun or rosette motifs flanking figure. Single band of raised dots in border.



Figure 116: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=462797&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure identified as a goddess, with dome or orb attributes either side. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered, worn belted at the waist. Hair is worn long with daedalic-style horizontal divisions. Wings are circular in shape. Border is made up of triple band of dots. Large rosette attached to top of plaque. Loops for two additions below - one is now missing, the other appears to be a pomegranate or poppy-head.



Figure 117: Electrum jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=462842&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Electrum jewellery plaque depicting figure identified as a bee-goddess, with rosettes. Central figure shown as human from the waist upwards and has bee-like lower body. Hair is daedalic-style with horizontal divisions. Small, twisted band around border of plaque with additional row of vertical lines along top edge.



Figure 118: Electrum jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462841&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Electrum plaque depicting figure identified as a bee-goddess, with rosettes. Central figure shown as human from the waist upwards and has bee-like lower body. Hair is daedalic-style with horizontal divisions. Small, twisted band around border of plaque with additional row of vertical lines along top edge.



Figure 119: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, 7th century. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/257431 accessed 11/03/2025) image.
Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding large felines by the foreleg. Location given as "Greek" but suggest Rhodes instead on the basis of comparison with other figures (e.g., Fig.98-111, 112-118) Central figure wears long dress covering the feet with horizontal rows of dotted decoration on skirt, belted at waist. Head is uncovered with hair shown in curls or braids. Large felines shown with dotted decoration over their bodies. Two circular attachments hang below plaque, likely to be poppy-heads or pomegranates.



Figure 120: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, 7th century. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/256925 accessed 11/03/2025) image.
Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding large felines by the foreleg. Location given as "Greek but suggest Rhodes instead based on comparison with other figures (e.g., Fig.98-111, 112-118). Central figure wears long dress covering the feet with horizontal rows of dotted decoration on skirt, belted at waist. Head is uncovered with hair shown in curls or braids. Large felines shown with dotted decoration over their bodies. Two circular attachments hang below plaque, likely to be poppy-heads or pomegranates. Border is inlaid with wavy line and infilled with what could be faience or silver - this is also used to decorate the lower attachments.



Figure 121: Silver jewellery plaque, Etruscan, 7th century. (Simon (2006) p.55) image. Silver jewellery plaque depicting standing female figure identified as Artumes, holding or controlling wolves, with human attendants either side. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Head is uncovered with hair worn long. Central figure appears to be unwinged. Loop for attachment on right side, damage visible on left side.



Figure 122: Silver jewellery plaque, Etruscan, 7th century. (Simon (2006) p.55) image. Silver jewellery plaque depicting standing female figure identified as Artumes, holding or controlling wolves, with human attendants either side. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Head is uncovered with hair worn long. Central figure appears to be unwinged. Loop for attachment on left side. Border of circles around plaque.



Figure 123: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca. 700-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pendants_with_Potnia_Theron_(Mistress_of_Animals),_700-600_BC,_East_Greek,_Rhodes,_Daedalic,_gold_and_cloisonne_Cleveland_Museum_of_Art_-_DSC08205.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting female figure controlling large felines. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated with horizontal bands of dotted decoration. Head is uncovered with hair worn in long curls or braids. Large felines covered in dotted pattern. Frame of plaque decorated with cloisonne. Two small loops for attachments (now missing) below.



Figure 124: Gold jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca. 700-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pendants_with_Potnia_Theron_(Mistress_of_Animals),_700-600_BC,_East_Greek,_Rhodes,_Daedalic,_gold_and_cloisonne_Cleveland_Museum_of_Art_-_DSC08205.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting female figure controlling large felines. Central figure wears long dress which covers the feet, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated with horizontal bands of dotted decoration. Head is uncovered with hair worn in long curls or braids. Large felines covered in dotted pattern. Frame of plaque decorated with cloisonne. Two small loops for attachments (now missing) below.



Figure 125: Electrum jewellery plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Plate_Camiros_Louvre_Bj2169-14.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure controlling a pair of large felines. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet exposed at the bottom. Head is uncovered with hair shown similar to daedalic style with horizontal divisions. Wings are circular. Double rope-like border with additional row of vertical decoration along the bottom.



Figure 126: Gold plaque, Rhodes, 7th century. (Mazet (2019) p.139; https://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ws/catalogue/app/collection/notices/record/ark:/12148/ c33gbtqcm accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding large felines by the leg or tail, with rosettes. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist which covers the feet. Head is uncovered with hair shown in daedaliclike style with horizontal divisions. Dotted sun or rosette motifs below each of the large felines. Twisted rope-like border with rows of dotted decoration across top and bottom of plaque - damage to edges, especially lower left corner.



Figure 127: Jewellery plaque, Rhodes, 7th century. (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/z_OmV0tXXPWPs4pKvPtnewT.20160506T0040 49Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of birds by the neck. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist which covers her feet. Head is uncovered with hair worn long with daedalic-style horizontal divisions. Birds face the central figure with their feet resting against her legs. No border or additions visible.



Figure 128: Electrum plaque, Rhodes, ca.640-630. (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/egMspIFNWU6s3G=EvIss6QE.20160506T00401 0Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Electrum jewellery plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of lions by the hind leg or tail. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist and covering her feet. Dress is decorated with diamond pattern. Border is decorated with multiple rows of granulation. Rosette visible at top of plaque.



Figure 129: Gold plaque, Rhodes, ca.700-600. (http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=462843&partId=1&searchText=kamiros&images=true&page=19 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold jewellery plaque depicting nude female figure with two lion heads. Female figure shown holding breasts, head is uncovered and hair is shown in daedalic style with horizonal divisions. Feline heads depicted frontally. Fill motif is closely-packed dots. Large rosette at top of plaque.



Figure 130: Jug, Cyprus, ca. 750–600. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/240096?sortBy=Relevance&depti ds=13&ft=*&offset=3500&rpp=100&pos=3507 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Polychrome terracotta jug depicting figure identified as possibly being a deity, next to a large, long-necked water bird. Figure wears long red robe with vertical black and white panel of decoration. Circular decoration or pendant visible on figure's chest. Hair is drawn in black and appears to be short and straight. Eye seems to wear make-up. Bird is shown to be almost the same height as the figure. Around these are large flowers.



Figure 131: Pitcher, Anatolia, 699-600. (https://collections.mfa.org/objects/155814 accessed 11/03/2025) left image; (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/zmoXElHlU6695jiZ7G6=5wP.20160506T003331
Z accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Pitcher depicting female figure identified as either Cybele/Kubaba (MFA.org) or Artemis (LIMC Artemis109a) with bow and arrows, showing goat or deer behind and leopard (suggested by pattern) in front being shot with arrows.
Central figure wears long dress which covers her feet, along with bow and quiver of arrows. Her hair is covered with a cap. Ribbon-like attachments can be seen either side of her skirt.



Figure 132: Relief krater, Sparta, Archaic period. (Fitzhardinge, (1980) p.53) image. Relief krater depicting frieze of standing female figures holding large felines by the necks or inverted by the tail - smaller felines below between the legs of the standing figure. Central figures wear short dresses with legs and feet exposed. Heads are difficult to see due to damage. Register below shows horses and warriors carrying shields.



Figure 133: Krater, Samos, ca.670-650. (https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/Q5pVY5s8WLWyjs=zcswNqAs.20160505T23525 5Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Krater depicting standing female figure with shield and spear next to small sphinx which raises front leg towards her. Central figure wears long dress with black and white chequered pattern, belted at the waist. Wears *polos* with long hair worn down the back. Shield pattern includes radiating triangles around edge. Behind central figure is dotted sun-like motif.



Figure 134: Column krater fragment, Corinth, ca.575-550. (Amyx & Lawrence (1975) pl.41) image. Krater fragment depicting pair of figures - one identified as female in white with black hair and one identified as male in black, horse appears on the right, with human figure leading. Clothing difficult to discern due to fragmentary nature - both figures appear to wear band or fillet in hair. Above is border of enclosed tongue pattern.



Figure 135: Bronze krater handle, Western Greece, ca.500. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=463319&partId=1&searchText=gorgon&from=bc&fromDate=900&to=bc&toDate =500&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Bronze krater handle depicting gorgon with snakes in place of legs. Gorgon wears short tunic which she lifts to show snakes below.



Figure 136: Volute krater handle, Chiusi, ca.570. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museo_archeologico_di_Firenze,_Vaso_François_8.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) left image; (LIMC Artemis 33b https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/vRiyAjTxW3SnnxmmjtXlwgV.20160505T235406Z accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Winged female figure identified as Artemis (Beazley (1986) p.25; Budin (2016) p.16; Budin (2004) p264. LIMC Artemis 33b) holding large feline and stag (Simons (2014) p.57). Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Dress is decorated with squared pattern. Head is uncovered with band worn in hair. Lion held in left hand by its neck, face shown frontal with body in profile. Stag held in right hand, held by its neck, head and body in profile. Panel below represents Ajax carrying body of Achilles (Simon (2013) p.499).



Figure 137: Volute krater handle, Chiusi, ca.570. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kleitias_e_vasaio_ergotimos,_cratere_francois,_570_ac_ca._artemide_e_aiace_che_porta_achille_morto_01.JPG accessed 11/03/2025 left image; (LIMC Artemis 33a https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/vRiyAjTxW3SnnxmmjtXlwgV.20160505T235406Z accessed 11/03/2025) Right image. Winged female figure identified as Artemis (Beazley (1986) p.25; Budin (2016) p.16; Budin, (2004) p264; LIMC Artemis 33b) holding two lions. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Dress is decorated with squared pattern. Head is uncovered with band

worn in hair. Both lions held by the neck with head and body in profile. Panel below represents Ajax carrying body of Achilles (Simon (2013) p.499).



Figure 138: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive figure holding bow. (Simons (2014) p.44) With attachments resembling snakes on skirt. Figure wears long dress with feet shown uncovered. Pattern visible on skirt of dress.



Figure 139: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive figure holding bow. (Simons (2014) p.44). Figure wears long dress with herringbone pattern on skirt. Feet can be seen uncovered below. Figure wears tall *polos*-like headwear.



Figure 140: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. (Simons (2014) p.44). Lead figure shown with snake-like attachments on either side. Figure wears long dress with horizontal bands of pattern visible on skirt. One foot visible below uncovered. Holds long staff or spear and wears what appears to be crested helmet.



Figure 141: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). Snake-like attachments on skirt. Figure wears long dress with herringbone pattern on skirt, belted at waist. Feet are uncovered. Figure holds long staff or spear.



Figure 142: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments on outer garment. Appears to have been made in same mould as
Fig.140. Figure wears long dress with horizontal bands of pattern visible on skirt. One foot visible below uncovered. Holds long staff or spear and wears what appears to be crested helmet. Here hair is more clearly visible in locks or braids below helmet.



Figure 143: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments visible around skirt. Figure wears long dress with vertical pattern or folds shown on skirt. Shape suggests dress is belted at waist. Upper body less well defined, may wear headwear but unclear.



Figure 144: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments. Figure wears long dress with feet left uncovered. Dress has horizontal bands of meander-like pattern. Upper body less clearly defined, may hold a staff or spear across the body diagonally and may wear tall headwear or helmet.



Figure 145: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments visible on outer garments. Figure wears long dress with horizontal bands of decoration visible on skirt. Feet are uncovered. Carries long staff or spear. Wears tall *polos* or helmet.



Figure 146: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments visible at the shoulder. Figure wears long dress with diamond or net-like pattern on skirt, belt can be seen at waist. Part of one of the feet may be visible below but is damaged. Carries long staff or spear diagonally across body. Wears helmet which covers head.



Figure 147: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments. Figure wears long dress with large meander-like pattern. Feet are shown uncovered. Holds staff or spear diagonally across upper body. Wears tall *polos* or helmet.



Figure 148: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.560. (Dawkins (1929) Pl. CXCVI) image. Lead votive from sanctuary of Orthia. Lead figure identified as Athena (Simons (2014) p.44). With snake-like attachments on left side. Difficult to discern detail due to damage. Figure appears to wear garment decorated with crosshatched pattern, may carry long staff or spear, and may wear helmet or other headwear.



Figure 149: Lead plaque, Sparta, ca.635-600. (Wace 1929, p.273 fig. 126.b) image. Lead plaque (imitating ivory: Simons (2014) p.40) depicting standing female figure carrying pair of water birds by the neck. Figure wears long dress with feet shown uncovered. Horizontal bands of decoration cover dress. Head is uncovered, with hair worn short at the back of the head. Border is damaged, but what remains shows dotted pattern.



Figure 150: Lead figurine (possibly damaged), Sparta, ca.620-560. (Wace (1929) p.263 fig.122f) image. Lead figurine depicting winged figure holding a lion (Wace (1929) p.259). Possibly damaged and may have originally held second feline. Skirt shaped in a way which may suggest feet originally shown. Wears long dress, shape suggests belted at the waist. Wings connect across front of body. Face is shown in profile facing right, wearing low *polos*, mostly missing due to damage.



Figure 151: Lead plaque, Sparta, ca.620-560. (Wace (1929) p.260 fig.120) image. Lead plaque depicting winged female figure holding two large standing felines by the neck (Simons (2014) p88). Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Dress is belted at the waist. Head is shown uncovered with hair in braids or locks either side of the head.
Figure and felines stand on platform (mostly missing).



Figure 152: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.620-560. (Thompson (1909) p.294) image. Lead plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of large felines by the tail, with two female attendants holding hoops. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Also wears round *polos* with hair similar to daedalic style with horizontal divisions. Figures either side wear same clothing, although they are unwinged and hold hoops.



Figure 153: Lead figure, Sparta, ca.620-560. (Thompson (1909) p.294) image. Reconstruction of lead figurine (Simons (2014) p.87). Depicting winged female figure holding pair of large felines by the foreleg (Wace 1929, p.259). Central figure wears long dress with vertical wavy pattern or folds on skirt. Feet can be seen uncovered below skirt. Figure wears low *polos* on head with braids or curls below. Lions face away from central figure; left lion is mostly missing due to damage. All figures stand on platform with herringbone design.



Figure 154: Black-figure lekythos, Athens, ca.575-525. (https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010269934 accessed 11/03/2025) images. Lekythos depicting winged figure holding pair of large felines by the hind leg. Flanked by draped youths with spears. Central figure wears long dress with patterned vertical panel and hem on skirt, feet are left uncovered. Dress is belted at the waist. Wings are shown to meet across front of the body with arms reaching over the top of the wings. Figure wears band or fillet in her hair.



Figure 155: Attic black-figure lekythos, ca. 530. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgones_Cdm_Paris_277.jpg accessed 11/03/2025). Lekythos depicting winged gorgons with snake attachments on shoulders. Both gorgons wear short *chitons* with vertical panel of decoration on skirt. Both wear boots with curling tops. Snakes are attached to shoulders or wings of gorgons and face the head of each gorgon. Faces of gorgons have exaggerated eyes and mouth with protruding tongues.



Figure 156: Black figure lekythos, Rhitsona, ca. 510-500. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Black-figure_lekythos,_bust_of_woman_between_large_snakes,_520-500_BC,_AM_Thebes,_0119.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Lekythos depicting female bust in profile, flanked by snakes. Central figure shown wearing cap or band in hair. Snakes shown with mouths open, facing central figure.



Figure 157: Lekythos, Athens, ca.550-500. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1926-0417-1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Lekythos depicting female bust in profile identified as Medea flanked by snakes. Central figure shown facing left, wearing cap or band across head. Appears to be wearing veil. Earrings and necklace can be seen. Either side of central figure are snakes rearing in vertical curves with mouths open towards central figure. Fill motifs are rosettes.



Figure 158: Lekythos, Taranto, ca.510-500. (LIMC Kirke 5 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/NI0jqgBQXqifvSLZnJFqzge.20160506T000720Z accessed 11/03/2025) images. Lekythos depicting seated female figure flanked by humanbodied figures with the heads of a boar and a lion. Figure identified as Kirke by cup and wand she holds - shown seated on a stool, draped in short garment. Band or fillet can be seen in her hair. To the left is a figure with boar-like head, to the right is a figure with a human body but lion-like head and tail. Around the figures are vine-like decorations. Above are palmettes.



Figure 159: Lekythos, Taranto, ca.510-500. (LIMC Kirke 15 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/F4aG53d=V=aEO3VDgk6OwwF.20160506T0007 22Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Lekythos depicting seated female figure in profile with boar or pig-headed figures with human bodies. Female figure on the right identified by white skin, shown draped in black garment and seated on a block. Around her are dancing figures with human bodies and animal heads, in the background are vines.

a)  b) 

Figure 160: Bronze mirror stand, Hermione, ca.540-530. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Staatliche_Antikensammlungen_M%C3%BCnche n_691.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) left image; (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Staatliche_Antikensammlungen_M%C3%BCnche n_694.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Figure identified as Aphrodite (Breitenberger (2007) p.87; LIMC Aphrodite 374). Depicted nude apart from necklace and headdress supporting two curving flowers. Sirens sit on each of these flowers. Central figure wears sandals and stands on the back of a lion. Mirror disc balances on top of figure's headdress.



Figure 161: Bronze mirror, Pontic, late 6th century. (Treister (2005) p.111) image. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Central figure shown frontally, raising arms above her head. Below is a sphinx in profile, facing right.



Figure 162: Bronze mirror, Pontic, late 6th century. (Treister (2005) p.111) image. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Central figure shown frontally, raising arms above her head. Below is a sphinx in profile, facing right. Damage to mirror with break across lower legs of figure and crack across upper-left of mirror disc.



Figure 163: Bronze mirror, Pontic, late 6th century. (Treister (2005) p.111) image. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Central figure shown frontally, raising arms above her head. Below is a sphinx in profile, facing right.



Figure 164: Bronze mirror, Pontic, late 6th century. (Treister (2005) p.111) image. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Central figure shown frontally, raising arms above her head. Below is a sphinx in profile, facing right. Mirror disc is missing.



Figure 165: Bronze mirror, Pontic, late 6th century. (Treister (2005) p.111) image. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Bronze mirror depicting nude female figure above a sphinx. Central figure shown frontally, raising arms above her head. Below is a sphinx in profile, facing right. Mirror disc is missing, and damage can be seen to sides, especially on the left.



Figure 166: Bronze mirror, Laconian, 2nd half of 6th century. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/253556 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Bronze mirror handle depicting standing female figure with griffins on shoulders. Central figure depicted nude apart from band across body (Pomeroy (2002) p.166). Headdress or rows of curls across head. Mirror disc balanced on top of figure's head.

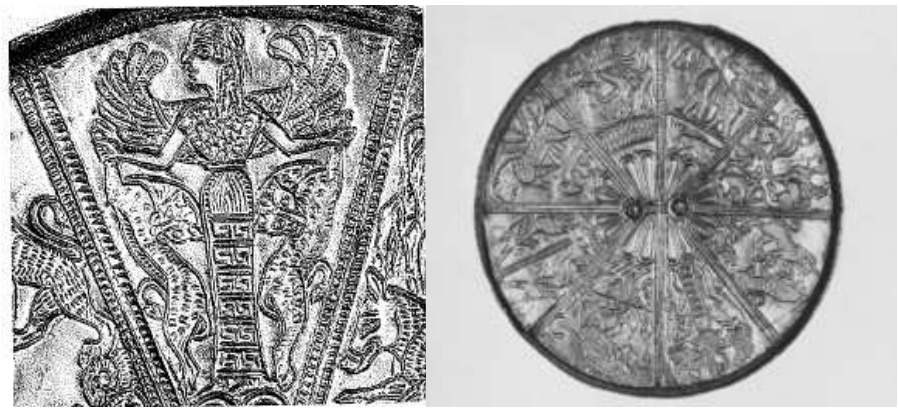


Figure 167: Silver mirror, Kelermes, 6th century. (LIMC Potnia (S) 24 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/GJVkwN_wXl66xUeN4nwTYAm.20160505T2359 26Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Silver mirror depicting winged female figure holding pair of large felines by the forepaws. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered, belted at the waist. Dress is decorated with horizontal bands of meander-like pattern on skirt and scalelike pattern on upper part of dress. Band worn around head with locks or braids of hair worn long. Felines are shown with spotted coats.



Figure 168: Bronze oinochoe, Etruscan, ca.525-500. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=400464&partId=1&searchText=gorgon&from=bc&fromDate=900&to=bc&toDate =500&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Oinochoe depicting female head in relief between two lions. Head is shown frontally with hair worn long, tucked behind ears with row of curls across forehead. Lions are reclining either side of this head, turning their heads towards the face.



Figure 169: Oinochoe, Rhodes, late 8th century. (https://www.getty.edu/publications/egypt-classical-world/02/ accessed 11/03/2025). Oinochoe frieze depicting sphinx holding water bird by the neck. Sphinx shown in profile with one human arm and one leonine front paw. Bird appears lifeless, with head hanging downwards. Fill motifs include diamond patterns, dotted suns, and triangular designs.



Figure 170: Oinochoe, Miletus, ca.560. (Mazet (2017) p.56 fig.11) image. Oinochoe depicting winged female figure holding a pair of lions by the foreleg. Central figure wears long dress with right leg and left foot uncovered, patterned hem on skirt visible. Shape of dress suggests belted at waist. Head is uncovered with hair extending behind. Lions held in standing positions, with their heads turned away from central figure. Fill motifs are diamond shaped. Spout is shaped like bird's head.

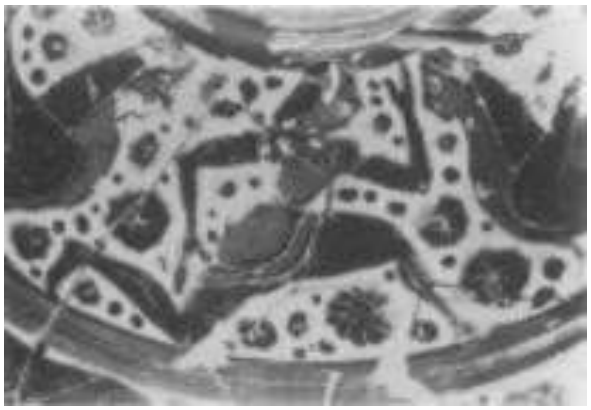


Figure 171: Oinochoe, Corinth, ca.575-550. (Amyx & Lawrence (1975) Pl.97) image. Oinochoe depicting running female figure between two sirens. Central figure wears short *chiton* with decorated hem on skirt, belted at the waist. Head is uncovered with hair worn long. Central figure shown in *knielauf* pose, running to the right. Sirens shown in profile, facing central figure. Fill motifs densely packed, including small and large rosette motifs.



Figure 172: Oinochoe, Clazomenae, ca.700-675. (LIMC Potnia (S) 1 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/WeSs_JE6WbyrUOQeh6TN9Qu.20160505T2359 23Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Oinochoe depicting standing figure with raised arms between two long-necked water birds. Central figure rendered as a stick-figure, unable to discern any outfit or features. Birds are almost same height as central figure and face away in opposite directions, bodies of birds decorated with vertical lines.



Figure 173: Oinochoe, Corinth, ca.600-575. (Mazet (2017) p.52 fig.4). Oinochoe depicting winged female figure holding long-necked water bird and sheep. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Vertical panel of decoration on skirt. Under sheep (held in right hand), there is another small bird, shown upside-down. Fill motifs are densely packed and include small and large rosettes. Body of Oinochoe decorated with friezes of animals including wild animals, livestock and birds.



Figure 174: Oinochoe, Eretria, late 7th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jug_women_Louvre_CA2365.jpg accessed 11/03/2025 left image; (Boardman (1952) Pl.7) right image. Polychrome oinochoe depicting standing figure holding coiled snake. Central figure wears long white dress with red cloak over the top half. No head covering, hair is shown in black in curls at the back of the head. Extends hand to the left towards coiled snake which rears to almost same height as figure.

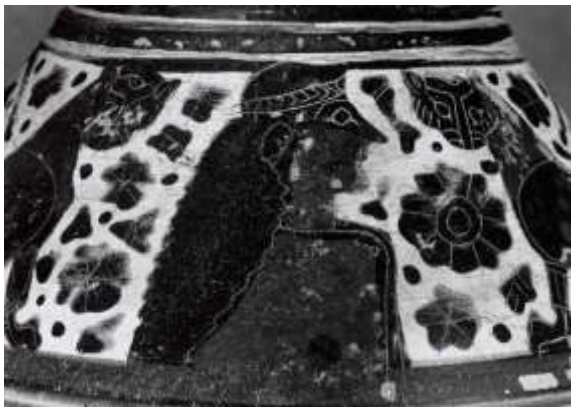


Figure 175: Olpe, Corinth, 6th century. (LIMC Potnia 31 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/=QCavGPVVfqEMpTASQ6coA0.20160505T2359 26Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Olpe depicting female bust in profile between large felines. Central figure shown inf profile facing right wearing headband or tiara. Hair is worn in long curls down the back. Lions shown with bodies in profile and heads shown frontally.
Fill motifs densely packed, including dots and rosettes.



Figure 176: Black figure olpe, Attica, ca.550-530. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=462464&partId=1&searchText=medusa&from=bc&fromDate=900&to=bc&toDate =500&page=1 accessed 11/03/2025) left image; (LIMC Gorgo 293 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/o3yhXFMTUJKOExPh3ai3tAS.20160506T000202 Z accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Olpe depicting winged gorgon with snakes. Central figure shown with gorgon-face and double set of wings forming x-shape behind figure. Central figure wears short *chiton,* belted with snakes, legs uncovered and curl-top boots. Snakes shown emerging from head of gorgon. Figure to left of gorgon turns his head away and raises a knife to her neck - this can be identified as Perseus. The male figure to the right wears a wide-brimmed hat and carries a staff and so is likely to be Hermes.



Figure 177: Perirrhanterion, Corinth, 7th Century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marble_stand_for_large_vessel,_lions,_women,_7th_c_BC,_AshmoleanM,_AN.Michaelis_237,_142548.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Marble stand in the form of three female figures standing on lions. Figures wear long dresses covering the feet and belted at the waist. Folds can be seen indicated in the skirt of the dress. Heads are uncovered with hair worn in long braids or locks over the shoulders.



Figure 178: Perirrhanterion, Isthmia, 7th century. (Angell (2017) p.95) left image (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Large_perirrhanterion,_AM_of_Isthmia,_202659_.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Perirrhanterion depicting three female figures standing on the backs of lions. Figures wear long dresses, belted at the waist which cover the feet. Basin rests on heads of figures.



Figure 179: Perirrhanterion, Rhodes, 7th century. (Angell (2017) p.98) left image (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis_with_lions,_torso_of_statue,_7th_century_BC,_AM_Rhodes,_Rhom26.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Perirrhanterion depicting three female figures (two incomplete above the waist) standing on the backs of lions holding the tails. Complete figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Hair worn long over the shoulders. Basin would have rested on heads of figures.



Figure 180: Perirrhanterion, Samos, 7th century. (Angell (2017) p.98) left image; (Dillon (2002) p.55) centre image (https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ancient_Greek_Marble_Pedestal_for_a_Wate r_Basin,_found_in_Samos,_c._630_BC_1367.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Perirrhanterion depicting three female figures (damaged) standing between two lions, holding them by leashes or tails. All figures are damaged. Figures wear long dresses which appear to be belted at the waist from the shape of the dress. Unlike other perirrhanteria (e.g. Figs. 177-179) figures stand between lions rather than on their backs.



Figure 181: Marble stele, East Greek, ca.525. (LIMC Artemis 57 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/4YRt=UIzU5e62R38klfOEQZ.20160506T003327Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Stele depicting winged female figure carrying a lion by the foreleg. Figure wears long dress, lifting skirt to show left leg uncovered. Figure also wears *polos* decorated with vertical lined decoration. Above panel are palmette decorations.



Figure 182: Relief plaque, Magna Graeca, ca.550. (https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010259791 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of large felines. Figure does not appear to wear any clothing but may wear a low *polos* or band across her head, with hair worn long down both shoulders.



Figure 183: Terracotta plaque, Athens, 7th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AGMA_Ancient_greek_terracotta_votive_plaque_with_Woman_and_Snakes.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Plaque depicting female, suggested to be Athena (Cook (1940) p.198). Head of figure in relief, shown between two snakes. Figure wears long dress, although bottom is missing due to damage. Snakes shown in wavy lines, both with heads at top of plaque. Snake on the left is curved around floral motifs while snake on the right curves around dotted sun motifs. Central figure shown with head uncovered, hair worn long, shown as wavy lines painted over relief.

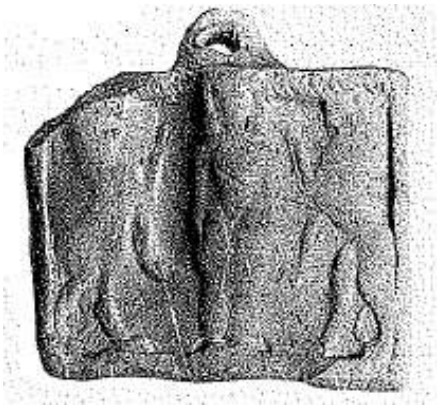


Figure 184: Terracotta plaque, Gortyn, 2nd quarter of 8th century. (LIMC Potnia 3) image. Plaque depicting standing female figure between large standing felines. No clothing can be seen on central figure - appears to have long hair with no headdress. Large felines stand on hind legs and appear to be similar height to central figure. Felines both face central figure raise one of the forelegs towards them.



Figure 185: Stamped terracotta brick, Mycenae, ca.670. (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Relief_Potnia_Theron_Louvre_CA297.JPG accessed 11/03/2025 left image; (LIMC Artemis 14 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/16x9P=0fUXyoWjK0KZApDQQ.20160506T00332 5Z accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Stamped brick depicting standing female figure holding a pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Head is either uncovered with long hair or may wear a veil. Face of figure is shown in profile facing left and appears beak-like. Decoration around figure panel includes circles and floral motifs.



Figure 186: Terracotta pendant, Sparta, ca.700-500. (Thompson (1909) p.290) image. Terracotta pendant depicting female head between two horse heads - the right head is missing due to damage. Head in centre shown frontally, may wear low *polos* or row of curls across top of head. Horse faces away from central figure, likely to have been symmetrical (see Fig.187).



Figure 187: Terracotta pendant, Sparta, ca.700-500. (Thompson (1909) p.290) image. Terracotta pendant depicting female head, suggested to be a goddess (Waugh (2012) p.9) between two horse heads. Head in centre shown frontally, may wear low *polos* or row of curls across top of head. Horses faces away from central figure, most of the right horse is missing due to damage.



Figure 188: Copper alloy belt plaque, Ionia, 7th century. (https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/304230?position=0 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Belt buckle depicting standing figure identified as Artemis (LIMC Artemis 16) with bulls. Central figure is stylised, appears to wear a dress, with long hair. Animals shown facing opposite directions away from central figure.



Figure 189: Horse ornament, Samos, 9th century. (Marinatos (2000) p.25) left image (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hazael_horse_frontlet_in_the_Archaeological_Museum_of_Vathi_in_Samos.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) right image. Horse ornament depicting nude female figure standing on lion head, holding two lion heads and three nude female images. Central figure stands with arms outstretched; three figures above stand with hands holding breasts. Two of the three images above stand on lion heads held by central figure, third stands on head of third figure. Above all figures is winged sun-like motif.



Figure 190: Horse ornament, Samos, 9th century (Marinatos (2000) p.28) image. Horse ornament depicting nude female figure holding two lion heads and three nude female figures. Two large felines lie across the top of the ornament. Similar in composition to 189 - except the central figure does not stand on a lion's head and winged "sun" motif has been replaced with two reclining animals.



Figure 191: Bronze cuirass, Olympia, ca.670-660. (Schefold (1966) pl.26) image. Bronze cuirass depicting winged female figure (bottom) between winged horses, below two snakes. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Double set of wings form x-shape on figure's back. Either side of this figure are winged horses standing on their hind legs which face this figure. Above the head of this figure are two large snakes in S-shape. Panels above this show pair of chariots, heading towards standing female figure in long dress and *polos*. Upper scene identified as Helen with the Dioscuri (Schefold (1966) pl.26).



Figure 192: Metal sheet, Athens, mid-7th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgon_in_the_center_of_a_sheet_(reconstructi on)_-_NAMA_inv_13050.JPG accessed 11/03/2025) images. Metal sheet depicting winged gorgon between large felines with horse heads above (LIMC Gorgo 279). This was originally a pediment decoration from the Athenian acropolis. It has been reconstructed (right image) with lions flanking the central figure and horses above the head. Figure can be identified as a gorgon by the large head with exaggerated eyes and mouth with long tusks and protruding tongue. Central figure wears a long dress with feet uncovered, belted at the waist. Figure's wings meet across the centre of her chest.



Figure 193: Bronze helmet, Delphi, 7th century. (LIMC Aphrodite 899a) image. Bronze helmet depicting female figure identified as Aphrodite, riding a bull. Main figure shown wearing long dress with patterned hem, feet are shown uncovered. Net-like pattern shown at top of dress. Hair is worn long behind the ears and down the back of the head - the head is uncovered. Figure is shown riding a bull which is decorated with stylised patterns on its neck.



Figure 194: Bronze plaque, Lindos, archaic period (Bevan (1986) pl.12) image. Bronze plaque depicting winged female figure holding pair of birds. Central figure shown wearing long dress with feet uncovered at the bottom. Dress is belted at the waist. Figure's face is damaged, head is uncovered with hair shown in daedalic style with horizontal divisions.



Figure 195: Bronze disc, Tegea, 8th century. (LIMC Aphrodite 899) image. Bronze disc depicting figure holding flower or fruit in raised hand with long-necked water bird. Central figure appears to be nude and may have long hair but details difficult to discern.



Figure 196: Gold sheet, Arkadia, archaic period. (https://arachne.dainst.org/entity/2632994 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Gold sheet depicting figure appearing to hold two animals - unable to identify animals due to damage. Central figure appears to wear long dress - lower part is missing - skirt is decorated with horizontal bands of decoration while upper part has net-like pattern. Head is uncovered with hair shown similar to daedalic style with horizontal divisions.



Figure 197: Bronze plaque, Olympia, second quarter of 7th century. (LIMC Potnia 23a https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/apH32nU0VleGVPpgrPpO5Qd.20160505T23592 6Z accessed 11/03/2025) image. Bronze plaque depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large standing felines. Central figure shown wearing long dress - lower part missing due to damage. Holds pair of lions by forelegs, facing away from central figure. Fill motifs are dotted suns.



Figure 198: Gilded silver relief, Corinth, 7th-6th century. (Picón & De Puma (2007) p.62) image. Silver relief depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large felines by the neck or foreleg. Central figure shown wearing long dress with horizontal lines decorating skirt - feet shown uncovered. Wings are shown meeting across front of figure's body. Head is uncovered with long hair worn down the back of the head. Other panels show a kneeling archer, centaur and a female figure which may be dancing.

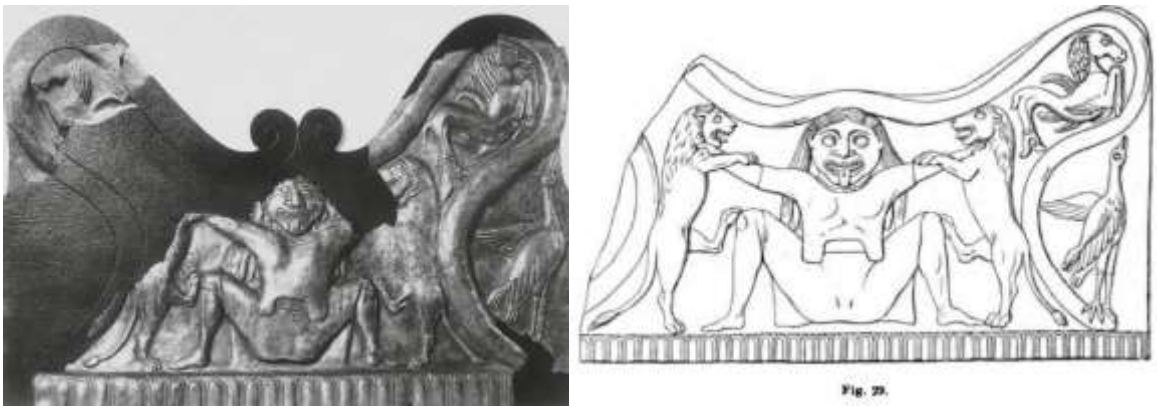


Figure 199: Bronze chariot panel, Etruscan, 6th century. (LIMC Gorgones (in Etruria) 89 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/wekbEW6HVRuM88e8zK1PKg9.20160506T0018 36Z accessed 11/03/2025) left image; (Studniczka (1890) p.152) right image. Chariot panel depicting gorgon flanked by large standing felines. Central figure identifiable as a gorgon by large head with exaggerated eyes and mouth with protruding tongue. Figure shown with legs apart, holding pair of lions, which both face central figure.



Figure 200: Plate, Rhodes, ca.600. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx ?objectId=399399&partId=1&searchText=goddess&images=true&from=bc&fromDate=900& to=bc&toDate=500&page=2 accessed 11/03/2025) image. Plate depicting figure with gorgon-like face. (Boardman (1998) p.156; LIMC Gorgo 280; Simons, (2014) p.61). Has been identified as Kirke (Marinatos (2000) p.51) or as Medusa (Studniczka (1890) p.153) Central figure holds two water birds and wears long dress with right leg uncovered. Dress is tightly belted at the waist. Figure has two sets of wings which meet across the front of the body.
Fill motifs include dotted suns and diamond patterns.



Figure 201: Black figure plate, Athens, ca.560. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athenian_plate_with_Heracles_and_Apollo_fight ing_over_the_Keryneian_hind.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Plate depicting Herakles and Apollo fighting over the Keryneian hind - female figure behind likely to represent Artemis. Central figure wears long dress decorated with circular pattern, belted at the waist. Feet are shown uncovered. Head is either covered with a cap or hair worn in a bun at the back of the head. Male figures either side of central figure fight over the deer in the middle of the group. Birds are shown in the lower panel of the plate.



Figure 202: Plate (fragment), Paros, ca.675-600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis,_Parian_pottery_plate,_675-600_BC,_AM_Mykonos,_177233.jpg accessed 11/03/2025) image. Plate depicting winged female figure holding pair of long-necked water birds. Lower right fragment is original, other parts of the plate have been reconstructed. Central figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Skirt is decorated with black and white squared pattern and belted at the waist. Headdress has two curling antennae and hair is worn long over the shoulders. Fill motifs include dotted suns and diamond motifs.



Figure 203: Black figure tondo, Attic, ca.550. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Coppa_siana_attica_del_pittore_di_heildenberg,_da_tomba_T2_di_marmaro,_550_ac_ca..JPG accessed 11/03/2025) image. Tondo depicting gorgon with snakes (LIMC Gorgo 235). Central figure shown in *knielauf* pose wearing short *chiton* with patterned hem, belted at the waist with snakes. Legs are uncovered, figure wears curling-top boots.



Figure 204: Relief plate, Crete, ca.750.
(https://maacollections.missouri.edu/ArgusNET/Portal/Portal.aspx?component=AAER&reco rd=6f55649e-4bda-4121-b181-4316792446d9 accessed 12/03/2025)
image. Plate depicting standing figure which appears to be winged, holding pair of animals, possibly goats (Kopanias (2009) p.127). Central figure is stylised, wearing long dress which is shown as a rectangular skirt and triangular top part. This suggests a belt worn at the waist. Skirt is shown with vertical band of pattern. Unclear if figure is wearing a *polos* or if the head is stylised.



Figure 205: Plate, Corinth, ca.600-575.
(https://www.kulturarv.dk/mussam/VisGenstand.action?genstandId=7551435 accessed
12/03/2025) left image;
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chimaera_Painter_-_CVPAP_168_A_10_-_Artemis_holding_two_swans_-_protome_of_goat_-_K%C3%B8benhavn_NCG_3289_-_01.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Plate depicting winged female figure holding long-necked water birds. Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Upper part of the dress has net-like pattern. Birds are held by the neck and appear to be alive. Fill motifs include large and small rosettes.



Figure 206: Plate, Lakonia, ca. 565.
(https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgone6.jpg accessed 12/03/2025)
image. Polychrome plate depicting gorgoneion surrounded by snakes. Gorgon head is shown with exaggerated eyes, mouth is large with fangs and protruding tongue. Snakes extend around the head with black upper bodies, red underneath. Gorgon is shown bearded.



Figure 207: Votive plate, Thasos, third quarter of 7th century. (Mazet (2017) p.53)
image. Plate fragments depicting part of a winged female figure which may hold animals (based on pose). Details of dress difficult to discern due to damage - appears to wear dress belted at the waist, head is shown uncovered with long hair. Fill motifs include dotted crosses and dotted sun motifs.



Figure 208: Votive plate, Thasos, ca.630-620. (Mazet (2017) p.54) image. Fragments of plate which appear to show winged figure which may hold lion (left). Central figure wears dress belted at the waist, length uncertain due to damage, but a pattern is visible on right side of skirt. Head may wear antennae-type headdress similar to Fig.202. Border of running animals around edge of plate.



Figure 209: Plate fragments, North Ionia, late 7th century. (Mazet (2017) p.57) image. Plate fragments depicting figure in a pose similar to other *Potnia Theron* figures. Figure's pose shows arms raised; lower body is missing due to damage. Border shows band of animals and band of lotus flowers and buds. Fill motifs include rosettes and dots.



Figure 210: Plate, Ionia, early 6th. (Mazet (2017) p.57) image. Plate fragment depicting winged female figure holding pair of lions (feet of second lion can be seen on the right). Central figure wears long dress - lower part missing. Skirt decorated with meander pattern on either side, belted at the waist. Wings meet across front of figure's body. Figure either wears patterned cap or hair is shown in close, short curls. Fill motifs include diamond and cross patterns. Borders are meander patterns.



Figure 211: Stemmed dish, Sardis, orientalising period. (Greenwalt (1970) Pl.10) left image (https://sardisexpedition.org/en/artifacts/latw-36 accessed 12/03/2025) right image.
Polychrome fragments which may depict a winged figure holding the tail of an animal. Central figure can be seen with head in profile facing left. Wings appear to have alternating white-black-white-red feathers. Details of pose and dress of central figure unclear due to damage.



Figure 212: Pyxis, Boeotia, 6th century. (Barclay (2013) p.158) left image. (LIMC Artemis 27 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/AaxGfJm6UgWJKK_New76NAj.20160505T23592 4Z accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Pyxis depicting winged female figure identified as
Artemis (LIMC Artemis 27) Two long necked water birds are held by the main figure. (Simons (2014) p110) Central figure shown wearing long dress, decorative zigzag pattern on the left side of the skirt. Dress is belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Narrow wings emerge from shoulders. Figure's head is uncovered with narrow headband and long hair. Fill motifs include swastikas, with a hooked swastika and rosette on left side. Opposite panel shows horse tied to a post with swastika, cross, triangle, and rosette motifs.



Figure 213: Corinthian Pyxis ca. 590-580 (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pyxis_with_cover._Corynth._Lyon_MBA_E2661.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image. Pyxis depicting siren between two sphinxes, Central figure shown with human face in profile, facing right, body of small bird. Sphinxes Stand in profile, facing the siren. Fill motifs are densely packed and include dots and rosettes.



Figure 214: Terracotta Pyxis, Corinth, ca.620-590. (https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/251184?&searchField=All&sortBy=Dat e&when=1000+B.C.-A.D.+1&ao=on&ft=mistress+of+animals&offset=480&rpp=80&pos=533 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Pyxis depicting female figure between two sphinxes. Central figure wears long garment with decorated hem, feet are uncovered. Hair is worn long with band or fillet in hair. Sphinxes appear in profile facing central figure, wearing tiaras or headbands.
Same composition appears on lid of pyxis. Fill motifs include rosettes and crossed circles.



Figure 215: Pyxis, Athens, second quarter of 6th century. (LIMC Artemis 32 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/8mM3Rgb9VyCyfi1y7Pi4WQQ.20160506T00332 5Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Pyxis fragment depicting figure identified as Artemis holding long-necked water bird and another animal. Difficult to discern details due to damage. Central figure wears long dress with vertical panel of decoration on skirt, belted at the waist. Feet may be shown uncovered. Head appears to be uncovered.

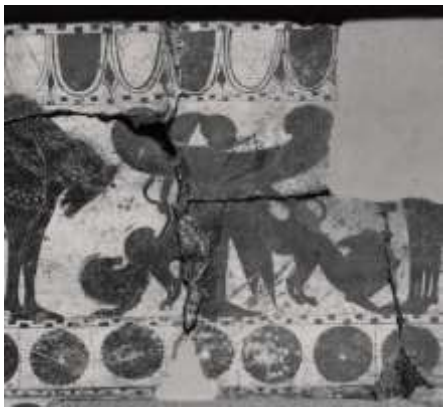


Figure 216: Sarcophagus painting, Clazomenae, ca.510. (LIMC Potnia (S) 19 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/zoi2x5XGWUOCgouoXpcoYgk.20160505T23592 5Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Sarcophagus painting depicting winged female figure holding a pair of large felines by the tails. Central figure wears long, close-fitted dress with feet uncovered. Wings connect across the front of the body. Head is covered with cap with hair visible at the top in long curls. Lions are held by the tails and look backwards toward central figure.

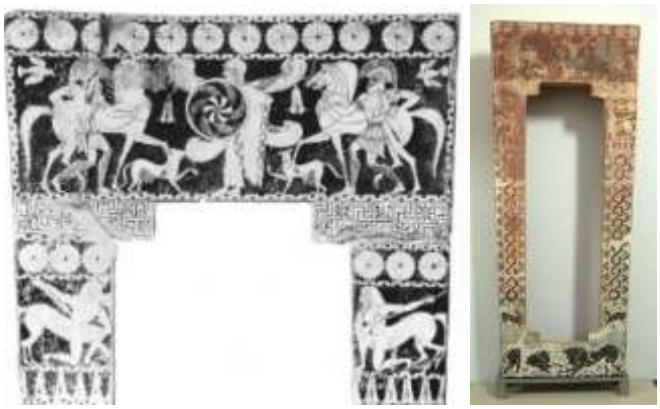


Figure 217: Sarcophagus painting, Clazomenae, late 6th century.(Boardman (1998) p.174) left image; (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Klazomenai_sarcophagus_in_the_Antikensammlung_Ber lin_01.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Sarcophagus painting depicting winged female figure with shield, flanked by horses and dogs. Central figure shown wearing long dress with feet uncovered. Figure holds shield with double row of concentric pattern and helmet covering head. Flanking this figure are dogs which face the figure, raising their forelegs, horses with warrior figures in helmets and small birds in upper corners.



Figure 218: Metal Shield, Olympia, second half of 6th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Escudo_olimpia.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image.
Metal shield depicting winged gorgon with fish-like tail, holding snakes (LIMC Gorgo 350). Central figure shown with frontal gorgon face with exaggerated eyes, large mouth, protruding tongue and "snail-shell" curls across forehead. Wears headdress over her head. Wings meet across front of body, which appears to be scaly, continuing down onto tail. Belt around waist is made up of two snakes.

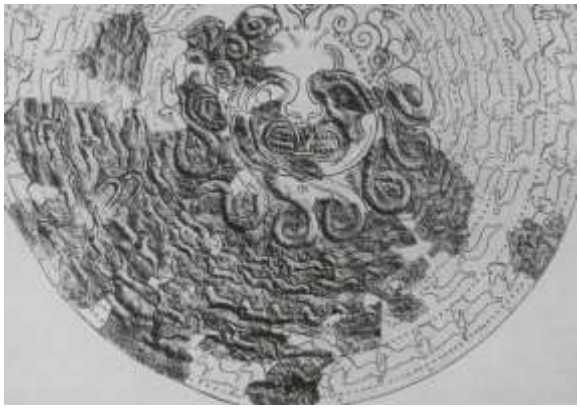


Figure 219: Bronze shield, Karkemish, 7th century. (LIMC Gorgo 156 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/Y6jEv_iIV8GX3wadUX8z5Qz.20160506T002312Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Bronze shield depicting gorgoneia surrounded by snakes. Central figure is gorgoneia with large eyes and mouth, s-shaped snakes surrounding the head. Around this are concentric friezes of running animals.



Figure 220: Bronze shield, Olympia, 6th century. (LIMC Gorgo 158a https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/nXBlJHCLUGi3ziH2GIcS2wf.20160506T002312Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Bronze shield depicting gorgoneion surrounded by snakes. Central face shown frontally with large eyes and open mouth showing large fangs and protruding tongue. S-shaped snakes around head. Three large wings surround gorgoneia, upper wing mostly missing due to damage.



Figure 221: Bronze shield, Crete, 8th century. (Marinatos (2000) p.22) image. Bronze shield fragment depicting nude female figure between large felines. Central figure shown with arms extended, wearing headdress. Lions have unusually large heads, depicted frontally.

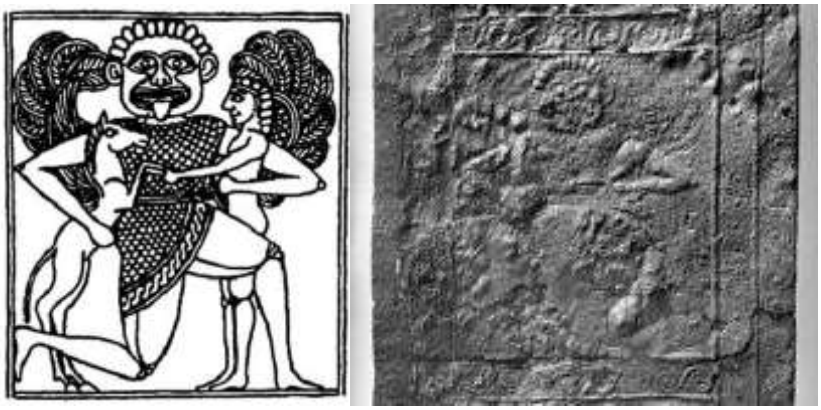


Figure 222: Shield Strap, Olympia, ca.600. (Marinatos (2000) p.62) left image (https://arachne.dainst.org/entity/1195989?fl=20 accessed 12/03/2025). Shield strap motif depicting Medusa with Pegasus and Chrysaor. Central figure identifiable as gorgon by large head with exaggerated eyes, large mouth, and protruding tongue. Gorgon wears short *chiton* with crosshatch pattern and decorated hem - belted at the waist with legs and feet uncovered. Right arm is around standing male figure who can be identified as Chrysaor, and left arm is around winged horse, identifiable as Pegasus.



Figure 223: Shield band, Olympia, 6th century. (LIMC Gorgo 19) image. Shield band motif depicting bearded gorgoneion surrounded by snakes. Frontal face identifiable as gorgon by large eyes and mouth with protruding tongue. Row of snakes across top of head with larger s-shaped snakes either side of head.

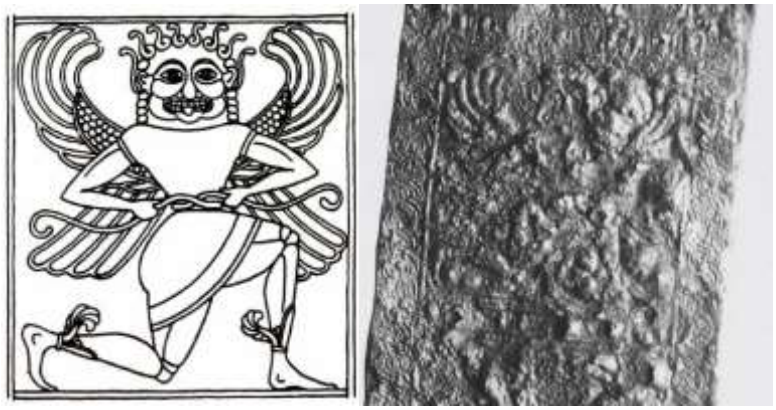


Figure 224: Shield band, Olympia, 6th century. (LIMC Gorgo 239 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/XIrMdagBUZWxe5pfR1RAAwS.20160506T00231 6Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Shield band motif depicting winged gorgon with snakes around the head and snake-like bands around the waist. Figure shown in *knielauf* pose, wearing short *chiton* and curl-top boots. Belt is made of two twisting lines and may represent snakes. Row of small snakes across top of head with larger snakes either side of head.



Figure 225: Shield Strap, Perachora, late 7th or early 6th century. (Marinatos (2000) p.90) image. Shield strap motif depicting female figure (upper part missing) holding a pair of longnecked water birds. Upper part of body missing due to damage. Figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with patterned skirt, feet uncovered. Figure holds water birds by the neck which appear to be alive, facing away from the figure.



Figure 226: Skyphos painting. Boeotia, ca.540. (https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010259881 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Skyphos depicting female bust in profile between two cockerels with lotus flowers. Central figure shown facing left, wearing earrings and necklace with band or fillet in hair. Hair is worn long down the back.



Figure 227: Skyphos, Chalcidice, ca.540. (Simons (2014) p.83) image. Skyphos depicting female figure (centre) with snakes. Central figure stands behind a tripod, wearing kneelength dress, legs and feet are uncovered. Her head is uncovered, hair is worn long with band or fillet in hair.



b)





a) c)

Figure 228: Marble statue, Paros, mid-6th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gorgon_statue_550_BC_AM_Paros_A1284_0759 44.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) images. Marble statue depicting a gorgon holding a snake. Winged gorgon shown wearing short *chiton* with scale-like pattern. Shown in crouching or kneeling pose. *Chiton* belted with entwined snakes, one of which is held in right hand.



Figure 229: Marble statue, Miletus, ca.570-560. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eastionian_statue_of_a_woman_at_the_Antiken sammlung_Berlin_(cropped).jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image. Marble statue (incomplete) depicting female figure holding bird. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Small bird held in right hand. Head of figure is missing.



Figure 230: Marble statue, Samos, ca.560. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statua_di_offerente_femminile_con_una_lepre,_dal_santuario_di_artemide_kitone_a_mileto,_560_ac_ca._01.JPG accessed 12/03/2025) image. Marble statue depicting female figure (incomplete) holding a rabbit. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Holds rabbit in right hand against chest. Head of figure is missing.



Figure 231: Terracotta figure, Boeotia, ca.750. (https://collections.mfa.org/objects/151610 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Terracotta bell-shaped idol. (Boardman (1998) p.64; Grace (1969) p.87). Female image decorated with pair of long-necked water birds. Figure has stylised bell-shaped body with long neck and small head. Legs shown below, decorated with stripes. Body is painted with two water birds facing each other, a wheel-like motif and double axe-like motif. The breasts are modelled and above these are dotted rosettes. Head appears uncovered, with hair painted on top of the head.



Figure 232: Terracotta figure, Cyprus, ca.600-500. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1883-0106-8 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Terracotta figure depicting a female worshipper holding a bird by the neck. Figure wears a long dress with feet uncovered, details suggests a shorter garment worn over a longer one. Necklaces can be seen around the neck. Figure wears a decorated *polos*. Holds small bird against the body with left hand.



Figure 233: Terracotta figure, Cyprus, ca.600-475. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1883-0106-12 accessed 12/03/2025) images. Terracotta female figure holding dove by the neck. Figure wears long dress which covers the feet. Details are unclear. Bird in held against the body with the left hand. Figure's head is covered with a cap.



Figure 234: Terracotta figure, Boeotia, ca.720-700. (https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010262652 accessed 12/03/2025) images.
Terracotta bell-shaped idol decorated with pair of long-necked water birds (Grace (1969) p.87; Thompson (1909) p.295). Figure has stylised bell-shaped body with long neck and small head. Legs shown below, wearing painted boots or socks. Body is painted with two water birds facing each other and concentric rectangular panels. The breasts are modelled with pendant or decoration between them, collar painted around neck. Head appears uncovered, with hair painted on top of the head and hole for loop on top of the head.



Figure 235: Terracotta figure, Sparta, 6th century. (Fitzhardinge (1980) p.50) image; Waugh (2012) p.13. Terracotta female figure shown riding a horse. Figure appears to wear a long dress, feet and legs difficult to see due to condition. Arms are extended horizontally, most of right arm is missing. Hair is worn long with band across front of head. Figure appears large in comparison to horse.



Figure 236: Seated terracotta figure, Greek, 6th century. (https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1924.877 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Seated female figure shown holding a small animal - possibly a rabbit. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Small animal is held against the body in left hand. Head is covered with hair visible below.



Figure 237: Terracotta figure, Boeotia, Archaic period. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:06XX_Terrakotten,_Tonreliefs_Altes_Museum_B erlin_V.I._3202a_anagoria.JPG accessed 12/03/2025) image. Terracotta figurine decorated with trip of long-necked water birds (Grace (1969) p.87). Figure has stylised body without legs. Body is decorated with water birds and swastikas - arms are painted. Breasts are modelled at the top of the body. Neck is long and painted with rings.



Figure 238: Terracotta statue, Magna Graeca, 6th century. (https://www.bridgemanimages.co.uk/en/asset/576023/summary accessed 12/03/2025) image. Winged female figure with griffin-like animal over left shoulder. Figure wears long dress which covers feet. Position of arms suggest they were originally extended forwards but now missing. Circular additions on both shoulders. Wears tiara or *polos* which appears to be broken at the top, curls are visible below.



Figure 239: Statuette, Acarnania, 6th century. (LIMC Aphrodite 62 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/Xd9Mg9B=XDqXmWlVurrf7Ax.20160506T00305 5Z accessed 12/03/2025). Statue of female figure identified as Aphrodite with goat. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Circular additions on shoulders. Wears tiara or *polos* on head with curls visible below.



Figure 240: Statuette, Greek, late 6th century. (https://nds.museumdigital.de/object/85626?navlang=en accessed 12/03/2025) images. Statuette depicting female figure with feeding long-necked water birds. Figure wears long dress with cloak or shawl. Arms are extended to feed birds in front of her. Wears *polos* with vertical decoration.



Figure 241: Terracotta statuette, Boeotia, 6th century.(https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010259739 accessed 12/03/2025) images. Terracotta statue identified as Aphrodite (LIMC Aphrodite 905) shown standing on the back of a large long-necked water bird. Figure wears long dress and *polos*. Holds casket in right hand (Johnson (1981) p.75). Stands on back of large bird, shown as though flying.



Figure 242: Terracotta statuette, Athens, 6th century. (https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010280657 accessed 12/03/2025) images.
Terracotta figurine identified in some sources as Aphrodite (Johnson (1981) p.78). Elsewhere, identified as Hyakinthos (Louvre). Seated between pair of long-necked water birds. Central figure wears long garment covering feet, no details are visible. Garment covers the head with only the face and front of the hair showing.



Figure 243: Terracotta figurine fragment. Possibly from Cyprus, ca.500. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Artemis_with_deer,_torso,_500_BC,_AM_Corfu,_Krfm04.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image. Statuette (incomplete) of female figure holding stag. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered. Upper body is missing. Stag is held by its antlers and appears small next to the figure.



Figure 244: Terracotta figure fragment, Sparta, late 7th century. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1923-0212-277 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Terracotta figure (incomplete) depicting female figure identified as Artemis holding lion. Figure wears long dress, feet are not shown, and upper body is missing. Pattern is visible on skirt of dress. Large feline is held against side of body by its neck, - difficult to assess scale but appears to be small in comparison to figure.



Figure 245: Bronze tripod leg, Olympia, Early archaic period. (Marinatos (2000) p.111) image. Bronze tripod leg depicting winged female figure (top section) holding long-necked water birds. Figure wears long dress with feet uncovered, belted at the waist. Holds birds by the neck which appear lifeless. Head is uncovered with band around the hair, worn long down the back. Other panels show a male and female figure holding a cup, three figures, two holding spears and a large figure behind a smaller one on top of a structure.



Figure 246: Bronze relief, Olympia, ca.600. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NAMA_Bronze_sheet_with_embossed_representations_in_four_panels.Sanctuary_of_Olympia.JPG accessed 12/03/2025) left image; (Studniczka (1890) p.154) right image. Bottom panel shows standing figure in long dress holding large felines by their hind legs. Central figure wears dress belted at the waist and cap or short hair. Other panels show eagles, confronted griffins, and Herakles confronting a Centaur.

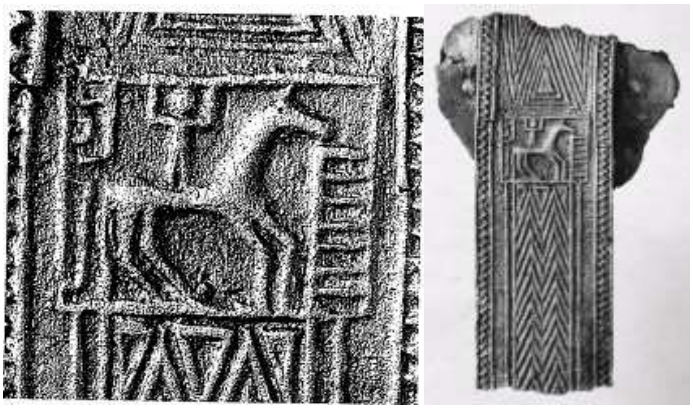


Figure 247: Bronze tripod leg, Olympia, 8th century. (LIMC Potnia 45 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/nUdK1yHUWni0Xn6a0zvCJw1.20160505T23592 8Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Bronze tripod motif depicting figure with raised arms on the back of a horse. Figure holds a long pole or spear above the head. No details of clothing can be discerned, figure shown small in relation to horse.



Figure 248: Pyxis, Arkades, 7th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arkades_Urne_03.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) image. Urn depicting female figure identified as Artemis holding curling branches (LIMC Artemis 11). Stands between two long-necked water birds (Marinatos (2000) p.131). Central figure wears long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Arms are decorated with bands or bracelets up to the elbow. Figure's face is mostly missing due to damage, but head appears to be uncovered with hair worn long; hair and face seem to have been modelled in relief. Standing birds are tall, reaching elbow-height on central figure.



Figure 249: Urn, Crete, 7th century. (https://collections.carlos.emory.edu/objects/10289/jar-with-goddess-artemis-holdingfelines-and-with-birds-p accessed 12/03/2025) image. Urn depicting female figure holding pair of large felines, with birds on both arms. Figure wears a long dress, belted at the waist with feet uncovered. Skirt is decorated with geometric, meander-like pattern, upper part of dress decorated with dotted net-like pattern. Shoulders covered with what could be a shawl or stylised wings. Figure wears a narrow *polos* and earrings with long hair. Large felines are decorated with spots. Fill motifs are large floral designs. Panels of concentric circles either side of figured panel.

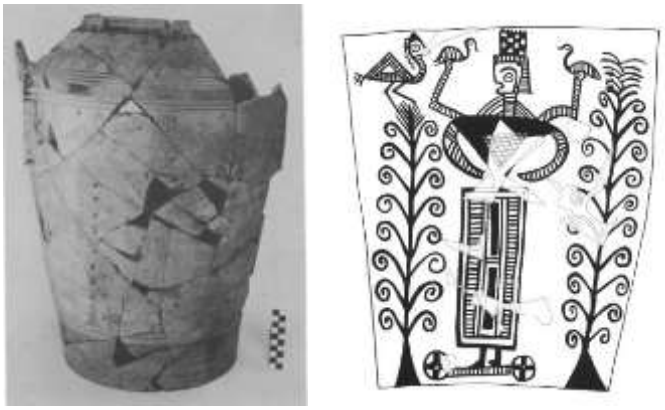


Figure 250: Urn, Fortetsa, 9th century. (Coldstream (1984) pl.8, p.96) images. Urn depicting female figure on wheeled platform between two curling trees (Marinatos (2000) p.129). Figure is raising arms with bird in either hand. Figure wears long dress, stylised as rectangular skirt and triangular top, suggesting tightly belted at the waist. Skirt is decorated with geometric patterns; upper part of dress has central net-like panel. Curving attachments at shoulders, may indicate wings or part of garment. Figure wears tall *polos* with chequered pattern. Face is shown in profile, stylised with single eye, eyebrow and open mouth. Hair is shown as short and decorated with lines. Birds held in hands are stylised with bodies decorated with vertical lines. Bird in tree has triangular body and more detailed head.

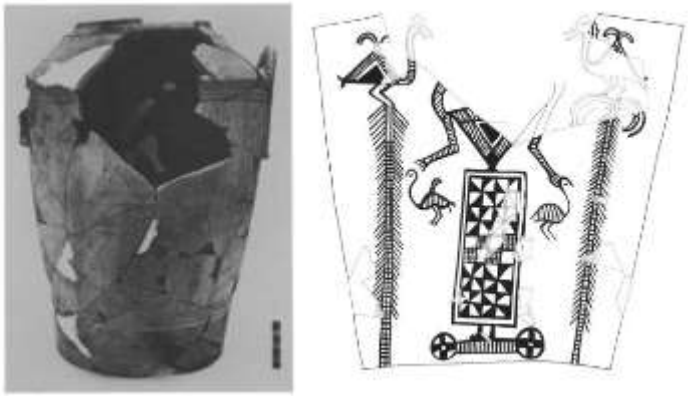


Figure 251: Urn, Fortetsa, 9th century. Urn depicting female figure on wheeled platform between trees, holds birds in both hands with arms lowered (Marinatos (2000) p.129). Appears on the opposite side of the urn from Fig.250. Figure wears long dress, stylised as rectangular skirt and triangular top, suggesting belted at the waist. Feet are uncovered and figure stands on a wheeled platform. Skirt is decorated with triangular geometric pattern while upper dress decorated with radiating lines. Upper part of body is missing due to damage, but likely to have been similar to opposite side. In contrast to Fig.250, figure's arms are lowered and attachments at shoulder are raised.

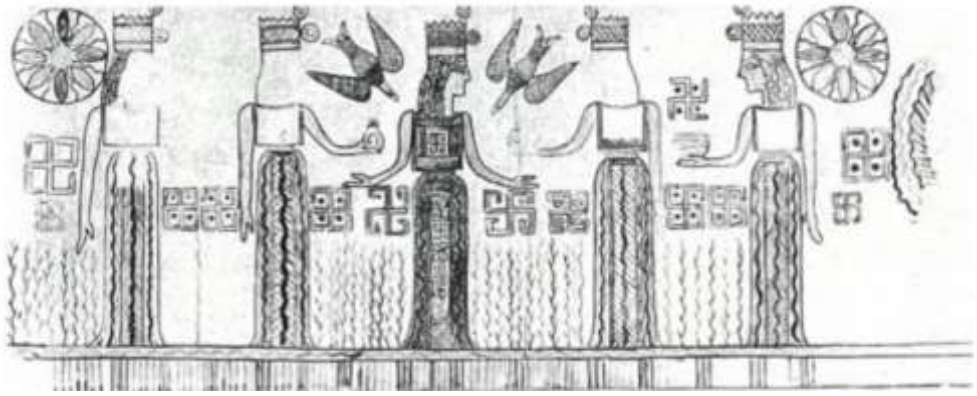


Figure 252: "*Polos*", Boeotia, Orientalizing period? (Simons (2014) p.98 (image). "*polos*" depicting frieze of female figures with birds (Boardman (1998) p.123). Central figure wears long dress which covers feet and *polos*, two birds approach her from above. Figure's arms are extended to the side and below these are swastika motifs. Either side of the central figure are additional figures, also wearing long dresses and *poloi*. These hold various objects, but do not have any animals surrounding them. Fill motifs include dotted swastikas (between each figure), wavy lines and rosettes in upper part.

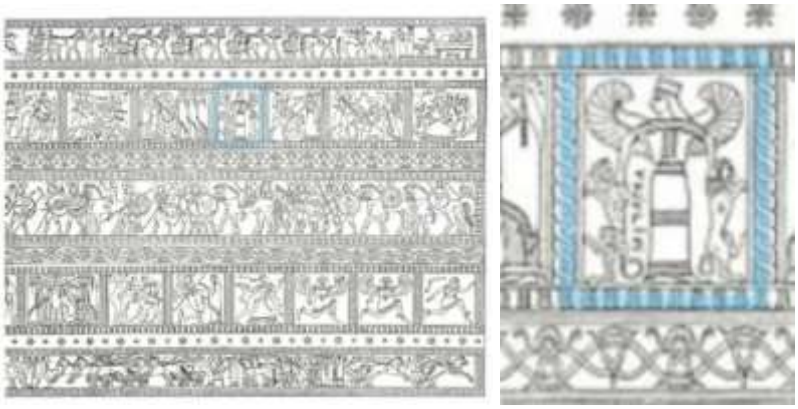


Figure 253: Chest of Kyselos (reconstruction), Olympia, ca.570. (Simons (2014) p.101) images. Reconstruction of chest depicting winged female figure holding pair of large felines (Schefold 1966) p.72). Figure is shown wearing long dress with horizontal bands of decoration, feet are shown uncovered. Figure wears low *polos* with hair worn long at back of head. Large feline held in left hand has spotted coat while large feline on the right is unspotted.



Figure 254: Bronze bust, Etruscan, ca.600-575. (https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1850-0227-15 accessed 12/03/2025) image; Bronze female bust holding bird with horns. Figure shown wearing belt and collar, with right hand across body and left-hand holding bird. Figure's head is uncovered with hair worn in long braids or locks.



Figure 255: Small altar, Sicily, 6th century. (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Arula_Kirke_Louvre_CA5956.jpg accessed 12/03/2025) left image (LIMC Kirke 4 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/ms6FfLzrXfiljyG9hPaIUwv.20160505T235344Z accessed 12/03/2025) right image. Side of a small altar depicting female figure identified as Kirke with boar-headed figure (LIMC Kirke 4; Marinatos (2000) p.44). Kirke appears nude, holding a cup and wand, with hair worn in long curls. Front of altar depicts the fight of Heracles and Triton.



Figure 256: Terracotta plaque, Sardis, ca.600. (https://collections.louvre.fr/ark:/53355/cl010259469 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Terracotta plaque depicting winged figure identified as Artemis holding pair of large felines by the tail (LIMC Artemis 37; Shear (1923) p.134). A line at ankle height suggests a long dress but legs appear uncovered. Wings meet across front of figure's body. Head is shown uncovered with hair worn long. Appears to wear boots or sandals which curl at the back.



Figure 257: Vase fragment, Sparta, ca.520. (Simons (2014) p.92) image. Vase fragment which may depict a female figure, possibly Orthia, holding snakes. (Dawkins & Woodward (19091910) p.16) Fragment appears to show feet of a figure wearing a long dress, feet uncovered. Curving snake-like lines visible either side.



Figure 258: Bucchero handle from a Kyathos or Kantharos, Etruscan, late 7th-early 6th century. (https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/289543?position=2 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Vase handle depicting female figure holding pair of large felines. Central figure shown holding felines close together, so few details of body or dress can be discerned. Hair appears to be worn long and braided.



Figure 259: Bucchero handle, Etruscan, Late 7th-early 6th century. (https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/collections/object/289822?position=1 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Vase handle depicting female figure holding pair of large felines. Central figure holds felines close together in front of body so few details of dress or pose can be discerned. Hair appears to be worn long in braids over the shoulders.



Figure 260: Fragment, Samos, ca.625. (Mazet (2017) p.55) image. Fragment which may depict a *Potnia Theron* holding an animal with its paws resting against her skirt. From fragment, central figure appears to wear a long dress with decorated skirt. Upper body and feet are missing due to damage. Some suggestion of fill motifs.



Figure 261: Black figure plaque fragment, Athens, ca.575-525. (https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/record/E8D91E23-EE17-4AB3-B247-3F5697776E99 accessed 12/03/2025) image. Plaque fragment depicting female figure carrying a siren. Figure wears long dress, decorated with star-like motifs and decorated hem, feet are uncovered. Appears to hold siren by the back of the neck. Upper body of central figure does not survive.



Figure 262: Bronze handle, Athens, Archaic Period. (LIMC Potnia (S) 34 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/5zsey1aEVmiXaqBk1xxeKQV.20160505T235927Z accessed 12/03/2025) image. Bronze handle depicting female head surmounted by two horse heads. Face is shown frontally with hair in daedalic style with horizontal divisions. Band worn across head. Horses shown in profile, left horse face mostly missing.

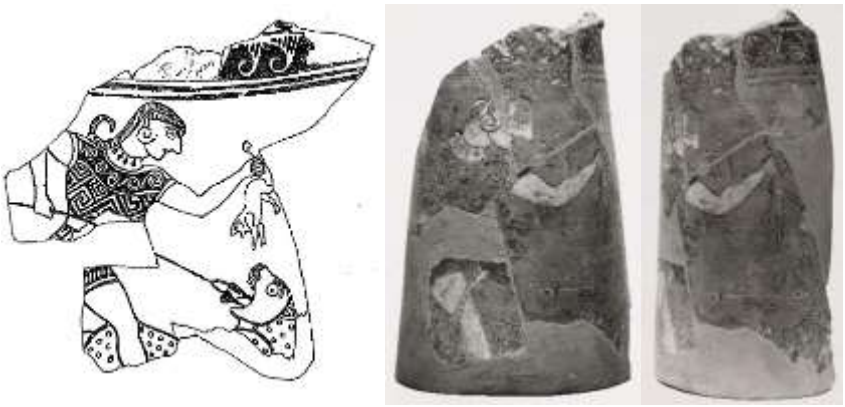


Figure 263: Fragment, Lemnos, 7th century. (LIMC Artemis 935 https://ark.dasch.swiss/ark:/72163/1/080E/NWj4kfliUvOjyVTt4RPh4Qb.20160505T235716Z accessed 12/03/2025) images. Fragment depicting female figure confronting large feline and holding smaller feline above. Central figure wears short *chiton* decorated with meander-like pattern, a necklace with beads and an earring. Hair is worn long at the back of the head. Left hand holds spear, pointed into the mouth of a large feline, while right and holds a smaller feline by the tail.