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Cults of Artemis in Ancient Greece

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ABSTRACT

Artemis was a cruel and wild goddess. Her mythological apparatus was replete with blood and death. Her cults displayed awe-inspiring elements of primitivism. Together with Dionysus, to whom she is mythologically and ritually related, she presents a riddle for the student who tries to understand her place in the Greek pantheon.

In accordance with the modern alertness to the dangers of oversimplification lurking behind sweeping general accounts, I have chosen six particular Artemisian cults in three places of mainland Greece (at Sparta, Athens and Patras) upon which to focus my attention. In the aetiological legends of their foundations the Spartan and Athenian cults share a common origin (located by ancient writers in the distant Black Sea), the supervising deity being identified as Artemis Taurike. They also display remarkable signs of remote antiquity or, as has been proposed, of an archaizing process. Cruel rituals and beliefs associated with primitive magic are conspicuous in these cults but also feature prominently in the two cults in Achaia.

The cult of Artemis Ortheia is comprehensively studied. All the existing ancient evidence, both literary and archaeological, is taken into account in an attempt to give a unified picture of the goddess without neglecting the diversity of disperse elements. By contrast, in the exploration of the three Attic cults selectivity prevails. Here again the emphasis is on what was common among the rituals enacted and the aetiological myths of their foundation, but not all ancient testimonies are considered to be of equal value. Consequently some sources are omitted and others overlooked in the discussion, for the additional reason that the Attic cults have been satisfactorily explored in recent publications. From the aforementioned local cults the focus is then shifted to the Homeric epics. The distinctive feature of Homeric religion is found in the endowment of divine powers with precise Forms and in the understanding of divine forms in anthropomorphic terms of Beauty. The contrast with the Artemisian cults at Patras is striking. There are of course signs in Homer showing that the gods are conceived as Powers, but the heroic epic tradition seems to have opted for the adoration of beauty as an indication of Excellence. How are we to combine the adorable divine maiden of the Homeric epics with the wild power manifested in local cults? Artemis vacillates between virginity conceived as maidenly exquisiteness and celibacy symbolizing natural wilderness.
My hypothesis is that in the eyes of the Greeks, virginity, far from being 'absence' or lack of sexuality (as has often been supposed), was indeed the precondition of fertility. The dynamism of procreation was considered to reside in virginity; hence the strengthening of virginity was regarded as the intensification of procreative power, in much the same way as, in an image drawn from applied physics, the energy to be gathered from a water-stream is enhanced by the use of a dam that arrests the stream's natural course. Such a hypothesis may well be supported by the ancient evidence, and may also account for the second characteristic trait of the Archaic Artemis, namely her wildness. For in wildness, symbolically crystallized in 'forests' and 'hunting-activities', the ancient mind saw, rather than merely a stage antecedent to, and indispensable for, 'civilization' (as the most popular theory assumes), awe-inspiring powerfulness and mighty detachment calling for religious veneration. In the diptych of the complementary contrariety between the Heavenly and the Earthly, the local cults, with their special emphasis on ritual enactment, stressed the maternal side of existence, whereas the Homeric mythology chose to emphasize the masculine principle that is operative in the world. This latter principle when applied to a pre-existing feminine deity, assumes the form of potential fecundity, hence of virginity, as opposed to the actual fertility of motherhood.

The most recent theory on Artemis is that of J.-P. Vernant (and his so-called Paris School). The French scholar claims that Artemis is a goddess of marginality, a deity at home where ambivalence, ambiguity and liminality prevail. This, however, relates more to the modern milieu where marginality and the concomitant ambiguity are conceptual missiles of great heuristic value than to the goddess herself. Artemis was primarily manifested as natural Dynamism. Given the amoral character of natural dynamism she could be munificent or malevolent depending on the circumstances of her manifestation (implied intervention or fully-fledged epiphany). But such a duality does not entitle us to speak of marginality in her case, because in the eyes of the worshippers themselves her being was perfectly well circumscribed and very clearly defined. In contrast to the modern deeply-felt insecurity vis-à-vis the clarity of beings, a distinctive feature of ancient polytheism was the clear-cut delineation of the beings aspiring to the divine order.
To A.L. Pierris

τὰ δὲ πάντα οἰκίζει κεραυνὸς
Heracl. fr. 64 (Diels-Kranz)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

From the invaluable help that I have received from Dr P. Cartledge throughout my studies in Cambridge I would like to single out three consequences that have proven to be of the greatest import for the course of my thought. It was he who first made me realize that the ancient sources do not speak for themselves as I had erroneously assumed previously. It was he who provided me with a sense of the historical dimension and of the changes that accompany the passage of time. And it was he who broadened my intellectual horizons, initiated me in the recent trends of academic discourse (of which I was more than totally ignorant) and thus enabled me to escape the constant threat to all research, the danger that comes under the name of provincialism. For his indefatigable availability whenever a problem arose and his unfailing support during the vicissitudes that are part and parcel of conducting graduate research I find no words to express my indebtedness.

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From the recurring (much against his habits) night-long discussions with Mr P. Dalias, a biologist with special interest in ecology and evolution, I have benefited more than I can tell. He would be surprised to be acknowledged for what I would like to call his keen interest in, or rather loyalty to, the Artemisian field of power, but he would readily realize how very close to one another our respective projects are, separated though they appear by the (ultimately artificial) gap that divides Arts and Sciences. More than a result of contingent circumstances as is usually the case, our friendship is rather based on having 'things in common'.

Shall I also thank Mr A.L. Pierris for having opened a path into the ancient world which would, perhaps for many years to come, have remained for me an inaccessible ideal? I understand that thanking him would be an all too inadequate expression of my gratitude.

Acknowledgement of intellectual debt does not, it goes without saying, alleviate the burden of responsibility which always remains with the author. All the persons mentioned above and countless others of whose influence in shaping my views I am not even aware have a share in the success when the arrow hit the target. But when it fell short of its task, my unskillfulness alone is to blame.

There are φιλοι but there are also φιλαται. Among the Greeks of the student-diaspora it is customary to thank parents for financial support and continuous emotional assistance. However, if, in his traditional reply to Midas, Silenos were wrong and the spontaneous adoration of life be a sign of its self-justification, who can find adequate words to thank those on whose hands our most precious thing, our very existence, has always depended — its coming-into-being and its continuation to the present?
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Originality should not be the absolute goal of an enquiry. If anything essential is to be grasped, the struggle for understanding must follow the steps of past people, more sensitive and recipient than we, who may have posed problems and given answers thereto more accurately than we can. To come back to them would then amount to resurrecting their thoughts —for thoughts too die when not fed properly— or to raising momentarily some postmortem apparitions of the thoughts’ shadowy existence.

Progress is the prerogative of science. I can see it in spacecrafts (and to a much more limited degree, in Western rationalization), but I cannot find its footprints so definitively as is usually assumed in the highly acclaimed Aristotle (except to the extent that he was a scientist) or in psychoanalysis. When human beings and man’s condition in the world are at stake, there is always a question of archaeology, be it a rediscovery of the self or a revelation of long-forgotten primal events. The past qua a 'no-longer' is of no interest except perhaps for a misplaced, if not overdeveloped, human curiosity. By contrast, the past qua present and alive (even if anaesthetized) is of vital importance.

*What can be said at all can be said very clearly; and whereof one cannot speak thereof one must be silent.*

Fine! Nevertheless, the clarity of a thought resides in the clarity of a previous experience. The most meticulously accurate descriptions of sea and sun are bound to remain vague and ineffective to a person born blind. An intimation of religious sentiment is always presupposed when a deity becomes the subject of a discussion. And the occasional mistiness of verbal expression may be elucidated with recourse to what is desired to be conveyed when the appropriate conceptual apparatus is felt to have become stiff and inflexible, fallen as it has into long-term abeyance.

The aim of this study is to shake off some false impressions and to give some new interpretations in points of minor detail which could more adequately fit the overall picture; it is by no means intended to provide an original comprehensive approach to the study of ancient religion, although compatibility with the most general context of Greek culture has always been the ultimate desideratum. In this sense, new interpretations are meant to be elucidations of obsolete truths. The study’s merit, if it has any, lies in the attempt, perhaps deplorably clumsy, to recapture the past (or rather, one important aspect thereof in the ramifications of one of its manifestations) as something not entirely dead,

but neglected and forgotten. Originality, therefore, means to understand the self-same things anew, to recover an original freshness of beholding. What is then considered to be at stake is the preservation of creativity which, like the goddess who is the subject of the following pages, resides in dynamism.

*Amica noveltas, magis amica sapientia.*

For us mortals oblivion amounts to death. The Greeks, from Homer onwards, were well aware thereof. It may be beneficent to return to them if for the umpteenth time...

**Postscript:** In the critical remarks that I launch against the interpretations of modern scholars, nothing more is implied than the particular point in which my view differs from theirs. On the whole I am greatly indebted to all their studies both for the material that has been gathered there and as sources of inspiration. I am not sure that I would know of even the existence of the cults and myths discussed below without them, and certainly I would feel unable to utter a single word about Artemis.

A further point needs to be made. The various aspects of a deity are so indistinguishably interconnected that any linear description of them is bound to be, to a certain extent, repetitive. The contradictions which appear at first sight when a rite is interpreted now in one way and then in another should be resolved with regard to the fact that different associations are in each case explored, the sum total of which consists in the cult in question. It is as if a concrete object is successively seen from various angles and under different light so that its various aspects be grasped. The intrinsic variation of those aspects does not shake the integrity of the object, because it is part of its entity. Moreover, it is by means of this variety of attributes and of their closely interconnected associations that the unity of a deity is established: the different parts constitute the oneness of the whole.

The present thesis is the result of my own research and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration—if reading books, attending lectures and discussing problems with others are not considered to be kinds of intellectual collaboration.
Prolegomena
Studying Ancient Greek Religion

It is indeed an irony that biology which as its name suggests is the science that deals with life cannot properly define its subject-matter. To the prima facie very simple question "what is life?" biology cannot provide a definite answer. Empirically, however, not only the biologist but the layman as well can, in most cases, distinguish an animate being from an inanimate object. Likewise, the study of religion cannot give a satisfactory answer to the question "what is religion?", namely an answer that is broad enough to encompass all known religious beliefs and practices and also specific enough to be meaningful. A provisional answer could suggest that religion is the relationship of man with the divine and furthermore claim that a particular religion is the particular form in which this relationship is manifested in a particular culture. But then the problem seems to be transposed one step farther back, and to be subsequently posed with reference to the 'divine': are we sure that we are making a meaningful statement when we speak, in a rather abstract way, of the divine?
SOME FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF GREEK RELIGION...

To present basic assertions and provide outlines is to make simplifications and neglect aspects that can only be accommodated by roundabout arguments. A clear vision is, however, required before embarking on a detailed analysis of particular (and possibly exceptional) cases. A phaenomenological description silently presupposes what lets itself φαίνεται in the various configurations of the phaenomenological variegation. The following must be understood as the groundwork of a phaenomenology.

Lack of space prevents me from discursively entering the arena of modern conflicting views on the subject. As a result, the following remarks which serve the purpose of being guidelines for the case-studies of Artemis may sound dogmatic. But, as is always the case, they were written after the main part of this thesis was completed, and are, to a large extent, guided thereby.

Immanence and Thisworldliness

Max Weber¹ has brilliantly shown in his major study of the world’s religions, that human religiosity can be divided into two broad categories: the transcendental and the immanent. In transcendental religions, divinity is conceived of as standing outside and above the world. Regardless of whether it is conceived in monotheistic or polytheistic terms, godhead imposes its will from above; divinity strictly so called, is a supra-natural principle which receives legitimation more or less arbitrarily. The envy of one Baal against his co-worshipped fellow gods, as Nietzsche put it, expresses precisely the arbitrariness of transcendental religions. In extreme cases the transcendental deity goes as far in his alienation as to be himself responsible for the creation of the world ex nihilo. In immanent religions, on the other hand, divinity is conceived of as coeval with the world. It is part of the world from eternity and receives legitimation from the natural course of things. The will of gods is expressed from within, through the multifariousness of natural processes of the world itself. Of course, perceptions of the divine may lean to the more phantastic or to the more empirical as the case may be, but, either way, divinity does not stand outside, nor does it oppose the world. Throughout its long history Greek religion is of the second type.

Another distinction again succinctly proposed by Weber may well be in point. A religion can be characterized by either this-wordliness or other-wordliness. This refers to whether a religion seeks salvation in this world, or conversely whether it seeks salvation from this world, namely in another world, promised and to come. Although the

¹Cf. Weber Sociology.
transcendental or immanent conception of divinity is irrelevant to the kind of religious
wordliness that either conception prefers, there seems to be a strong propensity of
transcendental deities towards other-worldliness. It is as if the transcendental gods’
remoteness from, and opposition to, the world lead to an equally transcendental, hence
otherworldly, conception of desirable salvation. In actual fact, things become more
complicated when one tries to classify any one particular religion, because of the
involvement of various other factors which need not concern us here. However, this much
can be ascertained: Greek religion, especially Homeric religion, is characterized by this-
wordliness. Other-worldly elements are, of course, discernible in ancient mysteries (the
prototype of which, in so far as Greece is concerned, is to be found at Eleusis), but these
do not seem to have radically changed the principal religious experience, because the
otherworldly message of the mysteries was secured by means of a truly thisworldly,
indeed chthonic, symbolism of regeneration.

Myth and Cult

It is widely accepted today\(^2\) that, in contrast to the Judaeo-Christian tradition to which the
Western world is historically related, Greek religion had no sacred books, no
institutionalized Church, no authorized version of a Creed, no dogmatic theology. In
contradistinction to what we assume to be a religion since the Middle Ages or even since
the Reformation, Greek religion appears to be extremely liberal (if not pluralistic),
unauthoritative (if not care-free) and tolerant (if not outwardly indulgent). This is not
exactly so.\(^3\) Terms like pluralism and toleration point in the direction of the modern
democratic state based as it is on the acceptance of human rights (to uncensored
expression and religious freedom, for instance) and on the strict separation between
secular and sacred authorities, both of which concepts were almost entirely unknown in
ancient times. The fact, however, remains that Greek religion lacked the instruments

\(^2\) Cf. Brui-Zaidman and Schmitt-Pantel *Religion* 11-15; Finley *Legacy* 4; Easterling and Muir *Religion*
xxv (Finley) and 98 (Cartledge); Garland *Religion* ix...

\(^3\) What ancient polytheism could do was absorb foreign deities by providing them with a place in the
official sacred calendar and perhaps also in the recognized pantheon (cf. the case of Bendis in "Artemis in
Attica"). It could also allow for private worship of foreign deities to the extent that their pilgrims did not
interfere in the public arena. But when absorption and allowance failed, there was no room for toleration.
The alien divinities should be banned. Without underestimating the political motivation that played a
major part in Socrates’s trial after the collapse of Athens at the end of the Peloponnesian War, the
accusations brought against him should also be taken at face value. The reference to the introduction of
foreign deities into the public stage in the indictment of the trial (an allusion, in all likelihood, to
Socrates’s *daimonion*) was not meant as a mere pretext of a more serious crime which, after the amnesty
following the collapse of the totalitarian regime of the Thirty Tyrants, could not be spelled out (viz.
Socrates’s friendly relations with some of the main representatives of the regime, such as Kritias). The
accusation was taken seriously by the democratic court for what it was: an undervaluation of, if not
outward neglect for, acknowledged gods, coupled with an introduction of unknown beings presumed to
be divine (cf. the excellent Garnsey "Toleration"; see also Momigliano "Tolerance" and Dover
"Freedom").
through which the preservation and orthodoxy of Judaism and Christendom were and are secured. How did it then manage to preserve its identity? The answer should, I think, be sought in cult: it was through meticulous execution of rituals and insistence on the unerring worshipping of gods that ancient religion was prevented from falling to pieces. Justification and support for particular cults were provided by appropriate myths (now rather misleadingly called aetiological) which were, in most cases, supposed to have originated by imitation of a god-like example or through divine command - either directly or, most notably, through a Delphic oracle.

Myth and Cult are the two corner-stones of Greek religion. 4 In a religious context, a minimal definition of myth would be: 'a thing said', whereas the same for cult would be: 'a thing done'. The question that has embarrassed many modern scholars concerning the precedence of cult over myth, or conversely the priority of myth to cult, is badly posed. Myth is language and language is semantic voice. Similarly, ritual is gesture and gesture is semantic motion. Both myth and ritual are, therefore, meaningful means of expression of a verbal and bodily order respectively. What makes them meaningful is their symbolic nature which raises them from the level of animal practicality in pursuing an instinctual goal to that of a spiritual event. The spirituality of an event consists in the recognition of a logos. It follows that a wider understanding of logos (than is usually assumed) would make this concept applicable to both myth and cult. Participation in logos is no more what makes out of a mythical narrative a meaningful statement about reality than what makes out of a ritual activity a semantic deed. Semantic motion does not, in any meaningful way, precede language, nor is there a point in making the statement that ritual, generally and as a rule, precedes myth. The school of the study of classical religions that has come to be known as the Cambridge Ritualists seems then to have been permeated by the then very powerful Darwinian theory of evolution. 5

A Modification of the Evolutionist Approach

A religious phenomenon is a phenomenon replete with mysterious power. The simultaneity of finiteness and infiniteness in any Greek religious phenomenon is excellently grasped by Usener when he writes6:

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4 Cf. Otto Dionysos 7-46; Burkert Religion. Myth and Cult as such are not, it is true, indigenous categories of Greek thought but they describe a cultural reality that was 'realized' by means of a much more variegated nomenclature by the Greeks themselves (cf. Calame "Mythe").

5 For a critique of the Cambridge-Ritualists see Calder Ritualists and Versnel Transition, 16ff. (cf. Versnel "Sauce").

6 Usener Götternamen 276.

By contrast, Harrison wrote:

In fact in a word religious presentation, mythology or theology, as you like to call it, springs like ritual from arrested, unsatisfied desires. We figure to ourselves what we want, we create an image and that image is our god.

The intellectual shift of probably the best representative of the Cambridge Ritualists from the approach exhibited in the Prolegomena to that of the more theory-laden and concluding Epilegomena via the sociology of Themis seems to have been a conversion to humanism.

A sentiment of plenitude precedes the experience of a want in order to make it possible as such. True, the realization of human deficiency and incapacity, be it expressed as an unsatisfied desire or a general awareness of limitedness, is indeed responsible for the making of gods. But instead of saying that want *per se* creates the gods, we would better say that it is the realization of want, which moreover presupposes an experience of fullness, that is held responsible for the emergence of gods. As a consequence, gods may spring from arrested desires, but in a different sense. Far from being *caused* or *created* by these desires as the images thereof, gods are merely *stimulated* thereby: divine potential existence is endowed with potent actuality. If the images of gods were merely the figures of want, the gods would never play the powerful role assigned to them in the history of the world’s religions.

If religion does not presuppose a god to begin with, it is very reasonable to assume that myths are later-stage developments because they relate the stories of heroes and deities. A stage where ritual exists without being addressed to a particular god follows perfectly well from the assumption that mythology is a secondary development primarily originating in a presumed misconception of ritual (cf. Frazer’s definition of myth as 'mistaken explanation of ritual'). Within the framework of the Ritualist School this analytical scheme fits beautifully. Moreover, the evolutionary approach held by the Ritualists or any similar school of religious studies, accounts perfectly well for the later creation of divine beings, of gods proper, with recourse to the supposedly increased

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7Harrison Epilegomena 28.
requirements of the next stage of human evolution. The evolutionist approach could be schematically described as follows:

Ritual —> (Gods) —> Mythology —> Gods.

The gods in brackets are the vague entities (not yet personalities) which mythology uses in its purely etiological function; the last 'gods' are those created by mythology through this process.

By modifying the meaning and applications of 'evolution' we may be better equipped to find a way toward a satisfactory explanation. Human evolution together with its implications and possible inferences may be misleading, even plainly fallacious, when it is applied to a hypothetical human 'substance' which progressively evolves as time passes by. When by evolution we mean the progress of man from the first (hypothetical or 'attested') semi-human anthropoid through stages of hunting and fruit-collection, cattle breeding, horticulture and agriculture, and finally 'high culture' to the last development of the present (i.e. the Western post-industrial era of highly advanced technological equipment), the notion of evolution is wrong. For it co-ordinates different cultures in a unilinear scheme that takes it for granted that in tracing the historical development (by appropriate selection of what seems worthy of mention) the previous stage (or what is assigned to that position) is worse than the next stage which is in principle better. In point of fact, Near Eastern art is seen as the precursor of the artistic achievements of the Greek classical period, whereas Greek science is the antecedent of the European seventeenth century and so on and so forth accordingly with reference to the specific subject matter of each particular evolution to be traced. This notion of evolution is less conspicuously false, for it provides a sense of continuity which seems sometimes indispensable for the understanding of historical processes. With modifications and elaborations it is still employed today. But although evolution, we are now in a position to affirm, should not be applied to mankind as a whole, it can nevertheless be applied to each particular culture seen in its entirety. In an Aristotelian way of reasoning, evolution would then mean development and unfolding until a thing reaches the proper actuality of its appropriate nature. Full of potency a culture progresses, triumphally reaches its climax and then declines. Such could, it follows, be the case with religion too. (And this is not in fact an argument by analogy, because I take religion to be the quintessential crystallization of the culture which generates it.)

As a consequence, the evolutionary scheme can be modified as follows:


The temporal precedence of Myth over Cult or vice versa is not a matter of historical process or a matter of principle, but should be decided with reference to each particular mythico-religious couplet in question. The 'Gods' in brackets are the Augenblick Götter of the sensitive Usener.
Greek Religion and Nature

If the myth is something said and the cult something done, the problem that arises next must concern the stimulus which causes, or rather, has caused since time immemorial, the emergence of myth and cult as the basic elements of religion. The route towards the solution of this riddle should, I think, be sought in the direction of the primal relationship of Man with the World as a whole. It seems that as soon as the Greek mind became aware of itself (as soon as it found its appropriate nature, ἐν τῷ οἰκείῳ φύσιν, as Aristotle would say), to wit already in Homer, it thought of man as just one part of a multifarious and mighty Nature (not yet so called, for Nature is a later-stage discovery of speculative thought8) which manifested its invincible power through the rhythmical recurrence of the same. Contrary to what we moderns might think, the faultless regularity of natural phenomena (the perpetual alternation of Day and Night, the monthly waxing and waning of the Moon, the stable succession of seasons, etc.) instead of indicating a mechanistic causality, were taken to prove divine harmony. It was by means of this regularity that the divine element was revealed. Thus, the Greek mind found the Extra-Ordinary in the Ordinary. The Mystery of Nature is not a mysterious Miracle that neglects, or is even opposed to, the natural course of things. Rather, the primal miraculous event consists in, and is caused by, the naturalness of the world.9

The primal realization of Man’s Being-In-The-World and the concomitant feeling of Bewilderment and Mystery before the lawfulness of Nature lead to a spontaneous response to the external reality. The linguistic aspect of this response assumes the character of myth, whereas the more bodily and gestural aspect becomes ritual and cult. In this sense, the pronouncement of a god’s name could be seen as the aboriginal form of mythical expression,10 whereas facing the sky with hands upright or kneeling and looking at the earth could be regarded as the aboriginal forms of cultic expression. I do not actually take these examples to be by necessity historically correct (though some ancient evidence suggests that they were) but I would like to emphasize that the simultaneous genesis of myth and cult as distinct, yet complementary, modes of primal response to Nature conceived as divine, bypasses the problem of the precedence of one over the other as not only insoluble for want of adequate evidence, but as also unimportant. Myth and

8The ancient Greek concept of Nature could be either normative or descriptive. When normative, it was modeled on excellence or ‘bestness’ (ἄρετή of any kind). Descriptive it was whenever inferiority was regarded as natural (as for instance in the Aristotelian theory of natural inequality, culminating in his natural slavery, for which see my "Inequality" with relevant bibliography). But since Nature was considered to denote primarily excellence, and only secondarily reality, the real crux of the concept as felt by the Greeks lay in the combination of the two. Here I take Nature to refer to the wide spectrum of forces operative in this world.
10Cf. Cassirer Langage.
Cult, different though they are, originate from the same root which is the realization of being-in-the-world on the part of man who subsequently becomes a worshipper of nature. In this sense to oppose the Ritualists’ thesis by claiming that “myth and ritual are autonomous phenomena [that are] governed by [their] own [different] structural laws”11 is an exaggeration in the opposite direction. As a result of the emergence of Myth and Cult, religion turns out to be the specific mode of a particular relationship of Man with the Divine. The particularity of the relationship is due to, and is summarized by, the fact that divinity is simultaneously different from, and identical with, Nature itself. The fallacy and banality of the naturalist allegorical interpretations of ancient religion (Max Muller’s, for instance) lie precisely in their inability to understand such a paradoxical dual relationship of divinity vis-à-vis Nature.

The givenness of the concept of Nature has in recent years been seriously challenged. People are now less willing to accept that there is a Nature that exists out there irrespective of man’s intellectual conceptualization thereof. Nature is now regarded as a cultural construction that has been designed and built up by means of a great expense of human mental labour but which, otherwise, does not exist in and of itself. It is true that what has been ascribed to Nature over the centuries since its primal conceptual discovery in Archaic Greece can easily be discredited as nothing but ideology based ultimately on class- and gender-struggles. It is equally true that such a concept’s unquestionable acceptance can be applied to so many different contexts in so many different ways, and the concept itself can be manipulated in such divergent directions, that its content becomes blurred and meaningless. Finally, it is true that in the modern academic milieu the bringing of nature into a discussion is not met with a spontaneous, if unconscious, response. In most cases, nature is considered to be a hollow word devoid of any significance whatsoever of which we would better, if for reasons of clarity, dispose entirely as soon as possible. However, Nature’s heuristic value for dealing with questions of intellectual history arising from the study of the culture in which this concept was first given birth is great. We must first understand the intellectual language of the ancient Greeks before we may legitimately seek to translate it into the terms of our own conceptual apparatus.

It is commonly assumed that the emergence of philosophy in the early sixth century B.C. with the semi-historical, semi-legendary figure of Thales marked a sudden rupture with the traditional worldview of religion as described in the Homeric epics. The emergence of philosophy is usually linked to the emergence of the Archaic polis and the two features are supposed to be the pointers, on the intellectual and the social plane respectively, of the new outlook that was to be developed in the succeeding centuries.12 In fact, the rupture that occurred in Archaic Greece was not of the sort that we have been

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11 Graf Mythology, 116.
12 Cf. Vernant Origines; Snodgrass Archaic 160-200.
accustomed to think that it was. The intellect did not emancipate itself from the realm of Objective Being, but remaining, conversely, totally permeated thereby sought to give a rational articulation of the pre-existing experience of Nature. The great triumph of the Presocratics was that they managed to forge a language based on rationality which enabled them to get away from the mythical conception of the world without necessarily betraying its meaning. The transition from religion to philosophy¹³ (which, it is worth remembering, was never in the ancient world completely victorious for the 'progressive' side¹⁴) was an intellectual advance, the significance of which can hardly be overemphasized. But it was primarily a change of the linguistic and intellectual means employed to explain, and relate to, the external world, rather than a change of outlook. In the context of the new language revealed through the creative effort of the Archaic philosophers, the concept of Nature is perhaps the 'discovery' with the most far-reaching consequences. But religion equally referred to Nature avant la lettre.

The 'divine' refers to the primal cause that renders things meaningful, that provides them with an aim and integrates their being. The attempt of the Ionian physiologues to find a common substance in all worldly things was a search for the divine, in the sense of the most precious, because unalterable, element which undergoes changes without itself ever being changed. The first among them, who stressed the generative aspect of moisture and accordingly discerned water in everything, is reported to have said that all things are full of gods¹⁵: the spirit of his teaching will not be altered if it be proven that the wording is not his. And the two most eminent representatives of the philosophy that flourished in Italy in the first half of the fifth century, Parmenides¹⁶ and Empedocles¹⁷, similarly designated the result of their speculations as divine. If their language is, in modern accounts, considered to be metaphorical, this relates more to the perplexity of the modern investigators than to the ancient understanding of what it is to be divine. In a similar spirit the Heracleitean all-permeating fire and the logos common to all beings are understood to be divine¹⁸, and the 'mythological' Erinyes who prevent the sun from transcending its ordered course¹⁹ are the principles of cosmic harmony.

It would seem to be a fair, if provocative, assertion to say that the immanence of divinity was never denied in Greece, not even by Plato, the fabricator of the supposedly transcendental Forms. A passage in the cosmological Timaeus, in fact the very end of the dialogue, blatantly states that the existing world is the most beautiful conceivable cosmos

¹⁶Parm. fr. 1 (Diels-Kranz).
¹⁷Emped. fr. 6 (Diels-Kranz).
¹⁸Heracl. frs. 2, 30, 31, 114.
¹⁹Heracl. fr. 94 (Diels-Kranz).
that could ever have existed. Its beauty is the product of the skilful demiurgue that arranged everything in order.

Ancient Greek Culture ascribes divinity solely to Nature. Already in Homer, above even the rule of the father of mortals and immortals stands Moira. If translated into our own language, Moira would be both Nature and History. Nature, because it never goes against the predictions and commandments of the natural constitution of beings. Or when it seemingly does, it is only because of a lack of deeper knowledge of what is natural that goes into play. And History, because it is the principle which provides the course of things with their ultimate justification. Nature does nothing in vain, the ancient philosopher proclaimed, and the same holds true for History seen from the point of view of the overall harmony of the world. When there appears to be an injustice, it is always for the sake of a larger (ergo, from the limited human perspective, hidden) justice. Greek tragedy insisted thereon to the point of making further justification of the claim sound redundant.

The Greek tendency to ban the fantastic and the unnatural from the worldly stage can be illustrated from the way in which the Homeric heroes come into contact with the sphere of the godhead and sense the presence of the various gods: Athena is whispering her counsel in the ear of her protégé, and Diomedes or Odysseus take notice of her presence through the revelatory thoughts that suddenly suggest themselves to them; the flight of the birds is an omen indicative of Zeus’s will; the tremor that unexpectedly haunts the Achaeans is sent by Apollo as a manifestation of his power; when Paris is unable to harness his desire for the beautiful Helen the intervention is Aphrodite’s. In all these instances nothing abnormal happens. The divine epiphany is not a transgression and an aberration from the natural course of things. The miraculous and the extraordinary are natural events of extreme emotional potential, during which another sphere of existence, the powerful existence of the gods, is, as it were, unconcealed, dis-covered, in a flash of light. In contradistinction when the immortal steed of Achilles predicts in human voice the imminent death of the best of the Achaeans and reminds the hero of the yoke of untresspassable necessity that is to be suffered by all things mortal, the same Heracleitean Erinyes intervene to deprive the horse of the semantic voice that is not intrinsically his.

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20 Plat. Tim. 92b.  
22 Hom. II. XIX, 407-418.
The Relevance of Myth

Myth is the ordered narrative of something we refer to as real in a specific sense: the commonly assumed historicity of the myth by the members of the society in which the myth is alive, is the expression of its relevance.\(^2\)\(^3\) The myth is real, even when admittedly considered to be historically inaccurate\(^2\)\(^4\), because the outcome of the mythical deeds, (and, prior to that, the outcome of the mythical naming) is of utmost relevance to our lives. The psychoanalytic concepts of id, ego, superego and the like are, in this sense, mythical persons. They are endowed with particular attributes (resistance, will etc.), although the process towards anthropomorphism has not been completed in their case, because it runs counter to the modern conception of scientific truth. Similarly, the Big Bang is the contemporary mythological event of Creation, and the Optimism of the Enlightenment a specific mythological attitude.

The philosophic notion of ἀρχή comes very close to the way in which myth is perceived and experienced in a myth-permeated society. ἀρχή is either beginning or principle (or both at once). On the one hand, Myth, as a narrative describing divine and heroic deeds that are well-placed in time, refers to the beginnings of things, to the time when the world as we know it had not yet been fixed; rather, it was the divine and heroic actions that produced the ordered cosmos that we all experience. The relevance of Myth in the present, on the other hand, is its ubiquitousness. A mythological legend, its entertaining aspect aside, is worth reciting again and again because not only do the actions thereby described account for the existence of a particular ritual, institution or physical event and explain how it originally came about, but, moreover, because these very actions as the principles of preservation and stability of an existing reality are operative in the present.\(^2\)\(^5\) In the thought that Demeter may have ceased to mourn the disappearance of her daughter, the descent of Persephone to Hades, in the thought that she may have stopped performing the self-same act every year, the efficiency of the Eleusinian Mysteries is immediately shattered. Mythological deeds are at once situated in illo tempore and in the hic et nunc. The assumed historicity of the mythical events is the expression of the relevance of myth in the present.

Myth, Truth and Being-in-the-World

All societies give linguistic expression to their constituent experiences. The result of this process is a simple or complex Fundamental Myth in which a society believes, and with

\(^2\)\(^3\) Cf. Veyne *Myths?*; Detienne *Invention*.
\(^2\)\(^4\) Cf. Brillante "History" and Cartledge *Greeks* 18-35.
\(^2\)\(^5\) Cf. Eliade *Aspects* and *Retour*. 
reference to which all things become meaningful. But we should stop short of inferring from the apparent diversity of existing mythologies that myth is an arbitrary creation of human imagination of which human progress will sooner or later dispose. The universal distribution of myth is in itself indicative of the indispensability of myth for human existence. But if something is indispensable for the existence of something else, then the former’s ontological priority is sufficiently demonstrated.

What is ontologically superior and chronologically antecedent to human existence is the world as a whole. The world as whole is called, in philosophical jargon, Being as such. A stage where no world (in the sense of an ordered cosmos) exists is imaginable and conceivable - it may even, under certain circumstances, be meaningful. But a stage where Being as such is entirely absent, as distinct from being hidden, is not imaginable at all. It is Being as such that we cannot escape, rather than the idealistic category of the empty Space à la Kant.

Myth is not necessarily opposed to Truth, nor is mythos in predetermined conflict with logos. The μυθος of Thucydides is no more meant as an accusation (in the sense of the fantastic, exaggerated and unreal) than the λογος of Herodotus, and the Platonic Protagoras can ask his audience whether they prefer to listen to a logos or a mythos, because he understands that the two have the same heuristic value. The interchangeability of mythos and logos in the opening scene of the Trachiniae is a very revealing case in point.

Plutarch says that truth relates to myth in the same way as the sun relates to the rainbow; there is, in a sense, a causal relationship, myth being the effect of the dissipation of luminous truth which is the cause. The iridescent variety produced by the mixing of light with what is not light is the sensual world that surrounds us. As the sun is the ultimate cause of the rainbow, so is truth the ultimate cause of myth. Now we can see why Greek intellectuals (as distinct from the laymen for whom the logical inconsistencies of myths did not present a problem) sometimes referred to the μυθος as to a container of lies. It is true to say that unless one ascends to, and perceives, the ultimate cause of the rainbow, i.e. the sun, one cannot fully account for the existence of the rainbow. It is, however, no less true that the rainbow is not a lie (in the sense of a deception) because it is an existent. Here lies the purely meta-physical foundation of truth (which should not be confused with any idealistic conception thereof). And here the assumed tension between truth and myth is resolved. Because myth represents the world of appearances, myth is the outcome (and from an empiricist perspective also the ground) of truth. Unless truth

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26 Cf. Detienne "ἈΛΗΘΕΙΑ".  
27 Thuc. I, 22.  
28 Herod. V, 36.  
29 Plat. Prot. 320c.  
30 Soph. Trach. 60-67.  
31 Plut. De Isid. et Osir. 20 = Mor. 358f
becomes emancipated from the existing reality, i.e. from the world of myth, the battles between truth and myth, however cruel, fierce and excruciating they may occasionally be, will always remain quarrels between next-of-kin. In so far as the ancient world goes, in the battlefield of the myth-versus-truth antagonism, the matricidal crime of Orestes was never committed. Its destructive consequences (for Athena supplies only a legalistic solution) were thus evaded.

In the framework of modern science and Western rationalism, myth is opposed to truth as to its very unreconcilable antithesis (in a non-dialectical sense). But rationalism is just one way of perceiving reality, it is not the only way. Mathematical quantification, the ideal, that is, to which all rationalism aspires, gives an uncontestably fair but limited and one-sided picture of the world. In his reply to E. Jünger’s contribution (»Über die Linie«) to the dedicatory volume for M. Heidegger’s sixtieth anniversary, the German philosopher wrote:

Reason and its conceptions are only one kind of thinking and are by no means determined by themselves but by that which has been called thinking, to think in the manner of ratio.

The Myth of the modern world is the Myth of Science and Rationalism. But since rationalism opposes myth, there is a point (for reasons of clarity at least) in making the distinction between societies that are truly myth-permeated and those that are not.

The Chthonic and the Olympian

There are two strands to be discerned in Greek religion: the Chthonic and the Olympian. The Greeks were well aware of the difference between them. Chthonic deities were worshipped at night, their altars were close to the ground (βόθρος, ἔσχάρα), sacrifices to them were all-burnt offerings (δολοκατωμία), the victims chosen were preferably black. Olympian deities, by contrast, had large and occasionally very elaborate altars (βομός), their worship was a day-light affair performed under the all-seeing eye of the sun, the victims chosen were preferably white and, apart from the portion left on the altar to burn and nourish by the ascending smoke the heavenly immortals, the meat was cooked and distributed to the participants.

32Jünger Passage.
33Heidegger Question 39.
34Cf. Burkert Religion 199ff.
Various complex combinations of the Chthonic and Olympian elements can be found in particular cults. A phenomenological survey of Greek religious practices may blur the distinction which, for the most part, was kept intact. When in a given case the elements are fused, it is worth studying the reasons that have led to the fusion (which must not necessarily be a historical confusion of strata).

The Chthonic is essentially beyond good and evil; it is unlimited productivity, lack of form, tremendous power of bringing-forth. Its essence lies in unconditioned, unrestrained, almost arbitrary, Procreation. It is permeated by no principle of Form, no Order. It is chaotic eternal outflow. Its justification, which lies outside any ethical mode of being, consists in that it is. In this sense, it has no goal other than being what it is, no aim other than bringing into being. Hence, it is purposeless. When an ethics develops from the Chthonic principle, its sole concern is the tremendous importance of procreation as exhibited in the maternal blood ties.

The Olympian, by contrast, is essentially good and beautiful; it is the principle of Order, Form and Individuation. Its essence, the dynamism of which presupposes a telos, consists in Perfection and Excellence. It is essentially purposeful, generating an eros for the Best.

So far as our (primarily archaeological) evidence can go, the Chthonic and the Olympian are strata in the developmental sense to the extent that in ancient religion the more 'primitive' outlook in the first place stressed, and dwelled upon, the chthonic principle of reality to the detriment of the Olympian. The chthonic aspect of a deity, almost unilaterally focused upon in the beginning, engenders (and can be held responsible for the emergence of) the Olympian element in due course. What lies under the earth and what by nature resists daylight is the efficient cause of the formidable luminous presence, the flower proper, to come to the fore later. Since such a process is accomplished inside time (whence it assumes the form of a temporal succession), the chthonic element is in historical terms the substratum of that of which the Olympian element is the superstructure (and the newcomer for that matter).

However, the Chthonic and the Olympian are not strata in the developmental sense to the extent that the Chthonic was never completely effaced (nor could it have been, for...

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35 The fusion of the Chthonic and the Olympian in many instances of Greek religious experience has caused serious reservations concerning the pertinence and applicability of the dichotomy in doing justice to the available evidence. The discussion has been recently rekindled by two very interesting articles where a re-examination of the (pre-)conceptions of past explorers of Greek religion has been attempted. I take sides, of course, with Scullion ('Olympian') against the skepticism of Schlesier ('Olympian'), acknowledging, however, that some of the latter's reservations are more than justified. An organic, as opposed to a stiff, strictly delineated and rigidly taxonomic, understanding of the two terms as representing principles of reality (both of which are indispensable for any fully integrated being, be it divine) may overcome most of the pragmatic difficulties that a close examination of the ancient evidence will raise. The relationship of the Chthonic-Olympian dichotomy to the two distinct ancient conceptions of godhead (viz., 'gods and men share a common origin' vs. 'the gap between mortals and immortals is unbridgeable') is brilliantly grasped by Guthrie Gods 113ff.

36 Cf. Nilsson History 152.
this would result in the collapse of the entire religious system). When ancient Greek religion reached maturity (i.e. in the Archaic Age) the Olympian principle of reality, excellently manifested in the Homeric gods, took precedence over the Chthonic. But this can only mean that the bright and admirable sides of divinity were duly emphasized in their radiant splendour; it cannot and should not mean that the chthonic element was forgotten, estranged and had fallen into oblivion. Any individual deity which can be named and perceived in a concrete form, however chthonic its functions are, has within it a tiny portion of Olympianism. However, a tendency to neglect the chthonic foundation of all that is, began to appear with the classical era and seems to have been the primal concern of Aeschylus’ Oresteia. The fifth century shows perspicuous signs of what has been pointedly called "the Hybris of Order". The theological instruction that Aeschylus seems to have intended to give in 458 B.C. to his arrogant compatriots who had won Marathon, is that 'chthonicity' is the inalienable support for any kind of Olympian glory.

The two elements are, therefore, archetypal principles of the constitution of the world. Their union is symbolically expressed in ritual form as a sacred marriage (i.e. oμος γάμος). All Greek 'theologians' from Homer onwards refer to the primal couple that exists in the beginning of time. The names under which the two primordial beings are known differ from one poetic account to the other. But, in all cases, their copulation is held responsible for the generation of the cosmos. All worldly beings are products of the earthly womb which is impregnated by the heavenly moisture.

What gives actual birth, the maternal uterus, is more procreative and 'parental' than what begets, viz. the fatherly semen. No wonder, therefore, that the masculine principle was originally subordinate to the feminine principle. In the earliest theogony proper that has come down to us, in Hesiod’s account of the constitution of the world, the generation of Ouranos is a parthenogenic emanation from the bowels of Gaia.

**Allegory and Symbol**

To think the name sometimes suffices for the elucidation of the concept. Allegory is to speak of one thing by means of another. And this pertains to all fields of semantics. To paint a beautiful maiden and call the picture 'spring' is to paint in allegorical terms. In allegory the signifier and the signified are kept distinct: the one points and refers to the other, although there is a way of referring to the signified in a more direct way. The entity 'spring' (content) can be referred to as 'spring' (word); and we know that the spring is not

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37Pieris "Hellenistic" 144.
38In the Hesiodic cosmogonic account other beings, it is true, interfere for the creation of the cosmos (such as Chaos, Night, Eros etc.), but the importance of the Earth and of her son (the Sky) with whom she copulates is emphatically stressed.
39Cf. Gadamer *Beautiful*. 
a beautiful maiden, but simply a season. The method of allegoresis in the study of mythology may be said to go back to the sixth century B.C. with Theagenes of Rhegium.\textsuperscript{40} If Hera is the air and Artemis is the moon, then to speak of Hera and of Artemis instead of what is properly meant thereby is to speak allegorically.

By contrast, the symbol is what is immediately recognized as what it is and what can at once express its meaning. There is, of course, a duality in the symbolic no less than in the allegorical. But the difference between the two lies in the fact that the symbolic duality is immanent in the symbol, whereas the allegorical duality disjoins the allegory from the thing meant allegorically.

In the original Greek conception of the term, the \textgreek{σύμβολα} are tokens of recognition. A coin or an ankle is cut into two pieces and the two \textgreek{συμβαλλόμενα} persons recognize one another when they realize that the two \textgreek{σύμβολα} fit together. In this sense, Plato and Aristotle could refer to sexual attraction as a symbolic union.\textsuperscript{41} A man meets a woman (or another man, as the case may be) and he 'remembers' her; he recognizes in her the symbol that he has missed and longs for; his desire derives from a symbolic recognition.

The symbolic is the expression of something other than the symbol itself which, nevertheless, could not have been expressed otherwise. This leads to a symbolic or tautegorical (as opposed to allegorical) interpretation of mythology, the great significance of which for an understanding of Greek religion Schelling was the first to recognize. In recognizing religion as the field of the symbolic \textit{par excellence} Schelling acted in accordance with the subject matter: his realization was a realization necessitated by the fundamental law of an immanent religion, the law of the symbolic. Hence, the tautegorical interpretation of religious symbolism is the theoretical (or philosophical) mode of understanding religion that is intrinsic to religion itself. For, by not reducing religion to something else, 'tautegory' seeks to understand religion from within.

To say that a symbol \textit{is} this or that may be misleading, because it assumes that the symbol is used in order to cover things and obscure their meaning. (This may occasionally happen with bad symbolic art, but then symbolism is used homonymously. A symbol that prevents clarity of vision is no symbol in the true sense at all.) If the symbol is what causes recognition, it can be equated with the symbolized, it is indeed identical therewith, because if the symbolized could be expressed by itself, the symbol would never have been used in the first place: it would have been redundant, for the symbolized could have manifested itself without the mediation of the symbol.

When the decipherment of a symbol is needed, the symbol seems to be past its prime, to have lost its power to signify the symbolized. The symbol turns out to be a

\textsuperscript{40}Diels-Kranz FVS 1 51-52.
riddle when it does not immediately indicate the symbolized, when it no longer finds spontaneous response. The spontaneity of the response to the symbol is established in the original context in which the symbol as such initially emerges. This context is the living culture in which the symbol has the power to conjure up the symbolized, without any need of meditation.

The Historical Archetype as a Work of Art

The plane where the symbolic naturally thrives the most is the domain of great fine art. What pre-eminently characterizes a work of art — be it transient (like poetry or music) or visual (like sculpture and architecture) — is its naturalness. The great effort made by the artist, the pains he took, during a masterpiece’s conception and execution are concealed, or rather demolished by the very presence of the work of art. When this condition is not fulfilled, the work of art is not worthy of the title. Thus, the work of art appears, or rather stands there, as a natural offspring. Its naturalness is an expression of its harmony: nothing can be added to, or taken away from, it, nothing can be changed without simultaneously jeopardizing its overall perfection.

The work of art stands there in the most profound sense of existence. The essence of its profound standing—there is that the work of art is a symbol. The work of art as a symbol can never be exhausted by analytical interpretations regarding its 'meaning'. Its grandeur lies precisely in the mystery that it continues to radiate when all analytical interpretations have failed (i.e. when they have mostly succeeded in accounting for its success).

In addition to its other parameters, a Greek myth can be seen as a linguistic work of art: linguistic, because the means employed for its composition and transmission is language, and work of art, because it is the product of a long process of distilled experience with reference to its subject matter, whence its structure and ability to move seem to derive. Similarly, a Greek ritual can be seen as a gestural work of art: gestural, because the means employed for its coming-into-being and stabilization is a bodily action, and work of art, because in the crystallized form in which most rituals are known to us they are products of meticulous attention to what we could call the semantics of body language.

Since the language of mythology and the language of ritual are symbolic, the gods to which they refer are symbols. The gods as symbols are, therefore, works of art. But in order to distinguish the symbols of mythology and ritual from the symbols which the gods are, we may say that the gods are the arche-symbols. The Neoplatonists referred to them as Archetypes.
The World as a Whole Seen from a Particular Angle

It is in the essence of polytheism that no god or goddess, no divine personality or heroic figure stands alone. It is in the essence of polytheism that the divine is fragmented or to be more precise (since fragmentation presupposes lost unity and assumes disintegration, which is not the case in Greek religion) that the divine becomes apparent and crystal-clear in a variety of archetypical manifestations. It is in the essence of polytheism that it has many deities with different, even opposite and mutually incompatible interests and claims. However, as the fact that no human leg exists outside a human body does not prevent the medical researcher from analysing the leg's mechanics, describing its function, classifying its known diseases and possible injuries etc., so the fact that Artemis, say, is not the only deity of the Greek pantheon does not prevent us from focusing exclusively on her, if temporarily and for analytic purposes. Here lies the error, indeed the one-sidedness, of structuralism. Structuralism correctly sensed that by studying one particular god, as some earlier, especially German or Teutonic-inspired scholars did in monographs, one loses sight of the whole picture; but the device which structuralism contrived in order to remedy the situation, polar opposition or complementary polarity, is no less narrow. A polytheism consisting of Artemis alone is unthinkable because it is absurd. But equally absurd is a polytheistic religious system that consists of Artemis and Aphrodite, or Artemis and Hera, or Artemis and Demeter, or Artemis and Apollo or Artemis and whatever god you choose as her complementary or antithetical counterpart. 42

To resume the medical parallel, the leg, when not studied analytically on its own, is not understood with reference to the arm, but to the totality of the living organism of which it forms a part. Further mistrust is excited by structuralism when one realizes that a god or goddess, unlike any leg or arm, possesses not a part of godhead, but the entire divinity in its fully-blown substance all the time, even in his or her least conspicuous epiphanies. 43

Gods and goddesses under favourable circumstances reach maturity. Not all of them, however, are allowed to do so. There are divinities whose role in the pantheon is

42 Cf. the (omnipresent, but most reasonably defended by Vernant "Théorie") structuralist antithesis between the Orphic-Pythagorean meat-abstinence and the Dionysian omophagy with properly performed sacrifice as the norm and golden mean halfway through the extremes. One would be justified in raising some questions: i) Was sacrifice unintelligible or meaningless before the emergence of Orphism and Pythagoreanism around the sixth c. B.C.?, ii) Was omophagy a means of feeding the raging maenad, or should the Dionysian ritual be understood with reference to its own symbolic content? iii) Did abstinence from meat and life-long fasting shake the foundations of pagan belief revolving as it so eminently did around the act of sacrifice which was performed in virtually all religious ceremonies, and if a subversive attitude on the part of the fasters is taken to be proven, how could the report de Abstinentia of so eminent a supporter of traditional practices as Porphyry be accommodated?

43 Cf. the remarks made about the statue of Zeus at Olympia by Calasso Marriage 171.
from the very beginning subordinate, and whose coming-into-being depends broadly or even exclusively on the needs of pre-existing deities. The second-rate divine beings are destined never to attain anything but a servile status which may even be lowered if the function which they are called to serve disappears. Of all the divinities in a polytheistic religion some, properly named gods and goddesses, become first-rank superhuman beings. What qualifies them to such honour is their pervasiveness. Each and every deity worthy of the title presupposes as it were a religion of his own. The touchstone for the godliness of a deity is his or her holistic attitude with reference to the entire world. All true gods and goddesses assume a particular stance which fully characterizes them. As a consequence all problems of existence find a concrete answer (which we may be disinclined to call a solution) from each one of them. To make use of metaphoric language, every true god sheds his own distinct light onto things and makes them appear in succinctly-determined configurations. Every divinity seems thus to have his or her particular perspective, which is nonetheless all-embracing. We can therefore speak of a Zeus religion and a Hera religion, of Dionysian religion and Artemisian religion, even perhaps of 'Athenian' religion and surely of Aphroditean religion, but hardly of an Ares (or should we say: Aryan?) religion and of a Hephaestus religion not at all, except figuratively. Moving from one true deity’s viewpoint to another’s the world is illuminated differently. Relations that are strongly emphasized under one perspective (and the concomitant human obligations deriving therefrom) appear secondary or non-existent under a different perspective. Focal points of reference for one god become eliminated and invisible from another god’s angle of vision. What is here of paramount importance as a predicament becomes there anything but a problem. Different gods ask for different things. Their opposite views draw directly on their respective antithetical natures. Hence their conflict is bound by necessity to remain essentially unresolved. Within and amidst such hopeless straits what human beings are left with is to be only negatively defined: they must avoid any major offence against any major divinity at all costs; for minor offences are with almost mathematical precision unpreventable.

The opposed divine claims are not merely capricious. Nor do they occur solely when the assigned territories of power among gods happen partially to overlap. It is rather because each divinity that qualifies for the title of godhead holds in a sense sway over the entire world, that whenever and wherever a problem arises the pan-theon in its totality is simultaneously involved. And if mythology in most cases stresses the implication of one or two deities alone, it is because the others, less interested for their own reasons as they are, remain unmoved and are thus emphatically kept in the background. The battleground of divine combats is the gods' own abode which they all share, although they, more often than not, decide to resolve their tensions according to the example of the Homeric duels. On their initiative the world of multifarious breathtaking conflicts is rendered more
intelligible when the chaotic battles are ordered (and 'domesticated' as a structuralist might say) in the space of a wrestling-ground with varying degrees of interested divine spectators actively or passively participating in the agon.
...AND A QUESTION: Is Historical Theology Possible?

The study of ancient Greek religion has been dominated by what could be described as the Legacy of the Enlightenment. The basic doctrine of the Age of Reason was crystallized in its essential humanism which was strenuously opposed to any religious transcendent authority of meaning. Teleology was regarded as the fallacy par excellence of scholastic philosophy, and banned, as a consequence, from the domain of the so-called scientific pursuit of truth. The world as a whole was for the first time beginning to fade away, a process which would eventually lead to its being declared intrinsically meaningless and aimless. The fundamental anthropocentrism of this approach vis-à-vis the existing reality leaves, as a matter of course, no room for a genuine (substantive, as opposed to functional — psychological, sociological or otherwise)44) understanding of religion. For religion is a relationship which presupposes, apart from man who is always posited as an inalienable datum, yet another pole: something which both stands outside man and is powerful and meaningful in its own right. And this is the divine. Religion arises when and only when the divine has somehow manifested itself, because religion, although it profoundly concerns man, yet is not his creation in the way that a hut or ship can be said to be products of human creativity. With some notable exceptions the study of ancient religion has taken it for granted that religion is the indispensable byproduct of the perhaps charming, but surely naive childhood of mankind which will sooner or later be disposed of when Reason and Science become strong enough to penetrate even those misty corners of the human mind which persist in spontaneously refusing to throw their unreasonable childish fears away.

It is high time, I think, for religion to be inscribed in what has this century been called thinking (as distinct from traditional philosophy and opposed to traditional science). The task of thinking par excellence is the thinking of Being. But Being has since the end of the previous century declared itself absent. In the historical situation in which we stood until recently, the task of thinking was the thinking of nihilism.

The contextualizing method of inquiring into the past can, it is true, be seen as the prime of contemporary relativism.45 The fashionable movements of post-structuralism, deconstruction and the like, whatever their names and honorary titles (i.e all the complex intellectual schools that have been amassed under the rather obscure rubric of postmodernism), may highlight an adherence to the premises of humanism. Meaning for them is a value arbitrarily attributed to a thing (for no other reason than because man decides that things should be provided with meanings) which must always be contextualized (i.e. viewed from a vantage point together with the whole array of all

44Cf. the very helpful Berger "Definitions".
45Cf. Gellner Postmodernism.
possible historically and culturally conditioned relationships with other things and meanings), primarily because it is willy-nilly contextual: since it lacks an essence of its own, it is bound to condescend to any value that may be attributed to it; therefore, if this value does not belong to the society under investigation, it must necessarily be implicitly or explicitly possessed by the explorer’s society.

It has been repeated several times, and holds well that the study of paganism was impeded in the nineteenth century by the Judaeo-Christian preconceptions of the explorers. Greek religion could be admired for the exceptional aesthetic value of its products in the sphere of great art but its moral stance was consistently, either explicitly or indirectly, condemned and ridiculed. Usually the accusers traced their disapproving attitude vis-à-vis paganism back to the ancient critique of the traditional gods (and the name of Xenophanes would readily spring to their mind).

The death of God has, for some, liberated morality from the confines of puritanism and has made a more approving attitude to the deeds and demands of the ancient gods possible. But the death of God has also created a spiritual vacuum the like of which had not been experienced previously in the history of humankind. If we were to trace the intellectual evolution of the past two centuries of Western history with reference to the fundamental experience that underlies the diversity of apparently divergent intellectual movements, we would perhaps reach a scheme according to which humanism leads to atheism which leads to nihilism. Sartre was right. Existentialism is a humanism. Or rather, the unavoidable termination of humanism must be sought in the core of the existentialist myth, according to which man becomes worthy of the title of his humanity only when he realizes the inalienable responsibility posed by his unconditional freedom.

Postmodernism may be relativism reduced ad absurdum. But it may also be the final outcome of nihilism. And if postmodernism is an intimate experience of nihilism, it may well sow the seeds for a transcendence of the vicious circle of the humanistic outlook.

In the study of religion the fundamental problem that we still face is the legacy of the Age of Reason. Absence of intrinsic meaning equals forgetfulness of the divine. Whether or not the times are ripe for the possibility of what could be called "historical theology" (as not only distinct from, but also opposed to religious history, sociology or anthropology) is very hard to determine. The ripeness of a historical period for metaphysical speculation on first principles the relevance of which is immediately experienced, is, in the terminology of theology, called 'divine unconcealment'. It would be very presumptuous to pretend to know the answer of this very difficult question. What we may affirm, though, now is that the question can now be posed: is historical theology possible?

\[46\text{Cf. Sartre Existentialisme.}\]
In the relationship of man with the divine that constitutes religion, what is given is man and what seems still to be missing is the divine. For an understanding of ancient Greek religion what is needed is not a belief in gods, but the **acknowledgement of their presence**.

**Presence:** What is felt, but defies description. What is present as neither an image, nor a concept, but precisely the root from which image, concept and sense of efficiency can and will in due course spring.

The acknowledgement of gods is the *recognition of their pertinence*. Their pertinence is their ability to endow existence with sacredness *qua* the fountainhead of meaning.

The Aristotelian statement quoted as the motto of this chapter does not, it is true, suffice for an understanding of Greek religion. Yet, it can provide an alternative preliminary assumption for the study of the religions of antiquity.

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47Cf. the empathetic (and unscientific for the 'objectivizing' explorer) views of Otto *Theophania* and the perhaps equally sympathetic remarks of Rudhardt *Comprendre*; cf. also the more down-to-earth, but very sensitive descriptions in Versnel *Epiphany*. Cornford *Thought* xii. cleverly answered the question 'what is a (Greek) god?' — to a more specific but otherwise similar programmatic question, now explicitly raised, Loraux "Goddess?" chose not to reply; similarly Bremmer "Myth?" — by stating that the divine is 'something not ourselves and immortal'. This something, however, can be *sensed*: it is powerful. I prefer therefore (following the Heideggerian metaphysics and its application to the study of religion) to call this 'something' a 'presence'.

Legomena and Dromena
Among the three main deities worshipped in Sparta, namely Apollo Karneios, Athena Poliachos or Chalkioikos and Artemis Ortheia, it is the latter who appears to be the most puzzling, confusing and perhaps unintelligible, at least *prima facie*. Not only was her cult dark, cruel and apparently very ancient and almost 'primitive', but also the evidence we have for it, both archaeological and literary, is insufficient and occasionally misleading. Nonetheless, an attempt will be made to elucidate some aspects of Ortheia's ceremonies in Sparta, mainly by virtue of the helpful information preserved by the pious second-century-A.D traveller who became the guide of the illuminating discovery of the sanctuary of Artemis Ortheia, undertaken by the British School at Athens during the years 1906-1910 and 1924-1928.

As early as the spring of 1906, the excavators were able to identify the shrine near the Eurotas, which so well suited the ancient testimony of Strabo and Pausanias, with that of the Spartan Ortheia, through evidence much more certain and stable than the previous hypothetical suitability of the area: a vast number of inscriptions, votive offerings, architectural terracottas, lead figurines and statuettes, together with a great number of objects in carved ivory and bone, left no doubt about the deity to whom all these items were dedicated. The literarily famous Artemis Ortheia has found again her holy precinct. Her cultic epitheton being inscribed on marble and stone, on some stamped tiles and a few artistic objects either of pottery or carvings, produced substantial evidence of her uninterrupted worship there, for a period of more than one millennium (from the 8th, possibly from the 10th century B.C. to the 4th century A.D.) and provided the study of ancient Greek religion with new material to be attentively interpreted.
THE DIVINE EPIKLESIS

A great number of variant forms of the cultic epitheton under which Artemis was preeminently worshipped in Sparta was found on inscriptions and cult vessels, among which the one to be regarded as the normal type, being the most regularly recurrent, is that of όρθεία. The name certainly had an initial digamma which is attested in some cases, but more often than not was transformed to a B or disappeared altogether. Shortenings and lengthenings of the vowels of the epitheton as well as the substitution of the diphthong AI to EI\(^1\) and the well-known interchangeability of Σ and Θ\(^2\) in the Laconian dialect, procure finally such divergent variants as Βορθεία\(^3\), Βορθεία\(^4\), Φορθεία\(^5\), Βορθέα\(^6\), Βορσέα\(^7\), Ορθέα\(^8\), Βορθηία\(^9\), Φορθαιά\(^10\), Βορθαιά\(^11\). The first syllable being nothing but a vocalic r makes the word twice appear as Φορθαιά\(^12\). The Ionic form of όρθεία is very rare, and the commonest form of the name which is attested by most of the ancient literary authors (ὁρθία) is found only twice\(^13\). Finally there is the variant Φορθαιαία\(^14\) which serves as a link between what seems to have been the two most frequent, though not equally used, types of the name, as far as the literary sources are concerned, namely όρθία and ορθωσία.

No matter whether the primary form of the word was ΦΟΡΘΕΙΑ, as I assume, or not\(^15\), it does not seem accidental that when the O in the first syllable becomes a long Ω, the second syllable shortens the diphthong EI or AI into a single E. The word, when pronounced, must have had a rather fixed length, either its first or its second syllable being long. The forms Φορθέα, Βορθέα and Βορσέα given by Rose\(^16\), have not been found anywhere in the inscriptions, whereas the true exceptions (Βορθεία, Βορθηία),

\(^{1}\)Bechtle Dialekte, II, 303-304, claimed that the Laconian dialect substitutes EI Α for the AIA of other dialects, and this could have happened here since, as Woodward says (Hondius and Woodward "Laconia" 117), "four of the six earliest objects exhibit alpha, and two epsilon, in the second syllable".

\(^{2}\)Cf, the best-known example σώς-θέως (e.g. Alcman fr. 1, 36 (Page): έστι τις σιουν τιας; Aristoph. Lys. 81; Thuc. V, 77; Hesych.s.v. σιόπ).

\(^{3}\)George and Woodward ("Terracottas" 367) in R.M. Dawkins' exemplary volume [cf. the review by Wade-Gery ("Review") and the over-defensive reply by Dawkins, Droop and Wace ("Note"); cf. also Kunze "Review").

\(^{4}\)Woodward "Inscriptions" 328, 372, 373.

\(^{5}\)op.cit. 321.

\(^{6}\)op.cit. 325, 327, 329.

\(^{7}\)op.cit. 329 (thrice), 334, 348(?).

\(^{8}\)op.cit. 333.

\(^{9}\)op.cit. 349.

\(^{10}\)op.cit. 370; Dawkins "Objects" 214-215 and pl. CIX-CX.

\(^{11}\)Woodward "Inscriptions" 346.

\(^{12}\)Droop "Bronzes" 201 and Woodward "Inscriptions" 370.

\(^{13}\)Woodward, "Inscriptions" 315, 342. For this form there is a dubious testimony (Alcman fr. 1 Page = 1 Diehl) which could take it as far back as the 7th c. B.C., once the scholiast's correction is given place in the text. For arguments and counterarguments see Page Alcman 76-78 and below 'Ortheia and Aotis'.

\(^{14}\)Woodward "Inscriptions" 371.

\(^{15}\)Woodward's suggestion, (Hondius and Woodward "Laconia" 117) that the original form was Φορθαιαία, and his scheme of the word's evolution (Φορθαιαία > Φορθαιία > Φορθαιά > Φορθεία) are indeed very attractive. Cf. Risch "Orthia".

\(^{16}\)Rose "Cult" 400.
rare as they are, can either be considered to be misspellings, or justified by the donor's attempt to elaborate the sacred epitheton of the goddess by spontaneously lengthening it.

But what does the name mean or, to put it correctly, what did it primarily denote for the worshippers of the goddess? The etymologies concerning the name Ortheia that have been proposed so far can be divided into two groups according to whether or not they derive the name from the verb ὀρθῶ. The etymologies which do so, by far outnumber the rest and seem to be more reliable (and popular) because they take into account the unequivocal evidence of the ancients who always saw close affinities between the divine appellation and the various semantical ramifications of ὀρθῶς and ὀρθᾶ. By contrast, the modern philologists who propose a different origin for the epitheton argue against the traditional and 'authorised' derivation on account of the frequent cases of misleading etymologies to be found in the ancient texts. They blame the tradition's error on the incapacity of the ancient authors to deal scientifically with word-origins and lexical roots, and regret their lack of linguistic skills. They thus assume a very loose connection of the ancient speakers with their language (which is wrong) and a lack of conscientious and scientific (i.e. abstract and 'objective') method in enquiring into the meaning of words (which, in so far as modern linguistics stands as the model, is right). The notion of 'sign' and the thereby resulting sharp distinction between the 'signifying' and the 'signified' had not yet been established, nor had the concept of Ur-languages (which proved to be the most important discovery of historico-comparative linguistics) appeared.

The ancient Greek conceptualization of language can be seen in the context of ancient Greek culture as a whole. Instead of being primitive and unscientific, it turns out to be another aspect of that particular worldview, shared by many civilizations, which has been termed 'mythological'. Drawing on this distinct mode of Being it is convergent with other aspects of the same culture and could perhaps be illuminated with recourse to the context in which it made its appearance. The ancient attempts could then be regarded as essentially (though not formally) mythological, provided that we deprive the term of any pejorative connotations. They then can procure interesting insights into the meaning of the words in question. In the case of Artemis Ortheia, both the aetiological myths of her cult and the rituals practised in her shrine could help define the meaning of the cultic epitheton.

The first group of the proposed etymologies concerning the name of the Spartan goddess, mentioned above, seems to take into serious consideration the principle of 'contextuality'. The etymologies suggested try to establish a continuity between the supposed origin of the epithet and the several meanings which it later assumed. They thus aim at designating the semantic field of the word as it can be traced through the centuries of its cultic history, without assuming any noteworthy alienation between the primary

17With the exception of the Stoic distinction between ἁμαρτάνειν and ἁμαρτανόμενον which, however, subserved in the Stoic philosophy a function different from that in modern semiology.
meaning and the subsequent uses. According to the specific attribute or aspect emphasized, whereby in each case the goddess was thought to have been named Ortheia, the group can be sub-divided into four categories.

In the first category the etymology is based on an aetiological passage of Pausanias which assigns the divine appellation to the form of the cult-statue of the goddess. The name is thought to derive from the uprightness of the statue representing Ortheia, so that the meaning of the divine epitheton is supposed originally to be 'She who stands upright' or 'She whose statue has an upright position'. The idea, which seems to have been very popular during the second half of last century and the beginning of this, was advanced by Preller in 1854 and followed with modifications by Welcker, Mayer, Farnell and Rose.

Prior to that (and to Freud!), Gerald and Curtius had seen a sexual implication in the epitheton, which was promoted by Schreiber when he compared it to the erection of Dionysos Orthos and the ὀπθα (opθας) mentioned by Pindar. According to this view, which was accepted and further enhanced by Ziehen, Ortheia was the deity that caused erection to the adolescents scourged around her altar and the name indicated this primary function ascribed to her. The etymological interpretations that focus on the particularly phallic significance of the verb ὀπθάω are typical of the second category. This etymology, to which what follows adheres, has not been sufficiently elaborated, nor does it seem to have been driven to a full exploration of its significance. There is a whole array of implications which would possibly deserve further elucidation.

A derivative, if not metaphorical, sense of the verb is employed to account for the divine appellation by the proponents of the theory which sees in Ortheia primarily a birth-

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18Paus. III, 16, 11.
20Welcker Götterlehre I, 584.
22Farnell Cults II, 453, n. b.
23Rose "Cult" 403.
24Gerald "Elaphebolos" 77.
25Curtius "Gygaia" 150.
26Schreiber s.v. Artemis in Al. I, 586, 57ff.
27Pind. Pyth. X, 32 [ὀπθάω] is an emendation for ὀπθάνω of the manuscripts, but either way the passage refers to bestias se eirigentes.
28L. Ziehen s.v. Sparta (Kulte) in RE IIIA, 1470, 33ff.: "sondern wenn man an den eigentlichen Sinn der offenbar doch mit den wichtigsten Teil ihres Kultes bildenden Geißelung denkt, drängt sich mein Geruchens die Deutung ὀπθα = 'die Erigierende' trotz dem Peinlichen, was für uns darin liegen mag und wahrhaften auch für die späteren Spartaner darin lag, von selbst auf."
29Cf. also Eitrem Hermes 27.
goddess or a fertility-deity\textsuperscript{30}. The epitheton indicates her power to provide mankind with offspring, to help women in labour and to preside over the nurture and well being of newly-born infants. A precinct dedicated to Eileithyia situated close to the shrine of Ortheia\textsuperscript{31} has facilitated the approximation of the two. No phallic connotation is assigned to the \textit{\delta\omicron\rho\omicron\sigma\omicron\upsilon\zeta} effected by the goddess and, as Ziehen so well noticed\textsuperscript{32}, an abstract notion was allowed precedence over the concreteness of the word, and supposed to reveal the original religious meaning of the divinity discussed (third category).

Finally, there is the case of Chrimes who alone forms the fourth category because her interpretation relies on a scholion on Pindar, never before (and since) thought to convey valuable historical evidence, which claims that Artemis was called Ortheia from the Arcadian mount Orthosion. Chrimes takes it to indicate that Ortheia was "the lady of the straight-sided mountain" [...] in the Arcadian-speaking part of the Peloponnese" and establishes a connection based on Nilssonian premises between the Cretan goddess and the Spartan Artemis\textsuperscript{33}.

In the second group of etymologies concerning the epitheton Ortheia, there are two tempting, but rather ill-founded suggestions which neglect the uncontroversial evidence of the sources by ascribing to them a misunderstanding on account of the original meaning of the divine appellation. Thomsen\textsuperscript{34} derived the name from a hypothetical Indo-European root (*\textit{Vardh}-) which, according to the rules established by historico-comparative linguistics, would give in Greek the unattested root *\textit{Fape}-. This root would mean something like 'to make grow up, to strengthen, to develop' and, as a consequence, Ortheia would denote 'She-who-raises-(up)'. There is, however, no particular reason for inventing a hypothetical lexical root, since the existent uses of the adjective \textit{ape} by the ancient authors can nicely account for the meanings attributed to the word by Thomsen. Reasonably enough, this theory was received with understandable scepticism, when no major criticism was involved\textsuperscript{35}. The second attempt at an 'untraditional' interpretation of 'Ortheia' was made by Lypourles\textsuperscript{36} who suggested that the primal form of the divine name would have been Orthria instead of Orthia. If that were so, then the meaning of the epitheton would be 'the one of the dawn' and Artemis would be at Sparta the goddess of the morning sun who made her epiphany in the astonished eyes of the participants in her cult. The argument is based on a well-known poem of Alcman, in which a goddess called Aotis is addressed by a chorus of maidens. However, although the

\textsuperscript{30}Wide Kulte 113-114: "Nach dieser Erklärung [sc. the interpretation of the epitheton found in schl. ad Pind. Olym. III. 54] ist Artemis Όπθεια oder Όπθοωτια also eine Heil- oder Geburtsgöttin der Eileithyia verwandt, und so ist in der That der Beiname zu deuten*. Cf. Harrison Themis 504 and n.1.

\textsuperscript{31}Paus. III, 17, 1.

\textsuperscript{32}loc.cit.

\textsuperscript{33}Chrimes Sparta 257-259.

\textsuperscript{34}Thomsen "Orthia" 411.

\textsuperscript{35}Cf. e.g. Ziehen loc.cit. and Rose "Cult" 403.

\textsuperscript{36}Lypourles * "Opθpια.".
identification of Aotis with Ortheia has been reasonably proposed and is, in fact, very plausible\textsuperscript{37}, Lypourles' thesis, challenging though it may appear, cannot provide firm ground for the apparent 'loss' of the primal meaning in the ancient evidence, nor can it fit with the Artemisian character of both cult and myths of Ortheia in Laconia.

Two eminent classicists of this century, Wilamowitz and Nilsson, have conceded that the actual meaning of the Artemisian epitheton has not yet been satisfactorily construed, and their views seem to be equally applicable more than fifty years after they were initially expressed\textsuperscript{38}.

As has been the case in most of the above-mentioned etymological attempts, the examination of the entire mythological and cultic apparatus leads to a deeper understanding of the functions ascribed to the Spartan Artemis. An inquiry into the ways in which the worshippers themselves conceived of the goddess is, therefore, necessary before we can reasonably try to find out what the epitheton actually signified. Some questions are bound to be left open or totally unanswered, for several reasons of which the fragmentary form of the evidence that has come down to us is not, perhaps, the least important. However, only if the problematic issues by far surpass the resolved puzzles, and the most substantial aspects do not fall into place in an overall picture, are we entitled to make suggestions that straightforwardly disregard a great amount of the available testimonies. It is then that we may proceed to formulate a theory which turns the focus to a chronologically more remote era and which is, hence, doomed to be rather speculative and beyond actual proof.

\textsuperscript{37}See below 'Ortheia and Aotis'.
\textsuperscript{38}Wilamowitz \textit{Glaube} I, 183. Nilsson \textit{Geschichte} I, 487.
THE RITUAL FLAGELLATION

The most striking aspect of the cult of Artemis Ortheia in Sparta as reported by authors of late antiquity is undoubtedly the flagellation of epheboi at the goddess's altar. This cruel and seemingly barbaric custom is revealing of the horrendous character of Artemis Taurike whose original xoanon brought by Orestes from the land of Tauroi was identified, according to Pausanias' view, with the cult statue of the Spartan deity. It has been supposed that the flagellation rite was a later addition to an originally 'peaceful' cult, which was introduced in the Hellenistic or Roman period. It acquired great fame, so the argument goes, because people at that time rejoiced in watching spectacular bloody scenes and "there were not a few who took a sadistic pleasure in witnessing the flogging". However, the conservative character of the Spartan society, reported cases of religious flagellation or similar ritual beating elsewhere in the ancient (and modern, though not modernized) world, and a reference to the flogging of the youth in Lacedaemon which goes back to the fourth century B.C. refute this view. A plausible explanation should be given of the conditions under which the innovation took place in the domain of religious practices, which by their nature are very traditional and slow in changing and, moreover, why it assumed such an antique form reminiscent of age-old magic rituals. A view stressing the theatrical features of the rite which would facilitate its transformation into a spectacle and account for its becoming a touristic attraction, must also justify the sacred, as opposed to profane, character unanimously ascribed to it by the ancient evidence.

In order to support his opinion as to the identity of the xoanon of the Lacedaemonian Ortheia with that of the Tauric Artemis, Pausanias gives two legends, compatible with one another, which both emphasize the irritable and furious character of the goddess. The one refers to the original eúrétai of the cult-statue, while the other accounts for the ritual henceforth performed. According to the first, no sooner did Astrabacus and Alopecus find the agalma than they went mad, thus revealing the wild and frenzy-casting power of the statue, hence of the goddess herself. According to the second, a plague afflicted the Spartans after people from the 'original four villages' that constituted Sparta (before the incorporation of Amyclae) had quarrelled to the point of beginning to kill one another during a sacrifice to Artemis. The sprinkling of the blood of some human victims on the altar of the goddess provoked her wrath, which resulted in the sending of plague and which was later appeased by means of the institutionalization of an (annual?) human sacrifice. Pausanias's passage continues as follows:

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39Rose "Cult" 405
40Cf. e.g. Hesych. s.v. μόροττον; Paus. VIII, 23, 1; Plut. Rom. 21; Caesar 62; Ovid Fasti II, 425.
41See below.
42Cartledge Sparta 106.
43A complete ξυνοκλόμος of the five villages was never attained in Sparta, according to Thucydides (I, 10, 2).
We need not take the attribution of the substitution of original human sacrifices to Lycourgus as historically accurate. For the legendary figure of the Spartan legislator was time and again made into an actually deified being responsible for all benevolent (or considered as such) reforms of social structures including religious practices. However, the mention of human sacrifices, if related to similar remarks about other Artemisian cults by various ancient authors, may be considered to contain some historical truth. At least, it shows that human sacrifices, although occasionally seen as representative examples of uncivilized manners, were not regarded as an inappropriate means to appease divine fury, nor were they thought of as being entirely abandoned by the Greeks of historical times. What is more, the aetiological myths of their foundation indicate that the assumed repulsion to the idea of conducting ritual killing is not supported by the evidence no matter how we interpret it. For the very existence of human sacrifices as mythological aetia proves rather the opposite.

If the myths called aetiological (i.e. invented a posteriori in order to account for an obsolete and no longer intelligible cult) in performing their function as such should have recourse to an earlier religious stage in which human sacrifices were supposedly in practice, it follows that the Greeks were not ashamed of the fact (or what was taken as such) that they conducted human sacrifices in earlier times. If we deny the historicity of these sacrificial rituals, we cannot logically assert that the Greeks in other cases (e.g. in the Iphigeneia legend) altered the locality where the original myths were traditionally said to have taken place, and transferred them to a barbarian land in order to show the superiority of civilized Greek manners over the crude insensitivity of reported ritualized practices elsewhere. Nor can we reasonably argue that the lack of extensive examples of human sacrifice in Homer points either to its absence at the time, or to the humane sensibilities of

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44 Cf. Plut. Lyc. XXI, 4 (=59b) and V, 4 (=42b).
45 Cf. Hooker *Propaganda*.
46 Cf. Forrest "Date".
47 Cf. Suidas s.v. Λυκοῦργος
48 Contra Bonnechère "Flagellation".
49 Cf. e.g. Phil. VII.Apol. VI, 20: διὰ τί οὖν, ἔφη, τοὺς ἐξίσους οὐ καταθύσατι τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι, καθάπερ ἐδικαίωσαν ποτὲ οἱ Σκύθαι; δότι, εἰπὲν, οὐδὲν Ἑλλήνων πρὸς τρόπον βάρβαρα εξεσχεῖν ἤθη.
50 The substitution of Iphigeneia by a stag at Aulis was generally considered by many modern scholars to be the exemplification of the victory of Greek 'humanism' over the 'primitive' cruelty of the East and of past times. Thus e.g. Farnell *Hero Cults* 57; Murray *Epic* 121f. (cf. 12ff.); Clement "Evidence" 408. Cf., however, the sacrifice of three Persians by Themistocles reported by Phainias (fr.25 Wehrli=Plut. Themist. XIII, 2-5), the historicity of which lies in controversy [accepted by Stengel, *Opferbräuche* 93f.; Guthrie *Religion* 132; denied by Henrichs *Sacrifice* 208-224 and Hughes *Sacrifice* 111-115 and even more radically (Huges' book being the point of departure) by Bonnechère "sacrifice"— the discussion is not new: cf. Suchier *Diana* 23-25]; and the notorious case of human sacrifice on mount Lykaeon near Megalopolis reported by Porph. *Absint.* II, 27 and Tatian *ad. Graec.* XXX, 1 (Schwartz). In the case of Jupiter Latians in Rome, Porphyrius is more emphatic (II, 56): ἄλλ' ἐτι γε νῦν τίς ἁγνοί κατὰ τὴν μεγάλην τούῳ τῇ τοῖς Λατιαρίους Δίως ἐστὶ σφαζόμενον ἄθρωπον;
the poet. The one human sacrifice described in the *Iliad* is massive enough to compensate for the lack of more numerous similar descriptions.

Pausanias' reference to human sacrifices is reinforced by the perhaps exaggerated remarks of Cicero, Lucian and Plutarch (which stress the competitive character of the rite) that some adolescents met death while undergoing the Ortheia scourging. The aim of the flagellation was not, of course, the execution of the participants, but, when death occurred, it must have been regarded as a fact that glorified the dead and honoured the goddess. After all, dying young and by means of, as it were, divine election was thought to be a blissful rather than abominable event (especially when the event occurred in a sanctuary) as the Herodotean narrative of the death of Cleobis and Biton illustrates. In fact, there is a number, however limited, of modern scholars who have not turned a blind eye to the 'testimony' of Pausanias, and some have indeed claimed that human sacrifice is a very plausible antecedent of *diamastigosis*. And when Sextus Empiricus in a passage stressing the relativity of custom combines the abundant outflow of blood on Ortheia's altar with barbarian cannibalism and human sacrifices performed elsewhere, he seems to have been struck by the (un-Greek in his view) cruelty of the rite which, all things considered, was reminiscent of human sacrifices. To the Greek belief that polluting an altar with human blood is illicit the Spartan flagellation stood as an embarrassing exception. Philostratus combines the two elements, the competitive character which was later superimposed on the purely religious rite and the primal traits of an offering to the divine, in a very illuminating and, it seems to me, very carefully-uttered statement:

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σοφισάμενοι δὲ οἱ Λακεδαιμόνιοι τὸ ἀπαραῖτητον τῆς θυσίας ἐπὶ τὸν καρτερίας ἁγώνα ἐκούσα, ἀφ' ἦς ἐστι μήτε ἀποθνῄσκειν καὶ ἀπάρχεσθαι τῇ θεῷ τοῦ σφῶν αἵματος.
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The endurance competition is here related to the divine petition. What is more, the shedding of blood is seen as an all too necessary part of the Ortheia cult besought by the goddess herself. The necessity of sacrificing to the deity (τὸ ἀπαραῖτητον τῆς θυσίας), on the one hand, and the Spartans' unwillingness to do so properly (i.e. by offering human victims) (σοφισάμενοι), on the other, have led to the institution of the flagellation rite, not explicitly referred to as such but easily recognised in the καρτερίας ἁγώνα. The most interesting aspect, however, of Philostratus's passage is the particular

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51 Cf. Murray *Epic* 131ff.; Bowra "Composition" 68.
verb which he uses in order to describe, and somehow explain, that necessity of shedding blood for the goddess: 

\[ \text{ἀποφάσις} \] means to offer the first fruits and to dedicate the first offerings to the gods (or one of them) and is an almost terminus technicus in the religious sacrificial practices of the ancient Greeks\(^{57}\); it further implies by a conceptual association between the \[ \text{ἀρπάζω} \] as beginning and starting-point and the \[ \text{ἀρπάζω} \] as the most essential (therefore, the best) part characteristic of the whole (an association occurring several times among the Greeks\(^{58}\) that those first offerings are truly the best offerings as well - they are 'prime'. In this sense, it provides a very useful key for the 'reading' of the entire ritual.

Rose\(^{59}\), following Bosanquet\(^{60}\), thought that the first ancient author to mention the flagellation was Cicero who, drawing on personal observation or at least on good hearsay, gives an accurate picture of the rite in all its cruelty:

*Spartae vero pueri ad aram sic verberibus accipiuntur, ut multus e visceribus sanguis exeat, non numquam etiam, ut, cum ibi essem, audiebam, ad necem; quorum non modo nemo exclamavit umquam, sed ne ingemuit quidem.*\(^{61}\)

But if Cicero was the first author explicitly to describe the ritual, he certainly was not the first to mention it. Three centuries before him, Xenophon directly and Plato implicitly had referred to the flagellations\(^{62}\), thus leaving no doubt as to the antiquity of a rite involving whips which could perfectly well be identical to the well-known scourgings of the Spartan youths. There is no reason for trying to discover the origin of the 'horrible' rite in later innovations, assuming a peaceful ceremony to have been a religious rite de passage in earlier ages; on the other hand, it is quite probable that in later times the Artemisian celebration in Sparta became a fashionable and famous spectacle. This can be inferred from the existence of an amphitheatrical construction which was built in the third century A.D.\(^{63}\) possibly to provide room for a numerically enlarged audience\(^{64}\) and to facilitate attendance at a possibly secularized but still perhaps sacred performance. The secularization of the rite would be a sign of degeneration of religious practices and can be seen as the cause or, more probably, the effect of the loss of their original meaning. The fourth-century orator Libanius displays an attitude characteristic of the cosmopolitan curiosity of late antiquity when he admits that he *hastens* to attend the Laconian festival of

\(^{57}\)Cf. Rudhardt *Notions* 219-222.

\(^{58}\)Cf. e.g. Eur. *Phoen.* 1245.

\(^{59}\)Rose *Cult* 405.

\(^{60}\)Bosanquet *Sanctuary* 314ff.


\(^{63}\)Dawkins *History* 3 and 49.

\(^{64}\)However, Leake, *Travels* 151, who saw some ruins of the Roman construction which can be identified with that of Ortheia due to the given diameter of the internal circle (23 yards = 21.80 metres given by Dawkins *History* 39), says that this circle is "the smallest perhaps in existence" and thinks that "when Sparta was reduced to the hill which is now surrounded with the Roman wall, this circus may have been large enough for the diminished population." (my italics).
flagellation (ἐρωτήμα κακωμίκην, τάς μάστιγας) and to become then initiated in the Argive mysteries.

Xenophon mentions the Ortheia ritual in a moral context focusing on the bravery of Spartan youth which was legendarily one of the praiseworthy effects of the beneficial Lycourgan legislation.

καὶ ὡς πλείστως δὴ ἄρπάσαι τυρώς παρ᾽ Ὀρθίας καλὸν θείς (sc. Λυκοῦργος), μαστιγωθεὶν τούτους ἄλλοις ἐπέταξεν, τούτῳ δὴ δηλώσαι καὶ έν τούτῳ βουλόμενοι, ὅτι ἐστιν ἀλήγον χρόνον ἀληγίσαντα πολὺν χρόνον εὐδοκιμοῦντα εὐφράνεσθαι.

The religious character of the rite is, therefore, subordinated to the ethical and social dimensions which most ancient authors saw in all things Spartan, and the emphasis is put on education and training, not on the sacred solemnity of a holy ceremony. The only interesting thing is a mention of some cheeses (on the altar of the goddess?) which the boys were supposed to snatch away while other boys were ordered to scourge them. A similar view underlining the admiration for the 'Spartan miracle' is expressed by the Lacedaemonian Megillos in the Platonic Laws in a passage which the ancient scholiast at least took to refer to the flagellation-rite.

The evidence provided by Greek authors of the classical period does not go any farther. It proves that the religious practice of scourging young men in the festival of Artemis Ortheia was already in use in early fourth-century-B.C. Sparta, and we may reasonably suppose that it formed part of the old Dorian cult, which could be even contemporaneous with what the Spartans themselves understood as the invasion of the Heracleidae. After all, the same absence of information on contemporary religious affairs holds true in almost any ancient cult, and can be easily explained, first, by the absence in classical literary works of that antiquarian interest which some later authors so

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66 Nilsson, Feste 190-196, was very sceptical as to whether the passage refers to the diamasstigos, and he concluded that it does not. His arguments, however, are all ex silentio: instead of dismissing the information contained in the passage because no other source of the classical era mentions it, we would rather accept it as the first available evidence.
67 The bracketing of the passage by E.C. Marchant in his edition of Xenophon (O.C.T.) on the assumption that captorum supplicium at diamasstigoumámum in unam conflation videtur interpolator quidam, nisi in verbis ἀρπασα τυρώς λατεί mendum (sensus reddant ὡς πλείστως δὴ ἐρπάσαι αἵματα θείος) (app. crit. ad loc.) is entirely unsubstantiated. For the scope of Xenophon at this juncture is to show that allowance to steal and punishment of the thieves, when caught, are not incompatible with each other. With such a view in mind, it is quite reasonable that he regarded a religious enactment from his own perspective which aimed at highlighting Sparta's ethics. There is, therefore, no particular reason for believing that it was not Xenophon himself, but a later interpolator, who made the mistaken identification of the ritual stealing of the cheeses with the thefts permitted in, if not necessitated by, the Spartan agoge. What is more, the suggested phrase which would, according to Marchant, make some sense, does not seem to be particularly meaningful, nor does it sound Greek to me — (or conversely it does!). Ollier, on the other hand, in his comments on the passage (Xenophon 28-30) rejected the corruption-hypothesis (although on grounds which are not necessarily very firm). Yet, his final question ("Peut-on être absolument certain cependant que ce texte n'ait subi aucun espece d'altération?") may be a reasonable doubt.
68 For the Spartan Miracle as the Spartan Mirage see Ollier Mirage.
69 Schol. ad Plat. Leg. 633b Καρτέριφεις τὰς διαμαστιγώσεις ὕψη, ἐγένοντο δὲ αὕτα πρὸς τῷ ἱερῷ τῆς 'Ορθίας Ἀρτέμιδος τῆς τῶν πολιτείαν ἀπορθοῦσης.
conspicuously displayed, and, secondly, by the fact that by being things of every day life, rituals and ceremonies were almost self-evident and did not call for particular literary treatment. Testimonies increase in number and importance as soon as we depart from classical literature towards the Hellenistic period and abound when we focus on the intellectual 'movement' conventionally called the Second Sophistic. In our case, Pausanias turns out to be our main and most trustworthy informant.

In a passage immediately following the one cited above, the ancient traveller points out:

"η δε ίερεια το ξόανου ἐχουσά σφισιν ἐφέστηκε. το δε ἐστιν ἄλλος μεν κούφων ὑπὸ συμπρότητος, ἢν δὲ οἱ μαστιγωύντες ποτε ὑποθειούμενοι πάνω κατὰ ἐφιβίου κάλλος ἢ ἀξιώμα, τότε ἢ δὲ τῇ γυναικὶ τὸ ξόανον γίνεται βαρύ καὶ οὐκέτι εὐθοροῦν ἢ δὲ ἐν αἰτίᾳ τοὺς μαστιγωύντας πολείται καὶ πιέζεσθαι δι’ αὐτῶν φησιν, οὕτω τῷ ἀγάματι ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τῇ Ταυρίκῃ θυσίων ἐμμεμένηκεν ἀνθρώπων αὔματι ἱδεθαι."

As Frazer has pointed out in his extended anthropologically-oriented commentary on Pausanias, "this mode of divination by weight is very widespread" all over the world and several examples of similar divinatory practices ranging from the Esquimaux to tribes in Loango (West Africa) have been recorded by field ethnographers. If we cannot speak of divination in the strict sense of the term, what was felt by the priestess was definitely a divine sign. The method is also attested in other religious instances in ancient Greece and seems to draw on age-old magic. (For the attribution of a supernatural sign to a god has been seen as a later addition to what originally was the thing itself as immediately experienced without any reference to a particular divine being.) As it stands, however, it indicates how much the flogging was thought to be an integral part of the cult of Artemis to the extent that her 'supervising' statue (by consequence the goddess herself) directly intervened when the execution of the rite was not meticulous enough.

The flagellation seems, therefore, to lie at the core of the Ortheia ritual, at least in so far as the epheboi were concerned. But what was the significance of that religious scourging? The analogy with the ritual of the Pharmakoi who in some cities were beaten with rods while being expelled outside the boundaries of the state territory, does not hold true. The exception of the aetiological myths given at the epilogues of some Euripidean dramas to account for 'strange' and bizarre cults, rather, proves the rule, if it be an exception at all. For it is to be expected, on the one hand, that in tragic drama where gods so often play such a dominant role, myths 'justifying' particular cults would intrude, and, on the other, that theatre as a genre (whose religious origins were not denied by the Greeks), could be very suitable for 'discussions' concerning religion. Furthermore, aetiological myths in Euripidean drama also subserve the important function of integrating the characterization, or ἀθώςκῳ, of the tragic heroes, as it offers additional information about the dramatis personae, which relates them to particular mythical and ritual contexts.

71 Frazer Pausanias III, 342.
72 Cf. Dio Chrys. Orat. XIII de exsilio R419 (= 241 Dind.).
73 So Chrimes Sparta 260.
74 Cf. Tzet. Chil. V, 728-739; Hipp. frr. 5-10 (West).
not seem very plausible. For we know for sure that the pharmakoi were usually criminals, not honourable citizens (or would-be citizens as the Spartan adolescents were), and their function as scapegoats was to absorb (like sponges) all the miasmata of the city and and drive them away so as no longer to infect the citizenry. Even if originally the pharmakoi were distinguished members of society who were thought appropriate to avert divine wrath, the analogy cannot apply, because nothing indicates any ritual expulsion of the ephēboi posterior to the flogging\textsuperscript{75}. It has been argued that to beat somebody in a religious context with branches of a plant was believed to transmit to the person beaten the particular power or qualities found in that plant. Cases of ceremonial beating (ματαιμός), which are quite frequent in ancient Greek cults, seem to corroborate that view. If this is correct, then the examination of the material out of which the floggings were fabricated could be of prime importance at this juncture.

Pausanias again informs us that the goddess Ortheia was also called Lygodesma, because her cult statue was found in a willow bush whose twigs wound round it, thereby making it stand upright:

\begin{quote}
Καλούσι δὲ οὐκ Ὄρθειαν μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ Λυγόδεσμαι τὴν αὐτὴν, ὅτι ἐν θάμνῳ λίγῳν εἰρήθη, περιελθέσας δὲ ἡ λίγος ἐποίησε τὸ ἁγάμιμα θρόνον.
\end{quote}

The 'aetiology' of the uprightness of the agalma will be discussed below. What seems interesting here is the mention of λίγος (agnus castus) which twined round, and sustained, the statue. As we know from a great many ancient sources, which show a rare unanimity on the subject, the willow was regarded as the plant of chastity and

\textsuperscript{75}The principal ancient sources on ἀφρικαέεια are gathered by Mannhard \textit{Forschungen} 123ff. For interpretations of the ritual see Bremmer "Scapegoat"; Harrison \textit{Prolegomena} 95-119; Parker \textit{Miasma} 258ff.; Hughes \textit{Sacrifice} ch. 5. An interesting quasi-anthropological, quasi-psychological analysis is found in Girard \textit{Voyage} 103-134.

\textsuperscript{76}Galen XI, 807-808: ἐπέχει (sc. ὁ ἄγος) δὲ καὶ τὰς πρὸς ἀφροδίσια ὀρμᾶς τὰ πεθυργμένας καὶ ὁ ᾠδωρικὸς καρπὸς, καὶ τὰ φύλα καὶ τὰ ἄθη τοῦ θάμνου ταύτῳ τούτῳ δύναται δραῖ, ὡστε οὐ μόνον ἐπιθυμεῖ καὶ πυρόνια πρὸς ἀγιείαν πεπίστευται συντελεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀποστροφώνειμένα. ταῦτ' ἄρα καὶ τοὺς θεσμοφορίας αἱ γυναῖκες Ἀθηναίων ὑποστροφώνουσας ἐαυτῶς ὅλον τὸν θάμνον, ἐνέτειθεν δὲ καὶ τούμορα αὐτῷ. Pliny XXIV, 59: Graeci hygon vocant, alii agnom, quoniam matronae Thesmophorae Atheniensem castitatem custodientes his follis cubitus sibi sternunt. Aelian Nat. Anim. IX, 26: τοῦτον τοι (sc. τὸν ἄγον) καὶ ἐν ἔσθεμφορίας ἐν τοὺς στήματα τὰ γόνα τὰ Ἀττικὰ ὑποστροφώναται, καὶ δοκεῖ μὲν καὶ ἐχθρὸς εἶναι τοὺς δικέταις ὁ ἄγος, δὲν δὲ καὶ ὄρμης ἀφορίσιος κάλυμα ἔστι, καὶ ένεκτο τὸ γε ὄνομα λαβεῖν ἐνέτειθεν. Diosc. 1, 108: ἦσσομαι δὲ ἄγος διὰ τὸ τάς ἐν τοὺς θεσμοφορίας ἀγιεύουσας γυναῖκας εἰς ὑποστροφία χρῆσατα αὐτῇ. Eust. ad Hom. Od. X, 453: λίγος δὲ ὡς ἐρήθη ὁ ἄγος, φυτῶν ψυχρῶν καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἄγους ἀγοί λεγομένων κατὰ συγκοπήν, διὸ καὶ ἀγιεύεται ἐν θεσμοφορίας ἐθελούσης ὑποστροφῶν ἐαυτῶς τῶν τοῦ ἁγίου κλάδων, ἢν μὲνοικς ἄγοι. Being thought to help people sustain their chastity, willow could easily become associated with virginity, the chastity \textit{par excellence}. Thus in the Christian \textit{Banquet of Methodius} 196c (PG): ἢ δὲ ράμυν τὴν ἄγιειαν συστατῆρα, τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ δένδρον ράμυνος καὶ ἄγιος ἐστίν, ὥς ὁ δὲ ράμυνος καλομένον, ὥς ὁ δὲ ἄγος. Καὶ ταχα διὰ τὸ σταργεῖται τὸ φυτὸν τούτο τῇ παρθενίᾳ πεφυκείναι, ταύτῃ ράμυνος καὶ ἄγιος προσπροφερέθη, ράμυνος παρὰ τὸ στερεόμενον καὶ καταρτῶν πρὸς τῇ ἡδονῇ, ἄγιος δὲ τὸ διὰ παντὸς ἄγιευεν. (cf. 89c and 197c). For a modern discussion on agnus castus see Calame \textit{Chœurs} 285-289; Detienne \textit{Jardins} 153-154 where it is mentioned that modern science has discovered in the plant some chemical substances that could support the ancient claim (according to H. Leclerc \textit{Précis de Phytotérapiie}, (3rd ed) Paris 1935, p. 186); King "Bleded" 123.
'mattresses' of willow which helped them remain chaste during the celebration of the festival, as tradition and the very essence of that Demetrian cult obliged them to do. A second function ascribed to willow was its power to induce menstruation. And since menstruation is a sign of chastity because it denotes absence of pregnancy which, furthermore, implies lack of coition, that second function can be assumed to derive from its primary, and primal, function: *agnus castus*, as its very name indicates, was thought to calm down sexual appetites. The relationship between copulation and procreation was of course recognized in ancient Greece as far back as our evidence goes (in contrast with reported cases in other cultures) and is not contradicted, but, rather, further supported by the existence of so many divine beings in the nuptial chamber, an observation that provoked the mockery of the anyway biased St. Augustine. For the tremendous importance of coitus would, in a society experiencing the divine as immanent in worldly affairs and processes, lead to a specific recognition of the powers involved therewith. Copulation would therefore be the manifestation of some aspects of the godhead.

Willow was the symbol of chastity. It prevented sexual desires from actualizing themselves and thus kept them unfulfilled. But a desire which does not reach fulfilment is not annihilated. On the contrary, it is strengthened all the more, because the potency which substantiates it gradually accumulates. Since no outlet is provided which would alleviate its power, the desire reaches its extreme point of potentiality. And intensified potentiality always denotes utmost effectiveness. Therefore, chastity turns out to be the necessary presupposition for efficient copulation, hence procreation.

In the eyes of the Greeks, the symbol *par excellence* which crystallizes procreation as potentiality is, no doubt, the phallus. The dynamism of the engendering power manifested in all things natural is exemplified in the erect male organ. Nature always and
everywhere displays a strong tendency to (re-)generation which in animated beings becomes more apparent due to their mobility. Especially in those cases where the separation of the sexes has been effected, the natural predisposition assumes the distinctive form of sexual appetite. This appetite in its active (and aggressive) manifestation as opposed to passive and receptive fecundity, can be visually and symbolically seen in the phallus. It is characteristically masculine; therefore, not confined to men alone. And it also is essentially dynamic; therefore, unfulfilled in its non-actuality. With these views in mind we may proceed to enquire into the significance of the Ortheia cult.

The predominant role played by lygos in the aetiological myth of Ortheia under her 'other' epitheton (Lygodesma) (which, as we shall see, ultimately amounts to the 'same') propounded by Pausanias together with the physical pliability and flexibility of the plant enables us to identify the material of the whips in the flagellation of the epheboi. In fact, the ancients themselves had realised that willow-twigs were very appropriate to be used as scourges and they must have used them as such. Dioscurides\(^{83}\) points out that lygos was thus named διὰ τὸ περὶ τὰς ράβδους εὑτούν, thereby deriving the name of the plant from the verb λυγίζω, to bend, and Suidas\(^{84}\) states that the whips with which athletes were chastised were called lygoi. As a matter of course, he refers to the punishment of the athletes in Olympia and elsewhere who were caught not adhering to the rules of the games. However, the competitive and athletic character which the flogging by the altar of Ortheia later took makes the association even more plausible: the whips were, or were made of, twigs of willow. And we may assume that the archaic statue of Artemis which was twined round by such willow branches was the divine archetype of the ritual flagellation. Wound round by whips/twigs as it was imagined to have been (or, was it actually depicted in this way?) at the time of its discovery, it must have borne a resemblance to the flogged youth easily identifiable by all participants in the festival. As is usually the case, through an unconscious, but crucially important twist, the divinity was construed as performing what mortals actually did in its honour, thereby providing them with the necessary 'justification' for the sanctity of the ceremony.

The association of a god with agnus castus and its supposed relaxing power is mentioned once more in Sparta. And it is again Pausanias who gives us the information\(^{85}\). To the west of the Spartan agora there was a shrine of the healing-god Asclepius worshipped under the epiklesis Agnitas, and the ancient traveller relates the divine epitheton to the xoanon of the god which was manufactured from willow wood. The

\(^{83}\)Diosc. I, 103; cf. Hesych. s.v. λύγος and Athen. 617c.
\(^{84}\)s.v. λυγίζων: στρεφόμενος, καλυπτόμενος ἀπὸ τῶν λύγων. [...] τινὲς δὲ καὶ τὸ μετὰ τιμωρίας βασανίζειν λυγίζειν, καὶ οἱ μάστιγες αὐτὲς οἱ άθληται τάπερ οὐκ ἔσται, λύγοι καλοῦνται.
\(^{85}\)Paus. III, 14, 7τὸ δὲ τοῦ Ἀγνίτα προσείνηται μὲν ἐν δεξὶ τοῦ Άρώμου, Ἀσκληπίου δὲ ἐστιν ἐπικλῆρος ὁ Ἀγνίτας, ὡς ἢ ἄγνοι τῶ θεῶ ξωάνων ἢ δὲ ἅγνοις λύγοις καὶ αὐτὴ κατὰ τὰ ταύτα ἐστι τῇ ῥάμῳ.
primarily healing function of the god (who was, after all, a latecomer in the Greek pantheon, or at least in the Olympian chorus) would make us believe that willow was originally regarded as possessing medicinal qualities which enabled it to become associated with Asclepius. And it has actually been argued that "the idea that it diminished sexual desire seems to have been of secondary importance". However, even if this were true, nothing would prevent the well-documented association of *lygos* with chastity from having taken place at a relatively early stage and, in fact, the religious chastity maintained during a fasting period in the undoubtedly very conservative Athenian festival of the Thesmophoria indicates that such an association must have occurred very early in the worshippers' minds. Agnitas, therefore, could have been as much the god whose statue was made from willow as the divinity curing diseases deriving from sexual excesses, promiscuity and lasciviousness (or what was regarded as such).

The *agnus castus* as a symbolic embodiment of chastity and the whips made of that plant wherewith adolescents were flogged near Ortheia's altar, on the one hand; and the statue of the goddess which stood upright because of the uplifting power of these whips, on the other; on top of that, the widespread, almost universal symbol of the phallus, never explicitly mentioned, but implied in the semantic repercussions of the divine epitheton: where is the multi-faced interaction of theology, mythology and ritual founded? on what do the various aspects of myth and cult meet? how can we combine the dispersed elements of a cult into an harmonious picture? These and similar questions are not easy to answer, but, if posed, they may offer some insights into the historical truth of religious symbolism and may thus smooth the path to a more genuine understanding of the goddess.

In an attempt to present an explanatory scheme, I propose to see the main parts which compose the rite and have been discussed so far, in the following order: willow, *lygos*-twigs, whips, flagellation, erection, chastity, willow. This would, in a de-condensed way, mean that the branches of willow provided the whips for the flagellation which caused erection which was, moreover, a sign of chastity which, further, pointed to willow as a religious symbol. As was to be expected, the beginning and the end of this scheme concur in the same thing, namely *agnus castus*. This happens because in any integrated and unified part of an overall mythico-religious order the extreme points are made to meet. Thus they adequately reflect the harmony of the totality which they are supposed to partially represent, and become themselves members of that totality by participation in Wholeness as such. And it is well-known how far-fetched have actually been the consequences of regarding the circle in which, according to the enigmatic Ephesian, ἄρχη and πέρας are ἕυνα, as unveiling, in a physical and mundane form, the secret of

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87Bosanquet "Cult" 332; Harrison, *Prolegomena* 130, had before him, in 1903, made a similar remark with reference to the use of *lygos* in the Thesmophoria.
wholeness, hence of things divine. However, the prominent symbolic role of willow notwithstanding, it is not the plant, but chastity that crowns and, so to speak, supervises, and holds sway over, the various parts of the symbolism of the rite. If *agnus castus* acquires an important role in the symbolic structure, it is because it represents chastity, and if whips and flagellation are also involved it is because they can transmit to the flogged people the power of remaining or becoming chaste. The external aspect of that power, and the manifestation that one possesses it, are seen in the phallus, whereas the process in which that power manifests itself is summarised in sexual arousal. Therefore erection, being the manifestation of chastity, indicates, or rather guarantees that the transmission of the power of willow has been successfully effected.

In his *Oneirocriticon* Artemidorus uses the verb *ἐνταπύνω* or *ἐντείνω* in the passive mood to refer both to the notion of being whipped and to the fact of having an erection. The ambiguous passage runs as follows:


The obscurity of the passage seems to require some explanatory comments. First, it should be noted that it belongs to the four chapters of the *Interpretation of Dreams* (I, 77-80) dealing with dreams of sexual content. More specifically, it is found in the set of dreams which refer to sexual acts done, or rather dreamt to have happened κατὰ φύσιν καὶ νόμον καὶ θοσας as opposed to those which are against the law (παρὰ νόμον) and against nature (παρὰ φύσιν). Second, the passage refers to masturbation (δέφεσθαι) and, as is the case with the other dreams with the same theme in the *Oneirocriticon*, it is closely related to slavery; the polarity between δεσπότα and δοῦλος is here very telling. Last, but not least, the semantic field of the word used (ἐνετάθη) and the ambiguity produced by the blurring of the distinction between its two meanings which concern us here, account for Artemidorus's implicit belief that the dream was indeed divinatory (for not all dreams are, as in the introduction to the treatise the author claims) and that it really came true. A translation of the passage would then give us something like this: "Moreover, I know somebody who dreamt that he was masturbated by his master, and, in fact, he was bound to a pillar and received many strokes (= he was scourged a lot); thus (*οὕτως*) he was given an erection by his master." This is how this passage is usually interpreted.

Erection at this juncture is supposed to be metonymic and to refer to the bodily tension produced by flagellation. But if this interpretation held true, it would follow that the ancient readers of the treatise would be compelled to take the fulfillment of the dream only

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88For 'the method of Artemidorus' and an 'analysis' of the sexual dreams discussed in his treatise see Foucault *Care* 2-36. Cf. also Winkler *Constraints* 17-44. For the immense gap separating the ancient method of interpreting dreams from the modern Freudian one see the excellent article of Price "Dreams".


90Cf. Foucault *Care* 20.
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metaphorically, i.e. not seriously at all. In that case they could reasonably be anything but convinced of the interpretative adequacy of Artemidorus. The association of flagellation with erection must have been well established before the author of *Oneirocriticon* could rely upon it in order to provide an explanation of a particular set of dreams. Furthermore, I do not find it very plausible that such an association could rely entirely on a contingent linguistic approximation. Hence, I am inclined to believe that the association had already been firmly-rooted before the second century A.D. when we explicitly find it, and that, in the minds of the ancients, *flagellation causes erection*.

A scholium at a passage of Aristophanes' *Knights* supports the association between whipping and erection. Demosthenes and Nicias were presented on stage by the Athenian comedian as the two maltreated slaves of Kleon. Complaining about the beating which they so usually receive from their master (cf. vv.4-5) they associate the act of masturbation with that of flogging. The common underlying motive is that in both cases the skin is damaged; but the association seems to go farther and to be less superficial than it appears at first sight. In an attempt at illustrating this rather difficult passage full of poetic associations and playful implications mostly sexual, the ancient commentator writes:

Τὼν ἀποδερομένων τὸ αἰδοῖον ὑποχωρεὶ δὴσθεν

Another Scholiast, it is true, took the passage to refer to a comparison of "the skin on the backs of flayed slaves with that on the phalli of masturbators". This explanation is fair enough. Yet, it does not particularly account for what facilitated the emergence of such an association. By contrast, the commentator quoted above made the connection between erection and whipping, even though, formally speaking, it was not required from the Aristophanic passage. He must, it seems, have felt the need to place the association on firmer ground. Thus he informed the students of the play that "the sexual organ of those beaten draws back". Of course, what draws back is the prepuce which is thus the sign that an erection occurs. The association between flagellation and sexual arousal appears to have been more common and wide-spread than we would normally imagine.

A bronze figurine found in Tamassos in Cyprus which, according to its first publisher's view, dates from the Iron Age, corroborates a very early dating for the association of flagellation with erection, if not yet in fully developed formulation. It represents a naked male person who holds a whip with his right hand. The whip winds round his neck lying on his shoulders and his facial expression resembles the pain depicted on the face of another figurine from Crete with which it has been associated.

91 The ancient Scholiast on whose comment Henderson (loc. cit.) seems to rely says: ὅτι ἄστερ τῶν ἀπεμένων τὸ δέρμα ἀπέφερεν οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἀυτομολούστων. The ἀυτομολούστων, if not corrupt, should be understood as προβιοστερον and taken to mean 'those who are beaten as a result of being deserters'.

92 Furtwängler AA fig.7. The drawing of this figurine is reproduced in Lebessi "Flagellation" 112, fig.10. Cf. also the flagellant figurine in *JHS Archaeological Reports* 1976-1977, 64, fig. 114.

93 Lebessi op.cit. 104-106 (fig.1-3), 113.
They both represent self-flogging persons. What is more interesting, however, in the Cypriot figurine is that the self-flogging man has an erection: he is ithyphallic.

The rich iconographical evidence from the shrine of Artemis Ortheia in Laconia does not allow us to proceed any farther. No similar depiction of flagellated or self-flagellated man has seen the light of day during the excavations at the site. The closest we can get to the Cypriot figurine is a small figure (in ivory?) laconically described by Dawkins as "figure of nude man" dating from 740 to 660 B.C. or, if we accept, as we must, the 'revised' chronology proposed by Boardman, to 620 B.C. He holds something which could be a whip around his neck and the expression of his face is reminiscent of the Cypriot figurine in that it shows surprise, or, more likely, pain. He does not, though, seem to be ithyphallic. However, lack of iconographical evidence need not be decisive at this juncture, since it is well-known that not all ritual practices were depicted on cult objects. Worshippers dedicated to the goddess items which were, of course, considered to be relevant to, and indicative of, the character of the cult. But it should by no means be inferred from that, that actual scenes of rituals formed an indispensable part of those dedications.

In fact, there are some phallic representations among the archaeological finds which were taken by Rose to indicate that Ortheia was a fertility goddess. It has further been argued that she was a kourotrophos deity, and some inscriptions dedicated to Eileithyia found in Ortheia's shrine were regarded as indicative of her being a lochia deity as well, who presided over, and protected, child-births. Kilian went as far as to claim that Eileithyia received cult in the sanctuary of Artemis Ortheia, thus implying that Ortheia herself was a birth goddess. Poulsen had already identified a pair of seated persons carved in ivory with the divine couple Ortheia-Eileithyia, but the identification was founded on purely hypothetical grounds. Pausanias was well-aware that an Eileithyia shrine was located very close to the precinct of Ortheia, and Dawkins moderately saw in some tiles stamped with the name ΕΛΕΥΘΙΑ verification for the ancient traveller's remark. We should not, however, be led astray by an assimilation which goes back to the Hellenistic era. To be more precise, Artemis under the epiclesis Λοξία was, indeed, worshipped as a birth goddess in many places in ancient Greece, but this aspect of

94 Dawkins "Objects" 240, pl. 170, 5.
95 Boardman "Orthis" 4.
96 Rose "Cult" 402.
97 Kilian "Weihungen".
98 Poulsen Orient 165.
99 Pl. CXXIV in AO (cf. pl. CXXV).
100 Paus. III, 17, 1.
101 Dawkins "History" 51 (cf. Woodward "Inscriptions" 370).
102 The veterius schol. ad Pind. Ol. III, 54 (according to the distinction of A. Boeckh's major edition Pindari Opera, Lipsiae 1819, vol. II) says Ωφθοιτα την Ωφθοιτα τας γυναικας και εις σωτηριαν εκ των τοκετων άγιωτα and a recentius schol. ad loc. adds άρσος γάρ λοχείας. cf. Call. Hymn. ad Dian. 126-128.
103 Cf. e.g. Eur. Suppl. 958; Plut. Quest. Conv. 658f. See also Papachatzis "Ελευθιάτα".
hers, although it directly draws on her received character, seems to need further elucidation, before it can readily fall into place in the overall picture of the goddess at Sparta. In this sense, to say that Ortheia is a child-birth goddess is to beg the questions that are bound to arise once one takes notice of all the existing evidence concerning her cult in Sparta. On the other hand, the child-birth function of Artemis in Sparta does not seem to have been particularly pronounced. The ithyphallic images dedicated in her Spartan precinct could then, instead of making of her a deity securing fertility as such, rely upon, and emphasise, the divinity's chastity-protecting 'essence'. For, as argued above, the dynamism of chastity seen from the viewpoint of potentiality points to, and assumes, procreation.
What Sparta was pre-eminently glorified for in ancient times, what gave her a status of excellence in political (i.e. military and constitutional) affairs was the fact that her \textit{πολιτεία} managed to inoculate all citizens with bravery and virtue\textsuperscript{104}. She could not boast of elaborate and highly sophisticated temples, nor of statues and paintings of great artistic skill. Mnesiclean Propylaia and Callicratean Parthenons, chryselephantine Athenas or Zeuses were not among the things which her flowering offered to the ancient (and the modern\textsuperscript{105}) world\textsuperscript{106}. She inherited no spirit of critique, no intellectual discussions putting at stake traditional beliefs, no innovations and reforms aiming at suspending and 'moving' \textit{τὰ πάτρης}, no Ionic 'curiosity'. Her legacy consisted primarily of the virtue wherewith all citizens were imbued. And this virtue was a kind of Homeric \textit{ἀρετή}\textsuperscript{107}, according to which the \textit{ἀγαθὸς ἀνήρ} was \textit{μίθων τε ῥήτηρ’ ἔμεναι προκτῆρά τε ἔργων}\textsuperscript{108} with the emphasis put on the second pole, on \textit{ἀνδρεία} as opposed to \textit{ἀδολεσχία}\textsuperscript{109}. Contrary to Athens' architectural constructions and plastic artifacts which were destined to become the 'rule' of high culture, Sparta's \textit{κτήμα} \textit{ἐς ἀντιπροσώπου} whereby free citizens managed to become virtuous in speech and deed. This incongruity between \textit{ἡθος} and \textit{πολιτεία}, on the one hand, and material proofs of success, on the other, had not escaped the attention of the ancients themselves. Thucydides, in an attempt to elaborate upon the strength of Sparta which, as other ancient authors emphasized, had reached the notorious point of subjugating cities and gaining victories against enemies without moving a shield, juxtaposes Sparta to Athens with reference to what future generations would think of the two cities, judging from the existent remains that would have, more or less, come down to them, surviving, as it were, the destructive power of time,\textsuperscript{111} (Although, when he referred to the future, the ancient historian had not, in all likelihood, in mind either a time-span extending beyond a

\textsuperscript{104}Arist. \textit{Pol.} (VII, 14) 1333b 12-21. As a matter of course I refer here to what has been called the Spartan mirage or the Spartan myth (cf. Murray "Cities").

\textsuperscript{105}Interestingly enough, the influence of the historical and mythical Sparta has been regarded as too important to be neglected, and chapters have been devoted thereto in even histories of philosophy (cf. eg. Russell \textit{History} ch. XII). A general view on the issue is given in Rawson \textit{Tradition}.

\textsuperscript{106}However, in so far as development of art is concerned, Sparta was not below the average Greek city; Athens, rather, was exceptional. Cf. Cook "History".

\textsuperscript{107}Cf. Athen I 8e-11b and Suid. s.v. "Οὐμήσος (p. 526 Adler). The belief that Lycourgos first brought the hitherto neglected Homeric poems to Sparta (Plut. \textit{Lyc.} IV, 5-6) — a legend that must have originated in Laconia — may reflect an ideological construction of the Spartiates according to which they pursued the type of virtue pre-eminently glorified by Homer in the person of Achilles, the best of Achaeans (cf. Nagy \textit{Best} 26-41).

\textsuperscript{108}Hom \textit{Il.} IX, 443.

\textsuperscript{109}Cf. the short but witty verbal replies to various situations attributed to the Spartiates by Plutarch \textit{Laconica Apophthegmata} and the entire ancient tradition.

\textsuperscript{110}Plut. \textit{Inst.Lac.} 41 (=239d); \textit{Lyc.} 24, 2 (=54d-e). For a more down-to-earth perspective refuting the 'idealization' of ancient literary evidence see Cartledge "\textit{τεχνή}'?".

\textsuperscript{111}Thuc. 1, 10, 2.
few hundreds of years or any purposeful digging of the soil, modern archaeological expeditions seem to have supported, and corroborated, his foresight).

The δύναμις of Sparta was successfully effected by means of an array of institutions, legendarily introduced by Lycurgus, which forced the entire citizenry publicly to exercise virtue. The obligation (or rather, compulsion) of the free population, women to a certain extent included, to become and always remain ἄγαθοι, on account of which Sparta excelled, is particularly praised in the ancient texts.112

The way in which ἀρετή was established in Sparta, in so far as prowess and tenacity are concerned, was through life-long training. Especially in the case of the young Spartans, the ἡβόντες, the ἀρετῆς ἀκριβῶς involved such crude and extreme exercises as the κρυπτεία113 which consisted, among other things, of occasional killing of the εἰλικτῆς, lack of food and a nocturnal foraging existence. The competitive character of these and similar practices was so important for Sparta's well-being that the philo-Laconian Athenian historian was right to see in competitive emulation the very foundations of the Spartan éclat.114

Love of victory and crude antagonism reaching the point of hateful envy stand out in Xenophon’s description. These are considered virtues not only 'political', i.e. constitutive of the Spartan social arrangement and public order, but strangely also pleasing to the gods. It is not, therefore, surprising that the religious flagellation of the youth in front of the altar of Ortheia was regarded as a competition in endurance, that is to say as an additional contest undergone by the adolescents during their ἄγωγη. The same, on a larger scale, happened with an aspect of the cult of Apollo Karneios: the originally religious construction of tents and the fact that the Spartans stayed in them for a few days while celebrating an Apollinian festival (a ceremony perhaps similar to the Jewish Succot

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112 Cf. e.g. Xen Lac. Rep. X. 4.
113 In a henceforth very influential article ("Cryptie") Jeanmaire interpreted the κρυπτεία as an initiation-rite through which the young Spartans entered the society of ὀμοίων. Based mainly on ethnographical evidence and only secondarily on ancient testimonies (Plut. Lyce. and Schol ad Plat. Leg. 633b), Jeanmaire’s interpretation refuted the idea that κρυπτεία was a part of the military training of the Spartans: "Rien ne me paraît plus faux qu’une telle conception (i.e. cryptie=embuscade) de la préparation à la vie guerrière à Lacédémone" (142). Contrary to what had been hitherto argued (e.g. in H. Wallon Explication d’un passage de Plutarque sur une loi de Lycurgue nommée la cryptie, Paris 1850), Jeanmaire thought that "la puissance militaire fut la consequence des institutions" (145), the term 'institutions' here referring to the age-class organisation (and the ritual passage from one age-class to the next) of the Spartan society (cf. Jeanmaire Courtoi 540-569). Jeanmaire’s interpretation seems to have been very persuasive. Cf. Oliva Sparta 45-47; Finley "Sparta" (1968) in Use 161-177 (165); Vidal-Naquet "Le chasseur noir et l’origine de l’éphèbe athénienne" (1968) in Chasseur 151-175 (162f.); Cartledge Agesilaos 30-32. A re-examination of the ancient evidence conducted with a sufficient amount of fair scepticism is offered in Lévy "Kryptie".

114 Xen. Lac. Rep. IV, 1-5: Περὶ γὰρ ἐς μὴν τῶν ἡβόντων πολὺ μάλιστα ἑσπούδασε [sc. Δικαίος], ἐρείπων τῶν τούτων, ἐν γένους ὥσις δέ, πλείστων ἔτη ἡ ὁγδόον τῆς πόλεως ὅριον ὧν, ἢ ὧν μάλιστα φιλονικέα [the best codices read φιλονικία which would well suit the following ἐς ἐριν, but since the passage directly refers to choral and gymnastic contests, Xenophon may have written φιλωνικία instead] ἐγέρθησα, τούτων καὶ χοροὶ ἀξιοκρατητάτων γιγαντιαίους καὶ γυμνώς ἄγων ἀξιοκρατητάτων, ηὐμίσειν ἔκαλεν, καὶ τῶν ἡβόντων συμβάλλον εἰς ἐς ἐριν περὶ ἀρετῆς, ὥστε τούτων ἐπὶ πλείστων ἐφ’ ἀκριβείᾳ ἀνδραγαθίας. [...] Καὶ αὕτη δὴ γίγνεται ἡ θεοφιλεστάτη τε καὶ πολιτικωτάτη ἐρις.
or ‘tabernacles’) were, even by the ancients themselves, considered to display yet another indication of the hard military life which any Spartan citizen was compelled to adopt.

In a passage cited above, Xenophon draws from the flogging a moral conclusion of general application, and Plutarch, following Cicero in putting the emphasis on the athletic character of the rite, elaborates on the subject all the more. He informs us that the flagellation of the youths lasted for a whole day and was held once a year. The participants, being arrogant yet cheerful, competed with each other for the victory which went to the most enduring and brave amongst them who thus achieved great glory:

We need not accept Plutarch’s precision as to the duration of the rite, which could be a rhetorical exaggeration, but we have no reason to deny the agonistic character that the rite must have assumed at a later stage of its long history. A scholium on Libanius states:

and an Hesychian gloss corroborates the athletic character of the event by mentioning a training of the youths before the contest. The name of this bodily training derives from which in the Laconic dialect means the fox and has therefore been seen as one of the several aspects that the assimilation of the young Spartans to wild animals, characteristic of the assimilation, assumed. Furthermore, we learn from Hyginus that the victor of the flogging-competition was called (because the contest was held in front of the altar of Artemis), and a dedicatory inscription seems to refer to this contest by

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115 Athen. 141e-f. The most recent interpretation of the Apollinian cults in Sparta, Pettersson Cults, pays no attention whatsoever to the much-needed distinction between original religious meaning and later irrelevant elaborations of a moral or idealizing order, and indiscriminately confuses the two. In the case of Apollo Karneios ‘the military aspect’ is accepted on a par with, say, the theriomorphic ram-like representation of the god (62-66); but such a blurring is totally unacceptable. On Pettersson’s messy hotchpotch presumptuously presented in the anything-but-adequate Introduction as addressing, ‘among other things’, the question of “what the religious experience was like for the participants” (7), see the devastating, yet more than reasonable and highly substantial critique by Cartledge "Review".


117 Schol. ad Lib. Orat. 1, 23.

118 Hesych. s.v. φοῖνικας: ἡ ἐπὶ τῆς χώρας σωμασία τῶν μελλόντων μαστιγώδοις.

119 Vernant "Orthia" 25. For a critique of the pioneering work of Vernant on Artemis see below "Epigomena: I. Marginal Artemis".

120 Hygin. Fab. 261: Sed cum postea Romanis sacrarum crudelitas dispiceret, quamquam servi immolarentur, ad Laconas Diana translata est, ubi sacrificii consuetudo adolescentium verberibus servabantur, qui vocabantur Bomonicae quia aris superpositi contendebant, qui posset verbera sustiner.
calling it καρτερίας áγων. Thus, διαιστήμων, μάστιγες and καρτερίας áγων were apparently different ways of referring to the same 'competition' held in honour of Orthia throughout the centuries of its long history.

Contests and Games

If the originally religious flagellation was eventually regarded as an agon which strengthened and promoted the bravery of the adolescents, and if the cult of Ortheia on the whole was considered to be (and assumed to have been) an integral part of the educational system in Sparta, the assimilation was indeed facilitated by three adequately attested contests held during the celebration of the Ortheia festival. We are referring to καθήθρατόριον, κέλοια and μῦα. The first and last of these contests do not present us with any difficulties, since the etymologies of their names appear to be quite transparent and, consequently, reveal (more or less) the character of the competitions in question. The καθήθρατόριον (also to be found, in the inscriptions, as κασσωτάριον and καθήθρατόριον) was a sort of hunting-game, and since we know that in the minds of the ancients hunting was associated with, and supposed to be a substitute for, warfare, we can imagine that the 'military' aspect of this competition corroborated the view which saw an educational 'curriculum' in the religious festivities paying honour to Ortheia. The inscriptionally attested κυνήγες (another form of the καθήθρατόριον?) seems to point in the same direction. The μῦα, on the other hand, apparently a dialectal variant for μύσα (through the characteristically Laconian elimination of the sigma between two vowels: μύσα > μῶνον > μύνα), was a musical contest which focused, in all probability, on the vocal (as opposed to instrumental) musical aptitude, and the singing talent, of the participants.

Now, as to the κέλοια, it has been suggested that this contest too was musical (or recitative) in character, but somehow or other to be differentiated from the μῦα. (For instance, the former could have been instrumental whereas the latter vocal, or the one performed with a lyre, the other with a flute). This assumption was based on a supposed derivation of κέλοια from κέλοιαι, to invoke, and on an inscription which reads:

121I.G. V, 1, 290 (= AO 316-317, insc. 37). Woodward, ("Inscriptions") notes that this is "the only specific dedication by a victor in the καρτερίας áγων".
122 Cf. the ιερόν κυνηγείον at Brauron (Scanlon "Race" and Peppas-Delmousou "Theoria").
124 Thus Woodward "Inscriptions" 288-289. For καθήθρατόριον, together with κυνηγέτας and εὔλκης as dances or dancing competitions see Chrirmes Sparta 123-130.
125 Cf. Hesych. s.v. μῦα: ἀληθῆ ποιά.
126 Woodward loc.cit.
"Since the dedicated sickle is referred to as 'the prize of a nimble tongue', we may conclude that the κελοία was some kind of recitation or invocation", claimed Chrimes. In a similar line of argument, Rose had supposed that "the competition was one of oratory or declamation of some kind". Yet, Chrimes does not seem to have understood the meaning of the inscription perfectly well when she considered εὐστομον to have been a mistake for εὐστομὸς. For εὐστομον refers to ἀεθλον and characterizes the ἀρετῆς of line 9 by attributing to it 'sharpness' and 'knife-edgedness'; it does not attribute the quality of 'reciting-well' to the subject of ἔθετο, the agent of the dedication Timocrates. On the other hand, the second part of the inscription (11.6-10) written with smaller letters than its previous lines need not be contemporaneous with the engraving of the former part (11.1-5). Therefore, one is tempted to suppose that the two parts do not actually refer to the same contest. The superfluous repetition of the name of the donor in a definitely not-too-long inscripitional text seems to actually support such an assumption. If this view is right, the donor can then be imagined commemorating his victory in κελοία first, and, at a later stage when he also won a μία (for what else could be better described as εὐτροχάλον γλώσσης ἀεθλον?), adding his second victory on the available space of the same dedicatory stele.

In my view, the κελοία was an equestrian competition. It must have owed its name to κέλης, the racing horse, and could have been either a horse-race or a kind of game aiming at the exhibition of the dexterity of the young Spartans in dealing with, and perhaps manipulating, horses. The expression τὰ κελοία κρατήρας found in another inscription (if the restoration of the text is accurate) points to a physical, rather than 'spiritual' contest. Moreover, Ortheia seems to have had a particular, that is to say closer and more specific, association with horses than with other animals. Several objects which came to light during the excavation of her sanctuary depict the goddess with, indeed surrounded by, two horses, and, as Dawkins pointed out, amongst the numerous

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127I.G. V, 1, 264 (= BSA XIII, 1906-1907, 199 = Woodward "Inscriptions" 298, insc. 4). The inscription dates from the second half of the first century B.C.
128Chrimes Sparta 120.
129Rose "Cult" 406.
130op.cit. 120, n. 2.
131The respective size of letters given by Woodward ("Inscriptions" 298) are: '01 (l. 1-6) and ca '006 (l. 6-10).
132Cf. the uncertain dating of the entire inscription implied by Woodward, loc.cit., :"In view of its neat lettering this may well belong to the Augustan period (Kolbe), and not, as was previously thought, to the second century of our era".
133Cf. I.G. V, 1, 279 (= Woodward "Inscriptions" 313, insc. 31) where the dedicator Onasileides commemorates his two earlier victories in κατηματήτου (when he was πρωτοσάμιας καὶ ἀτροπόματας) and his later victory in κελοία when he was an εἰρην.
134I.G. V, 1, 258 (= Woodward "Inscriptions" 301, insc. 8).
135See e.g. AO pl. XXXII, 4; 5; CLXXII, 1.
terracotta figures of animals that were found at the shrine "the horse enormously preponderated". Having given the respective numbers of the terracotta figures (according to which animal they depict) the same archaeologist is amazed to realize that "[t]he number of horse is thus greater than of all other animals put together, and when to this are added all the equestrian figurines, and the reliefs in limestone, the preponderance of the horse amongst the animal votives becomes still more conspicuous". Regardless of the reasons which may account for Ortheia’s being so fond of equine nature (of which some indication will be given below), one thing seems quite certain, namely that the iconographical evidence pays great attention to this fact and perhaps also suggests that horse-races took place in Ortheia’s festival. It does not, therefore, appear improbable that the κελόια were precisely these horse-races or related games of a similar nature.
SPARTAN AGE-CLASSES

The age-class organization, and the related nomenclature, typical of the Spartan *ephebeia* appear also in the inscriptional evidence referring to the above-mentioned contests. Participation in each (or all) of these *agones* seems to have been arranged in groups according to the age of the competitors. The terms found on inscriptions classify the boys in five such groups which has caused modern philologists and historians much trouble when they have tried to reconcile the inscriptive evidence with literary testimonies indicating a more numerous, but also more clear-cut and understandable classification.137

In a scholastically meticulous and exceedingly analytical article, C.M. Tazelaar138 thought that he had found a way out of the riddle presented by this disparity with recourse to a supposedly necessary distinction between a classification that alluded to the physical development of the young Spartans and a more technical terminology that followed legal lines. According to his view, the crucial stages of the seventh and fourteenth years in a boy’s life, and the subsequent passage from boyhood to puberty and therefrom to adulthood, did not coincide with the prerogatives of the state which, in arranging the education of the youth, emphasized (apart from the seventh year when the *polis* took hold of the child’s training) the twelfth and eighteenth years instead. This does not seem to me to have been the case.

The dedicatory inscriptions found in the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, firstly, distinguish between παιδες and εφημερες and, secondly, classify the former into four categories: μικκιζόμενοι, πρατοπάμπαιδες, ἀτροπάμπαιδες and, finally, μελλείρημες. The problem arose when scholars realized that this classification did not conform to the classification of the Spartan adolescents preserved in literary texts.139 The Scholiast of Herodotus140, in an attempt at explaining the word εφήμερι used by the ancient historian, commented:

Εφημερι' παρὰ Λακεδαίμονιως ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ ἐμαυτῷ ὁ παῖς ημβίδας καλείται, τῷ δευτέρῳ προκομιζόμενος, τῷ τρίτῳ μικκιζόμενος, τῷ τετάρτῳ πρόπαις, τῷ πέμπτῳ παῖς, τῷ ἐκτῷ μελλείρημι. ἔφηβεύει δὲ

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137 Woodward *Inscriptions* 286-292; Marrou "Classes"; Chrimes *Sparta* 84-136; Tazelaar "ΠΑΙΔΕΣ".
138 It is a great advantage that the article closes with a summary (Tazelaar *art.cit.* 152-153) because one may reasonably feel unable to pursue the line of the argument, lost as it appears to be in secondary and not infrequently over-analysed explanations. In such an admirably labyrinthine construction the numbering of the various points (aiming at an imitation of the sophisticated age-class system in Sparta?) does not appear to be immensely helpful. Yet, the 'substantial' data of the article (as opposed to its 'phenomenological' presentation) are highly valuable.
139 The views of all scholars who tried to solve the riddle between 1910 and 1930 are more or less identical. They conclude that the terms ημβίδας up to μελλείρημι covered the period between the eighth and the fourteenth year of age. See Nilsson "Grundlagen"; W. Kolbe I.G. V, 1 *Inscriptiones Graecae Lacconiae et Messeniae*, Berlin 1913, 179ff.; Swoboda *Staatskunde* II 694ff. This view causes various difficulties and should, I think, be revised. (Revision was already in 1946 proposed by Marrou *art.cit.*), but his conclusions still need revision.
140 Schol *ad Herod. IX, 85, 1-2*. The scholium is printed in Tazelaar *art.cit.* 130 reproduced from its publication by H. Stein *Herodotus*, 1871, II, 465.
To these age-classes a less accurate commentator (on Strabo this time)\textsuperscript{141} added that in the seventh year the youth was called \textit{εἰρήν} (τοῦ \zetaˈ εἰρήν). It goes without saying that these references to years are not intended to denote years of age. What seems to have puzzled modern scholars is whether or not the beginning of the Scholiasts' numbering coincided with the attested commencement of public education in Sparta which took place when the boys were seven years old\textsuperscript{142}. Nilsson thought that it did and claimed that the Spartan youth-terminology referred to the age-span between seven and fourteen years. But how could that be an explanatory comment on a Herodotean passage which reports the burial of \textit{εἰρήνες} in a separate tomb distinct from both that of the Spartan hoplites and that of the helots, after the battle of Plataeae? As a matter of fact, the \textit{εἰρήνες} are not mentioned (as they mistakenly are in the Strabo-gloss) in the interpreted nomenclature, but the scholium as a whole is supposed to explain precisely this term. And there can be little doubt that \textit{μελλείρηνες}, as the name itself indicates\textsuperscript{143}, could not have been temporally separated from fully-fledged \textit{εἰρήνες} with an interval (during which the Spartan adolescents received no particular naming?) extending to at least six years. For not only is it unimaginable to suppose that young people participated in real warfare before they passed a certain age-limit, but we also have ancient evidence confirming this. Moreover, the mention of the duration of the Spartan \textit{ephebeia} (ἐφεβεύει δὲ ὁ παῖς παρ᾽ αὐτοῖς ἀπ᾽ ἑτῶν δεκατεσσάρων μέχρι (καὶ) εἰκοσι) would then be entirely out of context. By contrast, if we take this very statement to be illuminating of the whole ancient comment, we can easily infer that in the first year of the \textit{ephebeia} the boy was called \textit{μωβίδας}, in his second year \textit{προκομιζόμενος} and so forth until the twentieth year when he was called 'would-be \textit{eiren}'. The period of '\textit{melleirenia}' would then have lasted twice as long as the previous stages, viz. two years instead of one, and after that in his twenty-first year the adolescent would be called \textit{εἰρήν}. This 'delay' is, in fact, supported by Plutarch, when he states that
\begin{quote}
\textit{εἰρήνες} δὲ καλοῦσι τοὺς ἔτος ἥδη \textit{δεύτερον} ἐκ παῖδων γεγονότας, μελλείρηνας δὲ τῶν παῖδων τοὺς προσβυτάτους.\textsuperscript{144}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{141}Diller "Ephebeia".
\textsuperscript{142}Plut. Lyc. XVI, 7 (=50a): τοὺς δὲ \textit{Σπαρτιατῶν} παῖδας οὐκ ἐπ᾽ ὑπητοῖς οὐδὲ μυθίους ἐπουράνιαν παιδευγότας ὁ Λακοῦνας, οὐδ᾽ ἔμεν ἐκάστοτε ἐφεύγει οὐδὲ παίδευσαν ὡς ἐβουλεύτω ἀλλὰ πάντας εὐθὺς ἐπιτατεῖς γεγομένοις παρακαμφάτων αὐτῶς εἰς ἀγῶνα καταλαμβάνει, καὶ συνανόμους ἄλλων καὶ συντρόφοις μετ᾽ ἀλληλῶν εἰθὲς συμπαῖσαν καὶ συγχολαῖς.
\textsuperscript{143}Strabo-gloss (Diller \textit{art.cit}) μελλείρην παρὰ Λακεδαιμονίας ὁ μέλλων εἰρήν ἔσσεθαι (cf. Hesych. s.v. \textit{μελλέρην} \textit{μελλεῖφθος}).
\textsuperscript{144}Plut. Lyc. XVII, 3 (=50e).
Since Plutarch is very precise as to the age of the *eirhν* (οὗτος δὲ ὁ *eirhν* εἰκοσιν ἐτῆ γεγονός), and since his testimony is further supported by later lexicographers (who need not be seen as drawing exclusively on him), we can be fairly sure that the period of 'eirenia' commenced when an adolescent had reached twenty years of age; furthermore, we can assume that the terms *ταῖς* and *ηβώτες* were occasionally used indiscriminately (or they overlapped) to denote what we would roughly describe as the period of adolescence (in biological, if not legal, terms). This nicely suits the inscriptive evidence from the dedicatory stelae at Ortheia’s sanctuary, which unambiguously calls *ταῖς ἐφιδίχω* those competitions limited to younger participants.

It is, therefore, evident that the age-classes of the category of *ταῖς* of the inscriptive evidence correspond well with the age-classes of the literary sources. The first two classes (*μοῖβας*, *προκομιζόμενοι*) are omitted, apparently because they were not represented in the competitions, but the inscriptive *πρατοπάμπαιδες* must have been identical to the 'literary' *πρόπαιδες*, while the inscriptive *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* to the 'literary' *ταῖς*. The etymologies and semantic fields of the names in question point in the same direction. Regardless of whether Kretschmer or Woodward were closer to the truth when they suggested two equally plausible derivations for the most obscure of these names (i.e., *πρατοπάμπαιδες*), it seems that *πρατοπάμπαιδες* were to *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* in much the same relation as were *πρόπαιδες* to *ταῖς*. And given that in both classifications the names which surround these pairs are identical, the 'included' pairs should be correspondingly identical too. Hence, the ages of the inscriptive *μικκιζόμενοι*, *πρατοπάμπαιδες*, *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* and *μελέιρηνες* were sixteen, seventeen, eighteen and nineteen years respectively.

As the inscriptive evidence clearly indicates, the three competitions held in honour of Artemis Ortheia were organised in different groups according to the age of the participants. However, this could not have been the case with the flagellation rite. Even at that later stage of its history when the rite, having lost most of its originally religious significance, became a competition in endurance, the few available inscriptions

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145Photius s.v. κατὰ προτείρας (κατὰ προτείρας?): οἱ περὶ εἶκοσι παρὰ Δάκιοι. (cf. Hesych. s.v. κατὰ προτείρας [Schmidt: προτείρας cod.:] ἄλικας διόμη αἱ προτείρας [Schmidt: προτείρας cod.:] παρὰ Δακίδαμονοι].
146I am not convinced that the words *παῖς*, *παιδίσκοι* and *ηβώτες* were technical terms with a fixed meaning as Cartledge believes, *Agesilax* 30.
147Chirimes *Sparta* 93.
148Kretschmer "Knabenagonschriften" suggested that the first component of the word *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* was the adjective *ἄδρος* (meaning apparently 'fully-fledged' in this context); hence, he derived *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* from a semi-hypothetical *ἀδροπάμπαιδες*.
149Woodward "Inscriptions" 287 n.3, thought that *ἄτροπάμπαιδες* could have been derived by syncop from *ἄτεροπάμπαιδες* (= *ἐτεροπάμπαιδες*). The assumed opposition is between *πρῶτον* and *ἐτερον* with reference to the *παῖς*-age-classes.
150I have reached this conclusion independently of Den Boer *Studies* 248-261 who followed a similar line of argument and came, almost forty years ago, to the same final result. The conclusions of Billheimer "Age-Classes" are thus proven to be entirely wrong. Similarly wrong is "la synthèse proposée" of Marrou (art. cit. and especially table p. 229).
commemorating its victors never mention any classification referring to age. The most plausible explanation for this lack of specificity is that, contrary to the real competitions, the flogging of the youth which was the very kernel of the cult, involved boys of a particular age. This age must have been determined with respect to the cult as a whole and ought to have been regarded as the necessary corollary of the entire ritual, since it was its most crucial religious aspect. I think that the *nineteenth year of age* serves the function of the flagellation-rite best. The *melleirenes* stood, in fact, in the very borderline between adolescence and adulthood and their name indicates that they were defined not by what they were at that time, but by what they would soon become, namely fully-fledged *eirenes*. Their existence would thus point to the future with a view to which they were actually perceived as a not-yet-of accomplished manhood. If my interpretation of the ritual flagellation and its symbolic significance is correct, it then follows that the erect male organ prominently featuring during the flogging would be the sign which anticipated (hence, in a deeply religious sense, secured) their competence as brave future warriors and, more importantly, as prolific would-be fathers.

An expression employed by Plutarch seems to combine perfectly these two aspects of the phallus. In describing the eugenic methods characteristically used by the Spartans with a view to improving the quality of the citizen body (thus in perfect accordance with their perception of virtue) Plutarch states:

> έξήν μὲν γὰρ ἄνδρι πρεσβυτέρῳ νέας γυναικὸς, εἰ δὴ τινὰ τῶν καλῶν καὶ ἁγιασμὸν ἀστάσιατο νέων καὶ δοκιμάσειν, εἰσαγαγεῖν παρ᾽ αὐτὴν καὶ πλήσαντα γενναίον σπέρματος ἑδὼν αὐτῶς ποιήσασθαι τὸ γεννηθέν.

If it is hard to believe that the expression *γενναίον σπέρμα* draws directly on Laconic usage, it seems quite certain that it very well describes the way in which the Spartans understood the association between virtue and procreation. Both ultimately derive from the phallus; therefore both are based on nature and its unsurpassable potency. Still both need a kind of cultivation on the part of mortals so that the best possible result be achieved. Here 'nature' stands for the intrinsic inclination of a being to develop the dynamism of its substance to the full; it is its congenital tendency to actualize its potentiality. In that

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151 Plut. *Lyce.* 15, 7 (=49).
152 Nature, especially human nature, in the sense in which the word is here used, should not be confused with the mechanistic approach to the animal instincts which are more or less unanimously termed 'natural' (as opposed to the 'cultural' foundation of human behaviour). The notorious impulse of the introduction of purely biological methods to the study of ethical (in the most general non-moralistic sense) and cultural aspects of human existence which previously was the exclusive prerogative of the theoretical, non-scientific branches of knowledge, can only be explained with a view to the overwhelming tendency of modern man to explain everything in 'objective', viz. quantitative, terms. The scientificity of all domains of human experience can be seen in the emergence of new 'sciences' such as E.O. Wilson's sociobiology (for the application of which see Wilson *Nature*). In so far as the study of ancient Greek religion is concerned, W. Burkert has made an interesting attempt at explaining the original meaning of the ancient herms with recourse to the results of ethology. The influence exerted upon him by this discipline becomes manifest when he writes on the 'puzzle' provided by cultic phallus-shaped artifacts: "In fact I cannot find any *real explanation* before ethology observed that there are species of
sense it is not only a possibility, but primarily an obligation. That is why unwillingness to beget children in Sparta was considered to be the infringement of a serious duty and was consequently severely punished. The tangible and material sign of the natural tendency in so far as procreation is concerned is in fact the semen. As Den Boer acutely observed, "the issue is the mysterious vital energy in the warrior’s σπέρμα. This energy must be utilized for the community, it being both a religious and a social duty." I think that the social dimension of the duty of bringing forth offspring was derivative and that it was actually based on the realization of a natural inclination which as such became the foundation of a religious cult.

Be that as it may, the noble semen mentioned by Plutarch and expected by elder Spartans is the material substance of a twofold potency: the generative power that brings into being, and the formative principle that leads to perfection. Its procreative aspect is σπέρμα per se, while its fulfilling and accomplishing property consists in its being γενναιόν. The way in which the achievement of the latter was ideologically or historically designed in Sparta is provided, in addition to the reference of Plutarch, also by the first-century B.C. historian Nicolaus of Damascus who, anachronistically speaking, renders the rather formulaic καλὸς κἄγαθος of Plutarch into the more specific 'most handsome' (ἐυειδέστατος): 155

ταῖς δὲ αὐτῶν (sc. Λακεδαιμονίων) γυναιξὶ παρακλησιόνται ἐκ τῶν εὐειδέστατῶν κυσθαι καὶ ἀστῶν καὶ ξένων.

Aristotle, apparently expressing a common, if deontological, Greek view concerning the notion of nobility (the negative aspects of which were intensely exhibited in the outrageous verses of Theognis during the sixth-century B.C. social turmoil) pointed out that "the noble is what is not alienated from its nature". And, since nature is pre-monkeys, living in groups, of whom the males act as guards: they sit up at the outposts, facing outside and presenting their erect male organ. This is an 'animal ritual' in the sense noted above: the basic function of sexual activity is suspended for the sake of communication; every individual approaching from the outside will notice that this group does not consist of helpless wives and children, but enjoys the full protection of masculinity." [Structure 40, (italics mine)]. If the inferences that can be drawn from the observance of monkeys' behaviour are based on a Darwinian evolutionary scheme, (if, that is, they are regarded as 'scientific'), I fail to understand how they are helpful, since man no longer remains in the supposed aboriginal state of animal life (nor could anyone, I think, believe that the ancients did or the so-called contemporary savages still do). If, on the other hand, what is ethologically observed is just a parallel to, and perhaps corroboration of, what we may otherwise discover to be, or to have been, the case, then I cannot see the meaning of the insistence on what is, in fact, only additional evidence. Lorenz's project is different and his book (Aggression) is not only thought-provoking, but also, I dare say, wise.

153The citizens who had no children were punished with ἀτμία (i.e. lack of due honour) which involved banishment from attending the Gymnopaeidai and absence of the respect normally exhibited to the elder by the younger (Plut. Lyco. XV, 1-3). An anecdote reported by Plutarch is very indicative of the importance attached to procreation in Sparta in relation to its strict social hierarchy: ὅθεν καὶ τὸ πρόσ Δερκαλίδας ῥηθέν οὐδεὶς ἐμείσατο, καθι' εὐδοκίμου ὧτα στρατηγοῦν. ἔποιετο γὰρ αὐτῷ τῶν νεωτέρων τις ἔδρας ὧδε ὑπείθετο [αὐτῷ del. Bryan] εἰπὼν, ὅθεν γὰρ ἐμοὶ σοὶ τῶν ὑπείθουσα γεγένησαν.

154Den Boer Studies 217.

155Jacoby FGrHist Nikolaos von Damascus F 103zu.

156Arist. Hist.Anim. I, 1, 18 (=488b). Aristotle, to be sure, juxtaposes γενναιόν with εὐγενεῖς in his classification of animals κατὰ τὸ ἰδίος, but this juxtaposition is of a very limited scope and aims primarily to distinguish the lion (εὐγενεῖς) from the wolf (γενναιός). In normal speech τὸ εξ ἀγαθοῦ
eminently revealed in excellence, semen's nobility presupposes the excellence of the bearer and simultaneously points to the perfection of the eventual offspring. Thus the phallus as the symbol of potency becomes the sign of both excellence and fertility. It is by means of the phallus that the propagation of virtuous perfection can be confirmed. The two main duties of the future citizens are to be manifestly found in the ritual erection which they ought to have whilst undergoing the religious flagellation. Such a symbolic significance could only be reasonably effective if the Spartan youth were flogged just once in their lives, precisely prior to their introduction to the citizenry; hence when they were no less than nineteen years old. Such precise specification of the age at which the ritual flagellation took place conforms with evidence for the received and institutionalized age-class distinction in other Greek cities. Moreover, it is in perfect agreement with the Panhellenic classification as it is exemplarily shown in the Pindaric Odes: participation in any of the great Greek athletic contests was basically organised according to three well-defined and distinct age groups (although subdivisions and alterations were occasionally possible): παῖδες, ἄγενες, and ἀνδρεῖς. The 'beardless ones' of this classification (once again 'negatively' defined as opposed to bearded men) were normally aged between sixteen and twenty. From their twentieth year onwards they were regarded as men. The growing of their full beard which must of course have slightly varied from one individual to another, was considered to be the sign that they had reached maturity. And the threshold of maturity was commonly set around the nineteenth or twentieth year of age. Apart from the existence of exceptional local variations, the lack of absolute congruity can be perfectly well accounted for by the looseness provided by the two different ancient modes of measuring time: the 'inclusive' and the 'exclusive'.

However, since the young 'men' while participating in the flagellation ceremony, were defined by what they were not, they were as a consequence thought of as standing on the very borderline between two different modes of being. And it is a by now well-known ethnographical fact that, instead of looking at the development of human beings in a linear evolutionary way, as modern man mostly does, cultures other than the Western conceive

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57. The yeivos (γενναῖο) and τὸ μῆ ἐξιστάμενον τῆς αὐτὸς φύσεως (γενναῖοι) were hardly distinct. Cf. Aeschin. 1, 42 where γενναῖος is related to ἐλεύθερος.
157. The γενναῖον στέρησα viewed from the perspective of the as-yet unborn child may, within the framework of ancient semantic associations, indicate another legitimate, albeit derivative, interpretation of the ὁδόθοις provided by Orthelia (cf. Call. Hymn, ad Artem 128; Schol. ad Pind. Ol. III, 54).
158. The introduction in the Hellenistic era of an organised age-class called νεοὶ (in a rather technical sense as opposed to the unspecified use of the term) referring "to youths older than the ephebi, ranging from a minimum age of nineteen to an indeterminate maximum" (Forbes NEOI 2 and n.6) nicely corresponds to the Spartan eirenia. The inscriptive evidence studied by Forbes plainly shows that the nineteenth year of age was an almost unanimously accepted lower limit.
159. Gardiner Athletics 41. A different tripartite division included the senior members of the community. But this referred mainly to dances (Plut. Inst.Lac. 15 (=238a-b); Pollux IV, 107).
161. See C. M. Tazelaar "ΠΑΙΔΕΣ" 128. The commonest example of the inclusive method is περιεπής to refer to athletic contests taking place every fourth year.
those borderline periods as intermediary states of being which consequently involve danger. Any transition from one mode of being to another (or to the next) is a very crucial point for an individual’s life, because the transitional period per se, since it cannot be determined by either the pre-existing state (which has passed by), or the coming one (which has not yet appeared), is assumed to be very unstable and indeterminate. The success of the outcome cannot be assured through human agency, hence it is thought to depend entirely on the benevolence or munificence of natural or supernatural forces. The instability of any situation and the dangers lurking underneath are usually conceived with reference to an external entity which, as it were, blocks the unrestrained unfolding of a being’s power. Even if the regularity of the phenomenon has been observed and thus assumed to be natural, because recurrent, the supposed existence of that external entity is not annihilated, but, on the contrary, strengthened through its regular reappearance. For the Greek mind, the existence of such an entity, the consequences of its imposition on a body (in the broadest sense of any real thing) and the danger involved therewith are all interpreted with recourse to the fundamental notion of pollution. And since pollution was originally conceived in the very pragmatic terms of a physical intervention, it is understandable that it pre-eminently manifested its presence in those critical points when the unimpeded development of a being appeared to have been suspended. Thus pollution was both the cause and the effect of any discernible recalcitrance, obstruction or instability to be seen in the course of a being’s spatial or temporal development. Ambiguity as such was polluted.

Flagellation again

To come back to the present case, if the epheboi at the end of their adolescence were seen to be polluted, then the ritual which ceremoniously terminated their boyhood and initiated them into manhood must, in addition to its other aspects, also comprise an element of purification. Such an element can, I think, be found in the flogging itself. An Hesychian gloss reads:

καθαρθῆναι: μαστυγωθῆναι

and a scholium on Theocritus says:

162Hesych. s.v. καθαρθῆναι; cf. Hesych. s.v. καθάρων (coni. Schmidt?; καθαρῶν cod.): [...] oi dě μαστυγῶν. (The accent given by the manuscript is certainly corrupt, because both alternative explanations of the word would not fit. Καθαρῶν κατασκάζων apparently means ‘restoring through judicial conviction’ which can be an explanation of a particular use of ‘purifying’, but hardly so of ‘destroying’ or ‘killing’.)
The purification effected through flagellation may be perceived in a twofold manner, one aspect of which is rather mechanical, the other more organic. Beating, in general, and whipping, in particular, by powerfully shaking the person beaten or whipped are considered to purify him. For, by means of the physical shock which they forcefully cause, any alien (ergo polluting) physical entity is regarded as bound to drop. In this sense, the purifying method resembles the actual cleaning of a thing (say, a carpet) through beating it, a process which, in fact, removes all external entities which stick to it and thus dirty it. On the other hand, the very same shock which beating and whipping provoke, seen from the perspective of the body that receives their power, induces an intensification of the organism in question. The body reacts to the attacking force and drastically brings its own energy together in order to efficiently oppose the outside power that challenges its integrity. Thus, the external attack causes an internal crisis, the successful outcome of which purifies the body. For the intensification of the body’s power drives away or extinguishes all particles (of a more corporeal or a more spiritual nature, as the case might be) which inhibit its development and prevent it from fully realizing its potential strength. The ancient admonition offered to medical practitioners that, when all other methods and attempts at restoring a patient’s health had failed, they should cause a serious shock to the sick organism (which would either be overcome and the disease simultaneously taken away, or prevail, inducing death) ultimately comes down to this primal view concerning purification.165 And, since no sharp, if any, distinction was drawn between the biological and the psychological planes in ancient times, both aspects of the purificatory method applied to the soul and its turbulences as much as they did to the body and its diseases.

163 The παοί proposed by Wilamowitz is, I believe, entirely out of question. Ahrens’s suggestion is the most plausible; cf. Hesych. s.v. σποδέων: παοίνι, συγγίγνεσθαι and s.v. σποδέων: ἔμαχον, ἐστύπτομαι. If it is correct, as it seems to me to be, the passage is better equipped to display some characteristically Aristophanic humour; for a sexual implication (cf. Arist. Eccl. 908; 942; 939; 1016) appears close at hand. On the other hand it best explains the ἐστύπτομαι and ἐξέδορε of which precede.

164 Schol. ad Theocr. V, 119. Theocritus (VII, 106-108; cf. Gow Theocritus II, 114 and 158) seems to refer to ritual flogging. Interesting parallels to the present case are provided by the flagellation at the Roman Lupercalia (Dion. Hal. I, 80, 1; Plut. Ant. 12; Caes. 61; Rom. 21; Ovid Fasti II, 19-36; cf. Ulf Lupercallenfest).

165 One may find a few ‘remnants’ of those primal notions on pollution and purification that have come down to us and seem to have survived amidst our otherwise rational thinking which accepts pollution only when viruses and the like are involved. Moving the arm in front of, or in a certain angle to, the face in order to avert an evil, or simply torturing, thought (as if it were an embarrassing fly) may mutatis mutandis be an example of the mechanical mode of understanding purification; whereas, shaking one (or thinking that one should be dealt a blow) when one talks nonsense, or is inconsistent, or just appears to be too emotionally involved in one’s conversational subject, may be a contemporary parallel to what I called ‘organic’ perception of purification. As a matter of course, the two modes are so indistinguishably interwoven with one another that determining which one prevails in each case is simply a matter of interpretation.
Interestingly enough, flagellation qua purification brings the inquiry back to Pausanias and his mythological account of the cult. Viewed from the perspective of pollution ascribed to the intermediary and not well-defined stages of life, the legendary human sacrifice executed in Ortheia’s festival can be seen as a kind of 'first-fruit offerings' which would primarily be thought to avert pollution, therefore to purify, and secondarily supposed to appease divine wrath. The Ortheian wrath in question is the archetypical aversion to the future expenditure (hence diminution) of the virginal power. The well-documented prenuptial offering of locks of hair to Artemis166 is merely a substitution of what originally was (or rather was considered to have been) a human sacrifice. For in the continual and autonomous growing of hair one can see the external manifestation of the perpetual development of a being’s internal and constitutive dynamism167.

The reference to human sacrifice is still more evident in the ritual of an Athenian cult devoted to Artemis who, like Ortheia, legendarily derived from the land of Tauroi. The ritual incision of a man’s neck there168 is meant to be a reminiscence of a previously performed sacrifice. For the precise indication of both the body part to be cut (i.e. close to the throat where sacrificial victims were slain) and the implement to be used plainly shows that the resemblances between this rite and any sacrificial ritual cannot be coincidental. The outflow of human blood pays due honour to Artemis Taurike in much the same way as the sprinkling of the Spartan altar pleases Ortheia. The religious meaning of these symbolic acts is the expiation of a deity, the transgression of the limits imposed by whom is imminent.

167 The hair "comme symbole et siège de la pulsion sexuelle" (Ghiron-Bistagne "Phèdre") is therefore derivative.
It has been argued that the association of Ortheia with Artemis is very late and that for the longest period of her cult in Sparta, the goddess was called simply Ortheia. To be more precise, this was, in fact, the view of Rose who, relying on Woodward’s assertion that "the addition of the name of Artemis to that of Orthia [...] seems unknown before the Flavian era, approximately"¹⁶⁹, thought that "the two were not always identical even in the minds of their worshippers in comparatively late times"¹⁷⁰. Chrimes took some pains to show that a very late identification cannot hold true, but her efforts, praiseworthy though they are and to a certain extent convincing, are spoiled by her attempt, based on Nilsson’s work on the supposed origins of Greek religion, to trace Ortheia’s origin back to Minoan times. In a more substantial way, Page argued for an earlier identification of Ortheia with Artemis (going presumably back to the sixth century B.C. or earlier when Alcman, on whose P ar thene ions Page’s study is focused, floruit) and rightly concluded that "there is little among the relics of Ortheia which might not have been expected from a shrine of Artemis"¹⁷¹. Conclusive evidence proving that in the fifth century, if not earlier, the identification of Ortheia with Artemis was already firmly rooted is provided by both Pindar and Herodotus. The Theban poet refers to the goddess in a context which does more than simply imply that the process of the eventual identification of the two has begun: it takes the association for granted and more or less assumes that the identification has already taken place. Heracles offers to Artemis a female golden-horned deer which was previously consecrated to Orthosia by Taygete. That the daughter of Lato is identical with the goddess to whom the sacred deer of Artemis was dedicated is easily inferred:

εὐθα λατοῦς ἵπποσόα ᾧθάτηρ
dεξιτ ἔλθον Ἄρκαδιας ἀπὸ δεράν καὶ πολυγάμπτων μυχῶν,
eῦτε μιν ἄγγελίας Εὐρυθέος ἐντι ἄναγκα πατρόθεν
χρυσοκέρων ἔλαφον θηλειαν ἄξονθ', ἀν ποτε Ταὐγέτα ἀντιθεοί
Ὀρθωσία ἐγγαίεσ ἱεράν ἱεράν

On the other hand, if this piece of evidence is considered to be inadequate, it is plainly supported by Herodotus who en passant mentions the cult of Artemis Orthosia in Byzantium, while referring to the two inscribed pillars which king Darius settled in Bosphorus to proclaim his fame:

¹⁶⁹Woodward "Inscriptions" 293.
¹⁷⁰Rose "Cult" 401 (cf. n.11).
¹⁷¹Page Alcman 74
¹⁷²Artemis described as the protectress of horses gives yet another trait which intimately links her with the Ortheia of archaeology.
¹⁷³Pind. Ol. III, 46-53. The identity of the two is taken for granted by the ancient Scholiast.
It is unnecessary to repeat that Orthosia is a variant form of Ortheia. It may, however, be worth noting that the reference to the altar seems to indicate that the relationship between this 'Byzantine' Artemis and the Spartan Ortheia, at the shrine of whom the altar is the most prominent feature, exceeded the limits of a mere linguistic approximation. In fact, we may suppose (albeit without much evidence) that in all places where the cult of Artemis Ortheia is attested, similar attributes were ascribed to the goddess. These attributes must have been epitomized in her wild and hard-to-appease character. A mythological explanation which appears to have been very widespread in the ancient world and which accounts for the assumed identity of some of the various Artemises, was the legend which ascribed the foundation of the cult to Orestes. But since many cities claimed originality on the subject and not all ancients were so erudite as to be able to take sides (as was Pausanias who mentions four candidate cities and subscribes to the Spartan claim), a Roman 'historian' found an easy way out of the riddle which is, however, very 'descriptively' indicative:

Orestem quidem ferunt non unum simulacrum Dianae nec uno in loco posuisse, sed multa in multis.

This view may indicate that in those places where an Artemisian cult had a very cruel character, it was associated with the Tauric or Scythian Artemis for it was reminiscent of the related horrific rituals and the legendary human sacrifices practised in honour of Artemis at the Black Sea. The transmission of the cult was thus ascribed to Orestes who, according to a widespread tale in all likelihood preceding Euripides' version (which was apparently strengthened all the more through its dramatization by him), together with the xoanon of the goddess brought her cult to the Greek land too. Or to put it more correctly, the transmission of a statue, as seen by the ancients, was the 'material' and external aspect of what was in point of fact the transmission of a cult.

This is not the case with a cult of Artemis in Samos referred to by Herodotus in a very interesting context. Neither Tauric attributes were ascribed to the goddess (or rather we are not aware of any) nor was her cult allegedly founded by Orestes. Yet some resemblances with the cult of Ortheia are striking and may turn out to be illuminating for a better understanding of the Spartan ritual. In order to explain why the Corinthians were so keen to take part in the expedition against Polycrates, the tyrant of Samos, organised by his political adversaries with the aid of the Spartans, Herodotus uses one of his favourite

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174Herod. IV, 87, 2.
175For the monumental character of the altar, apart from its description given by Dawkins "History" 8ff., see also Yavis Altars 108-110 and 235.
literary devices: he makes a digression (not a lengthy one this time) so as to give an account of what he calls an ὑβρισμα against Corinth committed by the Samians one generation before the described events. Periandrus, the tyrant of Corinth, Herodotus reports, sent three hundred men of the noblest families of Kerkyra to the Persian-controlled city of Sardis in order to be castrated. Their castration, however, was never carried out, for when the fleet reached Samos, the inhabitants of the island as soon as they learnt the purpose of the trip advised the young men to become suppliants in a shrine of Artemis:

Πρῶτo μὲν τοὺς παιδας ἐδίδαξαν ἵππου ἅφασθαι Ἀρτέμιδος, μετά δὲ οὕ περιφοροῦσε ἀπέλκευ τοὺς ἴκετας ἐκ τοῦ ἤπου, στῖών δὲ τοὺς παιδας ἐργοῦσαι Κορινθίων, ἐποίησαν τοι τῷ Ἐλευθερίῳ, τῇ καὶ νῦν ἔτι χρεῶνται κατὰ ταῦτα: νυκτὸς γὰρ ἐπιγενομένης, ὡς χρόνον ἴκετον οἱ παιδείς οἴσασαν χοροὺς παρβείνων τε καὶ ἱμέθων, ἵσταντες δὲ τοὺς χοροὺς τρωκτὰ σημάιμου τε καὶ μέλιτος ἐποίησαντο νόμον φέρεσθαι, ἵνα ἄρπάζουσε οἱ τῶν Κερκυραίων παιδείς ἔχουσαν τροφῆν, ἐς τοῦτο ἀπὸ τῶν ἄγκειον, ἐς δὲ οἱ Κορίνθιοι τῶν παιδῶν οἱ φύλακες ὀξύοντο ἀπολιπόντες.177

Let us leave the conclusion of the story in suspense since it does not concern us here. What does, however, concern us is, first, the reference to Artemis in this context, second, the dances of maidens and unmarried adolescents and, third, the ritual grabbing of the sacred offerings.

As to the first, it is worth pointing out that the deity who was considered by the Samians to be the most appropriate to be addressed when they had to deal with the eventual castration of young men was Artemis. Contrary to what a superficial understanding of the case of Hippolytus would suggest (in either its purely mythological form or its dramatic version), Artemis is here addressed as the most suitable divine being to prevent emasculatio from occurring. If she were the absolute protectress of virginity as such as is so often assumed, she would be rather gladdened by the necessitated, if compulsory, future celibacy of the Kerkyrean youth. Furthermore, had it been so, she would not be regarded as appropriate for, and capable of, an effective cancellation of the Corinthians’ plan. Hera as the Panhellenically established wife of Zeus and, moreover, the greatest divinity worshipped on Samos178, would be far better-equipped to take action and subserve the function longed-for. Even Aphrodite, the existence of whose cult in Samos under the for our purpose significant epitheton κοιμοτρόφος is a very plausible

177Herod. III, 48, 2-4.
178For the cult of Hera on Samos see Kipp "Hera-Kult". An interesting similarity between the Samian Hera and the Spartan Ortheia arises when one considers the extensive masks discovered in both sacred sites and the prominent role that agnus castus seems to have played in both places (Paus. VIII, 23, 5 in connection with what has been said above). More generally, for a socio-political 'special relationship' between Sparta and Samos in the archaic period see the convincing Cartledge "Samos".
assumption, would be in a better position to provide help. For there is nothing in the Herodotean passage to indicate that she was addressed so as to be appeased for the cancellation of an act which she favoured, as one might expect. On the contrary, she is referred to in such a way that one may easily infer how abhorrent castration would have been for her. And Herodotus seems to take this for granted. But if Artemis was not taken to be the goddess who promoted virginity qua permanent celibacy and generative impotency, her chastity and that which she demanded from her worshippers must be of a different kind. For the goddess, chastity is the state which enhances procreative power. Virginity is thus the prerequisite of procreation.

The context of the Herodotean story presents Artemis as the divine avertress of castration. Viewed from this perspective, the Samian Artemis is the prorectress of the generative power of young men, an attribute parallel to that aspect of the Spartan Ortheia which, in the pious ancient mind, caused erection to the flagellated adolescents. So far the equivalence between the two seems to be supported by the sources and the interpretation of the Spartan cult which has been advanced. I am tempted, though, to push the analogy a little farther. Among the archaeological finds that came to light during the extended excavations of the Ortheian sanctuary, there is one kind which has not been given due consideration, since it was taken to speak for itself: the sickles. As was to be expected, these objects, which were all found socketed in dedicatory inscriptions commemorating victories in one or more contests of Ortheia’s festival, were supposed to indicate the originally agricultural nature of the cult and to underscore the primarily pacific, or peaceful, character of the goddess. This view, although it may contain some truth, is, I think, misleading if accepted without further qualification. For all the dedications of sickles which have come down to us are all of a relatively late era when the cult had probably lost the vigour of its 'primal' meaning and had supposedly become a kind of bloody spectacle. What was, therefore, the symbolism of the sickles as objects of dedication within the context of a ritual which had long before been so alienated from any kind of agricultural ceremony? The answer should be sought in the function of the sickle and the symbolic meaning derived therefrom.

The Sickles

Primarily the use of the sickle as an agricultural instrument shows that the 'task' so to speak ascribed to it is to gather the grains of cereals when mature. To reap the fruit of corn which is the final product of a completed (because annual) natural process is to

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180Boardman "Sickles" and Anderson "Sickle".
collect the very best part of the plant. Not only the best, but the most fertile too. For it is by means of the grains that the plant is reproduced and the productivity of its intrinsic dynamism is manifested. On the cosmogonical plane of divine descent, the same function is effected through the sexual organs. That is why the emasculation of Ouranos by his son happens with the use of a sickle. In the Hesiodian theological, or rather theogonic, narrative the cunning Cronus uses a very sharp-edged sickle (ἀρμην καρχαρόδοντα) in order to 'reap' the genitals of his father. The use of the word ἠμην in the description of the castration is not just a poetic expression. It originates in (hence evokes) the perception of the act of reaping as a castration act. And castration here need not have any specific Freudian or Jungian overtones. It is neither the female 'inferiority complex' based on an 'experienced' lack of penis, nor a male fear of mutilation arising in copulation with relation to a vagina dentata. It may simply mean the taking-away of the most vital, and life-sustaining, power which is that of procreation. The intrinsic and indigenous fertility of the divine genitals is manifested in the eventual emergence of Aphrodite out of them. Therefore, the sickle is an implement which acquires the full array of its mythico-religious symbolism with reference to the male power of procreation. When the young Spartans dedicated sickles to the goddess, they seem to have wanted to simultaneously express two concomitant feelings: first that their procreative potency resides entirely in her hands, and, second, that an appeasement of her wrath is required before the dynamic potentiality embedded in virginity can unfold into procreative actuality. Aphrodite who springs forth from the mutilated divine genitals and the erection of the young Spartans in the flagellation ritual may thus turn out to have a deeper underlying relationship. For semen seen as the quintessence of blood or blood's foam (in the way butter is the 'foam' of milk) is in both cases a central point, explicitly in Aphrodite's birth (who is called ἀφρογενής and φιλομυθής at once), implicitly in Ortheia's ritual.

181 The sickle of Cronus could perhaps be implied in his most characteristic adjective ἁγκαλομήτης. But "Kronos'sicle did not necessarily make him a vegetative god" [Versnel "Kronos" 135, following Lang's critique (Magic 82ff.) against Frazer]. Though hardly acceptable without modification any longer, Frazer's vegetation god could be applicable in Cronus's case without being incompatible with the use of the sickle as the castration weapon.

182 For the use of psychoanalysis in the study of especially Greek religion and mythology see the brilliant article by Lloyd-Jones "Psychoanalysis".

183 For the use of psychoanalysis in the study of especially Greek religion and mythology see the brilliant article by Lloyd-Jones "Psychoanalysis".

184 Rudhardt Eros 15: "D'une manière paradoxale, la castration d'Oouranos est nécessaire à la naissance des enfants qu'il engendre; loin d'équivoloir à une stérisation, elle fait de l'acte sexuel un acte véritablement fécond". Cf. Caldwell Origin 149 and Roussel Pomeia 121ff. who rightly insists on the symbolic nature of religious (mythological or priestly-ritual) castration as a means by which sexuality is enhanced: the vital seed, or pneuma remains with oneself instead of being wasted away.

185 Hes. Theog. 196-200. Both verses are considered spurious, an assumption which is more reasonable for the former than it is for the latter. For it is highly improbable that the original form of the epitheton attributed to Aphrodite was φιλομυθής instead of φιλομυθής (cf. West Theogony 88). An Aphrodite who is pleased in, and provokes, seductive smiling and cheerful laughter (an attribute mostly appropriate for Charities and Peitho (cf. Hes. Theog. 64-65 and O.D. 73) who usually accompany her) must necessarily be the outcome of a late, and derivative, assimilation of the two adjectives caused by their phonetic resemblance. The primal meaning of the goddess of love should be understood in connection with the male genitals, one mythological expression of which is that she μιδείον ἐγκατάθηκεν. On the other hand, the more reasonable bracketing of v. 196 does not affect the meaning, since vv. 195-197 clearly state (with reference to her proper name rather than an additional epitheton) that the goddess...
where as we have seen, the sprinkling of the goddess’s altar with human blood and the
erection simultaneously caused presuppose a firmly-rooted implicit relationship between
blood and semen. The pouring of blood is the flow of life itself whereas the emission of
sperm is the outflow of potential life. Neither could exist without the other. Blood brings
forth sperm in much the same way in which sperm begets blood. The perpetuation of life
is the desired end. But it can only happen through a transfiguration which for the eyes of
the mortals takes the form of death. The ritual use of the masks in abundance discovered
in Ortheia’s sanctuary could be interpreted in this light.

Within the sphere of the masks and their significance fall also the religious dances
of the Spartan *epheboi*. On the other hand, the dances performed by young men and
maidens in honour of the goddess, a recurring feature in Artemesian festivals, should be
discussed against the background provided by Alcman’s *Partheneion*. Both kinds of
religious dances constitute the second similarity between the Spartan Ortheia and the
*χοροὺς παρθένων τε καὶ ημέρων* of the Samian cult. Before we undertake the task of
eucidating Spartan dances and masks, however, let us first complete the picture of the
above-mentioned affinities between the Herodotean passage and the Laconian cult by
moving to the third similarity.

It goes without saying that the celebration in honour of Artemis in Samos was not
inaugurated by the arrival of the Korkyrean adolescents. Such a 'historical' event could
never result in a new cult or even change the ritual of an already established mode of
worshipping the goddess. And Herodotus is very clear — and seems to be so certain as to
make us believe that he probably eyewitned the cult — in his statement that the ritual
was preserved down to his own days. Therefore, his account of the institutionalization of
the cult (deriving perhaps from an informal legend narrated on the island) is apparently
aetiological. The ritual stealing of the sesame-and-honey cakes which must have been a
basic aspect of the cult is parallel to the snatching-away of cheeses from the altar of
Ortheia as reported by Xenophon 186. The religious idea which underlies any ritual theft is,
as Rose nicely pointed out 187, the appropriation of a thing without paying the amount (be
it a sum of money, another object or any kind of labour or work) normally requested in
exchange. Moreover, since now and again the religious mind (magically) associates the
possession of a thing with its owner to the point of making out of the two an indissoluble
unity, stealing an object signifies, in the framework of magical thinking, the appropriation
of (the whole or part of) the power of its legitimate possessor. Thus the snatching-away of
the holy cheeses which apparently belonged to Ortheia, since they were consecrated on
her altar, meant an appropriation of divine power on the part, and for the sake, of the

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186 The first modern scholar who compared the two rites is, if I am not mistaken, Rose "Stealing".
187 *Art.cit.* 5. Rose’s interpretation of the ritual flagellation on the other hand, is, too rigidly Frazerian
and stiff.

was called Aphrodite Οὐ̂σεκ’ ἐν ἄφροι θρέφη. The foam is apparently the sperm sprung up from the
Ouranian genitals.
thieves', who, all things considered, must have been at the same time regarded as pious worshippers in the performance of a sacred duty. The divine archetype of the thief par excellence is, no doubt, Hermes. The theft of Apollo’s cattle most prominently features in the Homeric Hymn dedicated to him, and, furthermore, the god under his aspect of the Guide of Souls represents the archetypal image of what can be regarded as the theft par excellence: the taking-away of life itself. These preliminary remarks associating Hermes with the cult of Ortheia may be later proved to be very illuminating for tracing a 'history' of the goddess’s presence in Laconia.

The Cheese-Grabbing Ritual

If the interpretation of the magical meaning of 'stealing' be correct, the question which arises next concerns the symbolic function of the cheeses in this religious context and the particular divine power which their appropriation was supposed to procure. To put it differently, how can the cheeses be seen in the overall picture of the rite so as to become accommodated with the other aspects of the cult, and to which divine attribute, and in which way were they mythologically or ritually associated? Den Boer seems to have brilliantly shown the way toward a satisfactory answer of these, and similar, questions.

A fragment of Alcman, which following Den Boer I take to refer to the Spartan goddess, relates that during bright mountain-peak festivities a female deity draws milk from lionesses wherewith she prepares cheese:

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\text{πολλάκι δ' ἐν κορυφαῖς ὄρεών, ὅκα}
\text{σιούσι Ἀδή πολύφαυος ἐφότά,}
\text{χρύσον ἄγγος ἔχοισα, μέγα σκύφον,}
\text{οἶα τε ποιμένες ἀνδρεῖς ἔχουσιν,}
\text{χεροὶ λέωντον ἐν γάλα θείσα,}
\text{τυρόν ἐτύρησας μέγαν ἀτρυφον Ἀργειφώντα.}
\]

The fact that the person in the poem is addressed in the second singular person makes it highly unlikely that it refers to a mortal woman as suggested by Garzya. Moreover, the reference to Hermes corroborates the view which places the poem in the mythological context of divine, rather than human (i.e. cultic), acts. The powerful goddess manifests her sovereignty over wild beasts by drawing their milk, by appropriating, that is to say, the substance that nurtures their offspring. Hermes at this juncture represents the divine consort of Ortheia, although as is always the case in Archaic cults, he is subordinate to

\[\text{188} \text{Xen. Resp.Lac. II, 9.}
\text{189} \text{Den Boer Studies 261-274.}
\text{190} \text{Alcman fr. 56 (Page).}
\text{191} \text{Garzya "Note."} \]
her. The role that Hermes could have played in pre-Homeric religion as a Master of Animals (Πῶτινος Ἐρμῶν is the term coined by Nilsson by analogy with the Homeric Πῶτινια Ἐρμῶν) is more than adequately studied by Chittenden. She has shown that one of the original aspects of Hermes’s ‘protectiveness’ which went back to Minoan times was his power over wild animals, and that the god seen from the viewpoint of human benefits derived therefrom was transformed into the Protector of both wayfarers and flocks. The orator Aristeides, who, though he apparently misunderstood the deities involved in the poem and ascribed the divine action to Dionysus instead, nevertheless stressed the ‘invincible power’ of the god over wild animals, bears witness to the symbolic meaning that the drawing of lionesses’ milk must have had. What is more, the transformation of the wild substance into a cheese appropriate to feed mortals may be seen as parallel to the necessary transition of the Spartan epheboi from the potent natural virginity exemplified in their erect male organs to efficient, and effective, procreation.

Thus the cheeses consecrated on Ortheia’s altar seem to have been the cultic representations of a religiously speaking originally divine manifestation and must have been considered to be prepared by wild animal milk normally inaccessible to ordinary human beings. Their fermentation could then be the observable aspect of a divine activity (which in a secret manner transformed the intrinsic wildness of the milk into a digestible mild food), and their easily assumed consumption on the part of the Spartan youth (following their ritual stealing) must have signified a holy partaking and strengthening of the properties of the goddess under whose protection they hitherto were. The Spartan adolescents’ eventual abandonment of Ortheia’s domain of influence should have been accompanied by a culmination of the divine endowments which she could offer, lest their transition (which in a sense was a collective hybris, hence highly dangerous) be suspended.

192Chittenden "Master ".
193Arist. Or. XLI, 7, II 331 (Keil): πολλὴ τις καὶ ἀμαχὸς ἢ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ δύνατ’ ἄν καὶ ὅνως πτεροὺς, οὕτω ἵππους μόνον· ὥσπερ καὶ λεονταῖς γάλα ἀμέλεγεν ἀνέθηκέν τις αὐτῷ Λακωνίκος ποιητῆς. The Laconian poet referred to must in all likelihood be Alcman.
ORTHEIA AND AOTIS

It is a well-known fact established by the modern study of Greek religion and often emphatically stressed by the ancients themselves, that in Artemisian festivals dances and songs performed by young persons of both sexes, played an important, usually central, role\textsuperscript{194}. Such was, in all likelihood, the case with the cult of Ortheia too. Plutarch\textsuperscript{195}, for instance, in a purely mythological narrative anachronistically says that the abduction of Helen (not yet of Troy) by Theseus and Peirithous took place while the maiden (κόρη) executed a dance in the sanctuary of Artemis Ortheia. This precision would of course be of no avail, if the dance mentioned by Plutarch were not substantiated by an earlier and more trustworthy (albeit by no means secure) evidence. The source of the evidence in question is none other than the Laconian seventh-century B.C. poet Alcman. In one of his Partheneia or 'songs of maidens' an otherwise unknown divinity is named (Ἄωτις) to whom the young girls dedicate a garment. The passage that concerns us here runs as follows:

ταὶ Πεληδάες γὰρ ἀμυν

Ὀθίᾳ φάρος φεροῖσας

νῦκτα διὶ ἀμβροσίαν ἀτε σήμον

ἀστρον ἄφημοιενα μάχονται.

The condition of the papyrus which has transmitted the long fragment of the poem (and perhaps the most important and lengthily preserved piece of Archaic lyric poetry) down to us, is far from being perfect. Hence a great many interpretative problems have arisen and various readings have been suggested since the first publication of the Partheneion by Egger in 1863\textsuperscript{196}. Leaving most textual criticism difficulties aside, we shall confine ourselves to a brief discussion of two crucial problems caused by this passage which determine the possible relationship to the cult of Ortheia. In the first place, the relevance of the poem as a whole to the Spartan goddess Ortheia is far from being unequivocal.\textsuperscript{197} It resides on the ancient interpretation of the passage which stands in blatant contradiction with the text itself as it is preserved in the papyrus. The Scholiast in an attempt at explaining v. 61 writes:

'Ὀθίᾳ φάρος\textsuperscript{198}

\textsuperscript{194}See Calame Chœurs, passim and now Lonsdale Dance, passim.

\textsuperscript{195}Plut. Thes. 31 (cf. Paus. III, 18, 15). References to parthenoi are also made by Pausanias (IV, 4, 2) and Strabo (VIII, 4, 9).

\textsuperscript{196}Mémoirs d'histoire ancienne, Paris 1863, 159.

\textsuperscript{197}Cf. Garvie "Note".

\textsuperscript{198}The view according to which (cf. Kukula "Partheneion," 225; Calame Alcman 128, apparently mislead by L.S.(L.) svv. φάρος and φάρος) φάρος means plough, whereas φάρος robe, is not supported by the ancient grammarians (cf. Herodian, below; Schol. ad Eur. Poem. 1084: φάρος δὲ τὸ ἱμάτιον ἐνίοτε μὲν μακρὸν, ἐνίοτε δὲ βραχύ).
His interpretation poses several problems since it does not seem to explain what the text actually states. But given that the unknown ancient scholar (or the equally unknown compiler who drew on several commentaries ad locum written in Alexandria or under the influence of the scholarly spirit developed there) had more probably than not the entire poem in front of him, his understanding must have been better than the interpretations to which our very fragmentary evidence may point. In fact, this was the view of Bergk who two years after the poem's editio princeps proposed that the reading Ὢρθηια should be adopted in the text. His conjecture was elaborately supported by Davison for various reasons, palaeographical and otherwise, but although not substantially refuted by Page, it is not accepted either in his Partheneion or, more importantly, in his Poetae Melici Graeci. Page's hesitancy to emend the text may be justified, but this does not alter the meaning of the passage as his very interpretation plainly shows. For he took Ὢρθηια to refer to Ortheia as a particular cult-title. In so far as our present discussion is concerned, I have preferred to adopt Bergk's reading for two reasons. Firstly, it adequately combines the view expressed in the ancient scholia concerning the meaning of the passage with the goddess Aotis mentioned in v. 87. To be more precise, the papyrus-reading Ὢρθηιαι (nominative plural) must refer to Πεληδε in either of the following two ways:

i) it describes the early-dawn rising of the morning stars which, be it noted, are not conspicuous for their brightness, or

ii) it refers to the chorus-maidens (or some of them, Hagesichora and Agido, for instance, or even a rival choir) who are poetically assimilated to those stars when they get up, early in the morning, to dedicate a garment to the goddess.

In either case, the insertion of the adjective between two syntactically intimately connected datives (Διήμων and Φεροίσαλς) is not easily accommodated with the otherwise less complicated syntax of the poem and what we can assume for Alcman's style. What is more, the divinity addressed in the dedication would thus be missing, an omission not to be easily accounted for at all. Conversely, Ὢρθηια (in its dative case: Ὢρθηια) is an unknown divine appellation for any goddess whomsoever, which should, furthermore, stand on its own, not in explicit relationship with the goddess herself. Additional support for this reading is supposed to be provided by the hypothetical (yet unanimously accepted) derivation of the name Αὕτης from Ὕδως (the Dawn). A different derivation

199 Davison "Partheneion".
200 Page Alcman 19 and 78: "ὁρθηια must be retained in the text, and interpreted according to individual judgement as a plural nominative or singular dative".
201 Page op. cit. 82.
202 Aratus 264: διήμων καὶ ἀφεγγέες.
203 This identification has led Lypourles ("Ὀρθηία;") to interpret Orthia (qua Orthia) as "the goddess of the morning sun". Calame (Alcman 119ff.), on the other hand, following Davison's statement ("Partheneion" 447) that "it is easier to accept a new cult-title than a new deity" has identified Aotis with Helen (Dionysus and Helen were also found in the Partheneion by Bowra Lyric 55ff). The divinity of Helen in Laconia is implied by Herodotus (VI, 61) and is explicitly mentioned by Isocrates (Laud.Hel. 63) — with a touch of rhetorical exaggeration? Cf. later authors like Aeneas Gaza...
shall be advanced below which may support the Ὀρθεία conjecture. And secondly, the palaeographical explanation of the scribe’s probable error at this point, fully explored by Davison204, seems wholly convincing.

So far we have discussed the first point concerning the problem of the relationship of the Partheneion as a whole with Ortheia. We shall come back to this later. Let us, however, move for a moment to the second problem of textual criticism. It has been disputed whether the votive offering to be presented to the goddess (whoever she might be) was a robe or a plough. The scholium on the papyrus reads:

Σωκιφάνης205 ἄροτρον

but this precision, far from claiming that the word must thus be construed, rather indicates that the commonly accepted interpretation (i.e. that the offering was a garment) was not accepted by Sosiphanes who attributed a different meaning to the word. The etymology of φάρος, transparent though it seems to be (from φέρω, Lac. φάρος206), does not elucidate the particular character of the object: it simply means a thing possessed, brought or even worn; hence it may also unspecifi cally denote an 'offering'. But its use from Homer onwards207 (throughout the classical literature down to the late-antiquity lexicographers) ascribed to the word the meaning of textile (in general), and robe or garment (in particular)208. Even a grammatical reference by Herodianus209, which is somehow presented as supporting the ἄροτρον-view, cannot be decisive, since it does not specify in which of the two possible meanings the noun was used by Alcman. Hence, the interpretation arguing that the offering was a plough should, I think, be abandoned in favour of the other. For one thing, no real parallels of plough-dedications are provided in the extant ancient literature with the exception of a poem in Anthologia Palatina210 which upon closer inspection appears to be no parallel at all. For another, dedications of

Theophr. 646 (PG), and West Helen who thinks that unmarried girls in Sparta were under the protection of Helen.
204Davison "Partheneion" 448.
205For Sosiphanes about whom we know virtually nothing it has been suggested [RE s.v. Alkman (Crusus) III, A 1167] that he is identical with the tragic poet mentioned by Suidas (s.v.) who was later included in the Alexandrian canon of the seven tragic playwrights called the Pleiad. If this is right, his poetic vocation may have played a role in his rather devious interpretation.
206E1. Magnum 114, 19.
209Herodian. II.1 ci. μονήρου λέξεως β 36, II, 942.9 (Lenz): παραφράλατέων ὅτι τὸ φάρος τυχόν συντελείον τοῦ ἀναδέχεται τὰ τρία γένη [...] οὐδέτερον ὅποτε σημαντικὸν τοῦ ἵματοι ἢ τοῦ άροτροῦ, ὡς παρ’ Ἀλμάν, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρ’ Ἀντιμάχω (Fr. 119 Wyss): ἀεὶ φάρος χατέους ἔχουσιν [τιττείς; χατέους ἔχουν codd.; χατέους ἓκκοντες Lehrs].
210Anth.Pal. VI, 104. Two precisions are needed in order to duly differentiate this instance from the case of the girls in the Partheneion: i) the donator is himself an old ploughman and ii) the dedication is meant to be an offering to the pre-eminent agricultural divinity, Demeter herself, for the support she had provided over the years. Hence, no real similarity with Alcman’s poem. Even if it be proved in the future that φάρος means ἄροτρον, one must see in this symbol the whole array of its sexual as well as agricultural connotation (cf. DuBois Sowing 65-85).
garments to deities (esp. πέπλοι to goddesses) were so widespread\textsuperscript{211} in ancient cults that the interpretation of φόρος as robe becomes almost compelling\textsuperscript{212}. Among the attested dedications of garments to female deities, one deserves particular reference, for it elucidates the present case more than the rest. In Elea\textsuperscript{213} the sixteen women (famous for their participation in a highly revealing Dionysian cult\textsuperscript{214}) weave every four years a peplos for Hera. At the same time they organize and preside over a footrace of young girls in which the parthenoi compete in three distinct groups according to age.

Διὰ πέμπτου δὲ ὑφαίνουσιν ἔτους τῇ Ἡρᾳ πέπλον αἱ ἑκκαίδεκα γυναῖκες· αἱ δὲ αὐταὶ πιθέασι καὶ ἀγώνα Ἡραία. ὁ δὲ ἀγών ἐστὶν ἀμιλλαρὸς παρθένως· οὕτω που πᾶσαι ἡλικίας τῆς αὐτῆς, ἀλλὰ πρῶτα μὲν αἱ νεωτάται, μετὰ ταῦτας δὲ αἱ τῇ ἡλικίᾳ δεύτεραι, τελευταίαι δὲ θέουσιν οὐσι πρεσβύτεραι τῶν παρθένων εἰσί.

Leaving aside Pausanias’ details concerning the sartorial appearance of the participants, the length of the race, prizes and votives, the passage continues as follows:

eἰσὶ δὲ καὶ αἱ διακοινώμεναι ταῖς ἑκκαίδεκα κατὰ ταῦτα ταῖς ἀγωνοθετούσαι γυναῖκες, ἔπανάγουσι δὲ καὶ τῶν παρθένων τῶν ἁγώνα ἐς τὰ ἀρχαία, Ἰπποδάμειαν τῇ Ἡρᾷ τῶν γάμων τῶν Πέλοπος ἐκτίνουςαν χάριν, τὰς τε ἑκκαίδεκα ἀθροίσαι γυναῖκας λέγουσες, καὶ σὺν αὐταῖς διαθέγει πρῶτην τὰ Ἡραία.

Note the verb used by the periegetes (ἐπανάγουσι) which may point to an awareness of the aetiology involved. More importantly, note the mythological figure that has been called for to account for the agon: Hippodameia, or 'She Who Tames Horses', establishes the race after her marriage with Pelops in order to thank the marriage-goddess. The offering of a robe is a sign of matrimony, completed or anticipated.\textsuperscript{215} In his mixed (according to Aristotle\textsuperscript{216}) theology Pherecydes\textsuperscript{217} has Zas (a variation for Zeus) present Chthonie

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\textsuperscript{211}Apart from the notorious case of the Pan(Athena)ic peplos, it is worth mentioning the dedication of a peplos to Athena by Hecuba, already in Homer (II. VI, 293-295) and the annual dedication of a chiton to Apollo at Amycle (Paus. III, 16, 2).

\textsuperscript{212}This view has in fact been sustained by the majority of modern scholars (Kukula "Partheneion" 222ff; Garzya Alcmane 56ff; Chirmes Sparta 252; Davison "Partheneion" 448ff; Calame Alcman 130); against it were Page Alcman 78ff. (who seems to be in favour of the 'Alexandrian tradition') and Bowra "Partheneion" 35-44. There is also a second category of implausible suggestions:

i) φόρος being an error for φῶς = φῶς with the meaning of a 'torch' (cf. however, τὸ φῶς Parth. v. 40) (West "Alcmanica" 198; Griffiths "Partheneion") - imaginative but more deviant than Sosiphanes’s (ergo phantastic).

ii) φόρος being an unattested dialectical form for φήρος (Hesych. s.v.: ἔν τῶν ἀρχαίων θεῶν τροφή) (Wilson "Partheneion") for the improbability of which one may point out a) the assumed strange alteration of eta to alpha in Laconic, b) that Hesychius has something like ἀμφροσία in mind; whence supplied could this be an offering by mortals?, and c) that φόρος is etymologically related to θήρα and θήρια (cf. Hesych. s.vv. φήρα and φήρια) which are never rendered into θήρα and θήρια.

\textsuperscript{213}Paus. VI, 16, 2-8.

\textsuperscript{214}Plut. Mul. Virt. 15 (=215c); Quaest.Graec. 36 (=299b); W. Otto Dionysus p. 80.

\textsuperscript{215}Cf. what is said below with reference to the krokotos ("Artemis in Attica").

\textsuperscript{216}Arist. Metaph. 1091b8.

(who is later to be named Ge) with a φάρος decorated with (all the beauties of) the earth, including the (surrounding?) river Ocean, at their wedding. After the marriage, the chaotic, unbounded, formless primeval Chthonie becomes Ge, or the Earth which we know, replete with plants and animals. Pherecydes’s myth amplifies to cosmic dimensions what in cult stands in intimate relationship with the dedicator. Or, to put it more accurately, the ‘philosopher’ from Syros describes the cosmological archetype of a human matrimonial practice.

In Pausanias’s description of the entire ritual, the connection with Ortheia is not merely inferred by comparison; it is directly alluded to:

αἱ δὲ ἐκκαίδεκα γυναῖκες καὶ χοροῦς δίο ιστάσι, καὶ τὸ μὲν Φυσκόας τὸν χορόν τὸν δὲ Ἱπποδαμείας καλοῦσι. τὴν Φυσκόαν δὲ εἶναι ταῦτην φασίν ἐκ τῆς Ἡλίδος τῆς κοίλης, τῷ δήμῳ δὲ εἶναι ϕίκησε δύομα [μὲν] Ὀρθαῖαν εἶναι. ταῦτην τῇ Φυσκόαν Διόνυσον συγγενεσθαι λέγουσι, Φυσκόαν δὲ ἐκ Διονύσου τεκείν παιδὰ Ναρκαίον.

Two choruses as in the Partheneion, a relationship to Dionysus and an explicit reference to a deme called Orthia may be adequate indications that the parallel of Hera’s ritual went far enough in the same direction as Ortheia’s. Physkoa is ‘the swelling one’218 similar to Ortheia ‘die Erigierende’. The matrimonial character of Hera may have necessitated the use of a γυνὲ (instead of a παρθένος) as the πρῶτος ἐφρετῆς of the cult. But the ritual itself with the strict delimitation between the maidens who partake in the race and the women (the ἐκκαίδεκα and the διακονούμεναι) who supervise it, kept the distinction well unblurred.

The young maidens consider themselves to be under the protection of Ortheia. But in their case, at least as it is conceived by Alcman, it is not the chthonic deity that they have in mind. Nor is it as in Elis a divine Wife that they adore. The goddess is called Ἄωτις and the divine epiklesis must bear an overt relationship with the adjective ἄωτος. The substantive noun (ἀωτόν) refers to the best quality of a thing and the extant use of the word by Homer, Pindar and later poets219 bears witness to the correctness of the ancient lexicographical explanation220. Such qualitative extremity finds its best expression in the image of a flower. Thus ἀωτεύειν comes to mean ἀπαθείζεσθαι221. In accordance with the beauty contest of the Spartan girls described in the Partheneion, the goddess Aotis referred to is the Most Beautiful One. This runs parallel to several Artemisian

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218 Cf. the etymologies proposed with reference to βραύλχα and Βραυρών.
219 Cf. Hom. II, 1, 657; Pind. Ol. III, 6 (where, indicatively enough, the reference is to horses as is the comparison in Alcman’s poem); Theoc. XIII, 27; Apoll. Rhod. Arg. IV, 176.
220 Cf. Hesych. s.v. ἄωτον; Suid. s.v. ἄωτον.
221 Hesych. s.v.
appellations such as Καλλίσστη, 'Ωραία and Καλλιστώ222. We may therefore infer that the maidens’ hymn to the goddess and the votive garment mentioned there indicate a different, albeit complementary, aspect of Ortheia: her attribute as the Flowering (hence Undeflowered) Most Beautiful Virgin223. It may be argued that the wild character and the furious rage of Ortheia were not neglected in this vision (and in fact the assumed dedication of the garment must have also been part of an expiatory ritual), but the focus of Alcman shifts to celestial beauty rather than chthonic crudeness.224 The use of horses in a simile illustrating arrogant exquisiteness225 is additional evidence for Alcman’s perspective.

222 Cf. Apoll. III, 8, 2; Paus. I, 29, 2; VIII, 35, 8; Steph. Byz. s.v. 'Αρκαδία; cf. 'Callisto and Kalliste' below.
223 Ortheia was certainly called Parthenos (Hondius and Woodward "Laconia" 89); cf. Sosibius's (Jacoby FGrHist. IIIb, 595, F 6 (=Athen. XIV 646a) τὸ παρακυκασάμενον ἐγκώμιον τῆς Παρθένου mentioned in his commentary on Alcman (ἐν τῷ 7 περὶ Ἀλκμάνου).
224 Cf. the interpretation of the Homeric Artemis advanced below and what is said about Callisto in "Artemis in Attica".
225 Alcman fr. 1, 50-59 (Page):

Note that this passage immediately precedes the one where Orthis is mentioned. Calame in analyzing the simile (Alcman 67-72) highlighted the interplay between beauty and swiftness which is thereby underscored (cf. the ἀγῶν παρθένων in Elis). Cf. Devereux "Horse".
THE HORSE

Both the equestrian competition held in honour of Ortheia (κελοῖα) and the simile in the Partheneion which compares the young maidens with beautiful horses point to a particular relationship of Artemis Ortheia with the equine nature\textsuperscript{226}. This relationship is reinforced by iconographical evidence that shows the Spartan goddess together with horses. It seems therefore suitable to inquire into the reasons which allowed the association to occur. For in religious symbolism the particular properties or assumed qualities of the symbol must play an important part in the worshippers' understanding of the adored divinity.

The arrogance, loftiness and celestial beauty of the horse which instigated the comparison of Alcman, and which still appear self-evident to us, do not seem to be included in the primary semantic stock out of which the Greeks drew the elements which led them to the use of the horse as a religious symbol. What must have originally struck their eye in looking at a horse was its dark side. The horse was one of the most permanent chthonic symbols, a fact that justifies its presence in graves and cemeteries. Its association with Poseidon, as the god's emblem par excellence points in the same direction\textsuperscript{227}. For Poseidon, as his very name may indicate, was an aboriginal husband (πόσις) of Earth (Δή\textsuperscript{228}), and his relationship with the earthly power was never lost. His most characteristic epitheta ἐνοσίχθων, ἐνοσίγεως and σεισίχθων describe his power over the entire earth as it is manifested in earthquakes, and the archaic conceptualization of the earth as surrounded by the river Oceanos (ἄψωρροος), i.e. the watery element over which Poseidon unequivocally holds sway, indicates once again his sovereignty over the earth\textsuperscript{229}. It may be objected that according to the Homeric tripartition of the universe\textsuperscript{230}, Poseidon is assigned as a lord to the kingdom of the sea, whereas Hades rules in the underworld and Zeus is the supreme heavenly father; and that it is explicitly stated that the earth is the common property of all three deities (γαῖα δ' ἐτὸς ξυνιῇ πάντων); but in

226Cf. the votive bronze horse in the sanctuary of Artemis Brauronia (Paus. I, 23, 8). For a general account of the role of the horse in Greek religion see Bodson Ζώα 151-161.
227Bloch "Poséidon" 127: "Puissante divine chthonienne, (sc. Poséidon), il se trouve lié au culte des sources et à celui du cheval et bien des régions connaissent ce type d'union entre le monde souterrain, l'eau jaillissant de la terre et le cheval qui accompagne son maître dans l'au-delà". Cf. Bremmer "Poseidon".
228Cf. Chantraine Dictionnaire s.v. Poséidon; Kerenyi Zeus 64. The reservations of Ahrens (Dorica 80) concerning the possibility of Δή being a doric form of Γῆ are not very persuasive. Nor is the hopelessness expressed by Burkert (Religion 136) with regard to the second component of the admittedly composite noun Poseidon any more convincing.
229Sourvinou-Inwood is therefore wrong when she dismisses Poseidon's husbandhood to the Earth ("History" 221) and the god's 'chthonicity'. That is why she is at a loss when she undertakes to account for the legend reported by Pausanias (X, 5, 6) according to which Poseidon and Gaia who originally shared a sanctuary at Delphi gave place to Themis and Apollo; or when she wants to explain another version of the same Succession Myth mentioned by Ephorus (FGrHist 70 F 150) which says that Apollo succeeded Poseidon at Delphi ("History" 231-232) - where Poseidon stands of course for the Earth of the mainstream mythological tradition.
this particular instance the earth is mentioned together with Olympus and it can therefore be assumed to refer to the divine abode and the place where the Trojan war takes place (over which Zeus must necessarily be the undisputed ruler), rather than the chthonic element included therein. The particular relationship of Poseidon to the equine nature is apparent in the mythological legend according to which he begets three exceptional horses\textsuperscript{231}, and it becomes even more clear in an Arcadian myth of great antiquity\textsuperscript{232} (which may even point to an earlier zoomorphic religious stratum) in which the god assumes the form of a stallion in order to have sexual intercourse with Demeter who, in her attempt to escape his pursuit, has already been transformed into a mare.

Once the chthonic characterization of the horse by the ancients is established as a historical datum, we may further ask what caused, or at least facilitated, this characterization. Several indications are given in the ancient sources, but we may reasonably feel uncertain as to which particular feature of the horse, if any, had the predominant part to play in the process. The rhythmic galloping of the horse must have been one of those features. Now and again the fields and valleys of an apparently flat and fertile territory are approvingly characterized in Greek literature with recourse to the γῆ itself which is called πληξίπτως. The reason must lie in the fact that, apart from indicating a flat plain unobstructed by rough mountains where horses can easily run, the πληξίπτως γῆ could also demonstrate the fertility of the soil as the result of the instigation and stimulation of fertility produced by the scourging of the horses’ hooves. The earth is beaten by the horses and its productivity is thus magically enhanced (according to the intensification of a thing’s intrinsic power through beating explained above). There is, moreover, another aspect of the horse which may relate to fertility as well. Aristotle claims that from all animals it is the horse that, second only to human beings, is the lustiest\textsuperscript{233} and also that the mares become crazy (ἵπτομαι νοούσα) when they are sexually aroused\textsuperscript{234}. The unlimited and even uncontrolled generativeness of the earth may have found in the horse an appropriate symbol from the animal kingdom.

Theocritus\textsuperscript{235} in all likelihood assumes a popular fear which was responsible for the realization of a terrifying aspect of the animal when he says that the horse bites (δάκνει ἵπτος)\textsuperscript{236}. The idea of the horse was used as a bogey to terrify children and the

\textsuperscript{231}Hesych. s.v."ἵπτος" (cf. s.v. ἰπποθοκάμπτωτοι). ἵπτος is a common epiklesis attributed to Poseidon (cf. e.g. Aristoph. Nub. 83).
\textsuperscript{232}Paus. VIII, 25, 5.
\textsuperscript{233}Arist. H.A. VI, 575b: λαγνιστατὸν δὲ καὶ τῶν θηλείων καὶ τῶν ἀρρένων μετ’ ἀνθρώπων ἵπτος ἐστίν.
\textsuperscript{234}Arist. H.A. VI, 572a. The mania of the mares caused by sexual desire gave rise, according to Aristotle, to the assimilation of promiscuous people with horses (ὅθεν καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν βλασφημίαν τὸ ὄνομα αὐτῶν ἐπηφέροντο ἀπὸ μοῦν τῶν ζῴων τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀκολάστων περὶ τὸ ἀφροδισιαζεσθαί. cf. Hesych. s.v. πολυσ).\textsuperscript{3}
\textsuperscript{235}Theocr. XV, 40.
\textsuperscript{236}Cf. Aeschin. Contr. Timarch. 182; Diod.Sic. VIII, 22, 1; Dio Chrys. Or. XXXII, 78. For carnivorous and anthropophagous horses in Greek mythology see the interpretation (psychoanalytic as was to be expected) of Devereux "Chevaux".
reason for that must reside inter alia in snorting. Although poets and lexicographers thought of snorting as a sign of arrogance and haughtiness\textsuperscript{237}, the original impression caused thereby should have been rather horrendous\textsuperscript{238} and should have indicated a particularly animated, pneumatic and uncanny creature, possibly haunted by an underworld spirit\textsuperscript{239}. The notorious terror which was suddenly cast to horses and their unexpected shuddering and panic must have led the ancients to the same conclusion about the 'chthonicity' of equine nature\textsuperscript{240}. Pausanias\textsuperscript{241} describes an altar-like monument in the Olympia hippodrome which was called Ταράξιππος or horse-shatterer, and he narrates several aetiological legends about the obscure mythological person of the same name. The underlying bizarre fact calling for some explanation was the abrupt terror that haunted the racing horses and resulted in the destruction of the chariots and injuries for the charioteers\textsuperscript{242}. In this case the emphasis is put on the absence of a reasonable external cause for the horses' dreadful reaction and the concomitant uncanniness of the event. Seen as occasionally possessed by an awe-inspiring force, the horse is thus made into a symbol of earthly mania broadcasting covert conceptual vibrations about the mysterious process of bringing-into-being and passing-away.

In the case of Artemis Ortheia two additional remarks on equine behaviour made by Aristotle may have played a minor role in the approximation of the goddess to horses. Horses, we are told\textsuperscript{243}, enjoy being in swamps and marshes, drink always unclean water (for if the water is clear, they stir it with their hooves in order to make it cloudy) and are generally hydrophile. This may relate to the place where the sanctuary was settled which is particularly wet and marshy\textsuperscript{-}. On the other hand, mares are the only four-legged animals that deliver their young in an upright

\textsuperscript{237} Cf. Aesch. Sept. 464; Soph. El. 716-719; Et.Magn. 801. 11; Pollux I, 216; Hesych. s.v. φύσειμα.

\textsuperscript{238} Cf. Aesch. Sept. 475-476 where the ἱππικαὶ φρονήματα seen as a result of lust (μάργα) are said to provoke terror (βρῶμοι φοβηθείσι).

\textsuperscript{239} Verrani \textit{Figures} 99.

\textsuperscript{240} In the grandiose sacrifice performed by Achilles in honour of the dead Patroclus, horses and dogs (another chthonic animal; cf. Mainoldi \textit{Image} 37-51 with sources and bibliography - the 'chthonicity' of the dog is most explicitly stated by Plutarch \textit{Quaest.Rom.} 111= 290d) were slaughtered (Hom. II.XXIII, 171-174). As Rohde claimed (\textit{Psyche} 13 with notes) the sacrifice was meant to satisfy the bloodthirstiness of the dead, and it was therefore intimately related to the underworld. It is the 'chthonicity' of the horse that accounts for the death of Hippolytus in perfect accord with his name (Eur. \textit{Hipp.} 1218-1241 and 1335-1357) and relates the animal to the state of virginity (cf. Ghiron-Bistagne "cheval"). Dumézil, \textit{Centaures}, has seen in the horse a mythological figure connected with the conflict and unification of the sexes, but this idea must be derivative.

\textsuperscript{241} Paus. VI, 20, 15-19. Interestingly enough, in a similar remark by Dio Chrysostomus (\textit{Or. XXXII}, 78) the Ταράξιππος becomes an \textit{epikleisis} of Poseidon.

\textsuperscript{242} Paus. VI, 20, 15: τὸ τῶν ἱππῶν δέμα τὸ Ταράξιππος, σχῆμα μὲν βωμοῦ περιφερεῖς ἔστι, παραθέοτας δὲ κατὰ τοῦτο τοὺς ἱπποὺς φόβος τε αὐτίκα ἱερὸς ἀπ᾽ οὐδεμιὰς προφάσεως φαναρᾶς καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ φοβοῦ λαμβάνει ταραχὴ τὰ ὑπὸ ἄρματα καταγώγιουν ὡς ἔπιπαν, καὶ οἱ ἱπποὶ τιτράσκονται.

\textsuperscript{243} Arist. \textit{H.A.} VIII, 605a.
The uprightness and dynamic fertility of the goddess could thus have found in the horse an appropriate symbolic image.

244 Arist. H.A. VI. 576a.
245 It is noteworthy that the Greek substantive for horse is, in early literature, grammatically feminine. Thus in Homer ἵππος describes as a generic term both the stallion and the mare without specification of sex. The earlier Greeks may have seen in the horse a primarily female creature.
THE MASKS

The most interesting, attention-catching and puzzling category among the archaeological finds of the sanctuary of Artemis Ortheia is apparently the masks. Their function in the Ortheian ritual and the part they played in the mythological and cultic context of the Spartan goddess call for some elucidation. For we actually know very few things about them which could be unequivocally maintained, and, as a matter of fact, any interpretative attempt must be the result of a wider speculation about the role of masks in ancient culture and their meaning (or possibly ramifications of meanings) as religious symbols.

The first archaeologist who dealt with them was Bosanquet in 1906, but the one who first classified them and attempted to give an account of their role was Dickins, some twenty years later. In a descriptive analysis, Dickins distinguished seven types into which the masks should be divided according to their forms. These seven categories comprise representations of 'Old Women', 'Youths', 'Warriors', 'Satyrs', 'Gorgons' and what were called 'Realistic Portraits' and 'Grotesque Caricatures'. The limits between some of these categories seem to become often blurred, mainly because of the fragmentary state of most of the masks. That is why the number of the forms distinguished has been recently reduced to four with a further strong underlying tendency of ultimately contrasting the ideal representations of unbearded young men and bearded warriors with the furrowed demon-like and the bestial figures. Before we embark, however, upon an attempt at interpretation, some general preliminary remarks about masks seem to force their way into the discussion.

What is a Greek mask?

Our spontaneous and as it were 'natural' perception of the mask is of an artifact, the 'original' function of which is to hide an entity lying underneath. For us the mask is an illusion, a covering of the real and a negation of the true. It always denotes deception and it truly becomes what it is with reference to the thing (be it a physical object or a psychological emotion) which the mask masks. Real knowledge therefore relies on (and coincides with the outcome of) the process of unmasking, whereas masking equals a purposeful or incidental attempt at deceiving and lying.

Even when the benefits of deception are seriously considered to outnumber the drawbacks of resisting disillusionment, as is always the case with theatre, the conscious
mind always, if not simultaneously, restores the distinction between the mythical and the historical, or the fictional and the real. Gorgias\textsuperscript{250}, who claimed that in dramatic performances the deceived spectator benefits from the theatrical effects more than the non-deceived one, is thus assumed to have been the first intellectual in the West who gave a theoretical foundation and justification of illusion in art, of Art \textit{qua} illusion. And the entire tradition of the secular European theatre, most characteristically discernible in the various and complex disguises almost \textit{ad absurdum} exploited in some Shakespearean comedies, stresses the illusionary character of the mask. One need not endorse the \textit{esthete} stance of, say, an Oscar Wilde who subtitled his essay on \textit{The Truth of Masks} with the revealingly noteworthy phrase 'A Note on Illusion', in order to be able to understand the duality which is presupposed all the time when a mask (either the thing or the name) is used. The approximation of the two is usually the desired end. And since the mask as an artifact is regarded as crudely artificial and seems not to allow for an easy confusion of 'artistic illusion' and reality, it is abandoned for the sake of a better means. The most perfect mask becomes that of an actor's face who without wearing one manages to conceal his real (i.e. personal) emotional make-up. The more effective the illusion, the better the 'mask' meets its function and what is ascribed to it. A mask is a mask in so far as it produces an illusion and hides by its very presence the real thing which lies underneath. The above holds true for us moderns.

But what if there is nothing underneath, nothing to be covered and concealed and pushed to the dark? How about if the mask were \textit{not} the mask of something, but itself a thing \textit{per se}? How are we to conceive of the mask if the assumed relationship between the mask and what is masked is not taken for granted? What remains of a mask if its being is \textit{not} based on the antithetical duality of reality and truth \textit{versus} deception and error? Then the mask can, I think, be seen as a \textit{permanent presence}, as a \textit{thing in itself}. The polarity between appearance and reality turns out to be non-existent. The hidden content which has become mysterious or simply attractive through disguise disappears altogether. Better, it does not disappear for it never managed to make itself felt as such. There is no hidden content, no covered entity, no concealed meaning. The only 'hidden' meaning, the sole undeciphered reality lies in the fact that the mask has no meaning and no reality behind itself. The mask thus appears to be a mere surface and the truest one at that. It is not the surface (in the sense of the external aspect) of a phenomenon, but it is itself the \textit{phaenomenon per se}.

The lack of a hidden content and the fact that the mask is not the covering of something else are negative definitions of the mask which oppose the ancient thing to its modern (conceptual or real) counterpart. To pursue the understanding further would mean to come to a conclusion of what the ancient mask \textit{is}. The negation of hiddenness does not

\textsuperscript{250}Gorg. fr. 23 (Diels-Kranz).
imply a negation of meaning. The difference between ancient and modern masks lies in that the meaning in the former case is not latent, but on the contrary consists precisely in its being manifest. 251 A positive definition of the ancient mask should therefore take into account, and furthermore focus on, the manifest element of the mask as its most characteristic property. The mask thus appears to be a true manifestation. The etymology of the Greek word for the mask is highly revealing at this juncture, for it indicates the way in which the mask was originally conceived by the ancients themselves, and it shows how they came to employ masks in specific rituals related to particular deities, rather than indiscriminately using them in connection with any divine being whomsoever.

The Greek word for the mask is πρόσωπον (or προσωπεῖον which amounts to the same). The word is apparently constituted by the prefix πρός and the noun ὑπόσ. Difficulty, however, arises when we come to the interpretation of the second constituent of the word. For ὑπόσ deriving from the lexical root ὑπερ (whence ὑπομαί, ὑποπαίστα etc.) can refer both to the active and the passive voice of the verb 'to see'. It can therefore equally well indicate the action of seeing and the condition or possibility of being seen. Taking as their point of departure the modern conception of mask qua illusion and thinking, as a consequence, that the most prominent feature of the mask is its wearing on the face (in order, of course, to cover and veil it), assuming, that is to say, a utilitarian approach which understands the mask only in so far as it is worn (neglecting its other usages in ancient times or taking them to be derivative and of secondary importance), some modern scholars have construed πρόσωπον to mean 'what is put on the face', ὑπόσ being understood in one of its significances, not the most pervasive, to be sure. However, far from being so, the πρόσωπον is what is open to be seen, what strikes the eye, what is manifested. Instead of being what is worn on the face, πρόσωπον is a face. It is what characterizes a thing, what provides a thing with its identity in a manifest fashion.

At this point the ancient 'scientific' theories of vision appear to be of prime importance, since they cohere with what seems to have been a commonly accepted ancient view 252 (if not always so clearly stated as by Empedocles253), according to which for vision to take place it is the object that must emit a resemblance of its self (following a process called ἀπορροή) which must meet the requirements of the passages (πόροι) of the subject. Thus a collaboration, or rather coordination, of the two is always required. If one contrasts the ancient view with its modern counterpart according to which vision derives from the subject’s activity (as for instance summarized in Berkeley’s theory of vision, or that of Schopenhauer) which produces an idea having but a slight affinity with the object, one may realize the immense gap which separates the two. Applying this difference to masks we can infer that for the ancient mind the 'object' (not so called as a

251 Cf. Jenkins "Face Value".
252Onians Origins 76ff.
matter of course) enjoys an ontological precedence over the viewer. The modern opposition between subject and object (together with the concomitant priority ascribed to the former) is reversed when it is not entirely non-existent.

The first step for an understanding of the ancient mask is the realization that the mask is a manifestation. The second step consists in understanding that the manifestation effected by the mask is of that particular kind which is appropriate, and calls, for participation on the viewer’s part. It invites the ὀψίς of the viewer, its eyesight, and ultimately absorbs his view. The mask is the most appropriate means for man’s participation in one aspect of the divine world, because, in blatant contrast with other religious symbols and divine images (of the Apolline kind, as Nietzsche would say), identification with the divine is thereby possible.

This was, in fact, the case with Dionysiac masks or, to be more precise, with the mask (in the singular) of Dionysus. As some archaic and early classical visual representations of the god clearly indicate, Dionysus is represented as a Mask. The god’s presence coincides with the immediate and unmediated presence of a mask. Thus the mask becomes the symbol that helps (συμβολή) make the god’s presence felt to mankind. And since the suffering of the god coincides with the suffering of Becoming, man, being only one among the several natural participants of the world of change and corruption, intrinsically partakes in the Dionysian passion. This participation is facilitated through the immediate presence of the mask.

A mask felt as a presence, experienced as immediacy and consisting of mere superficiality? What do these statements indicate, what do they mean, if they are not bare figures of speech, mere verbal expressions? Analytically speaking, they mean precisely two things: frontality and ‘surfaciality’. Both aspects become almost self-evident once one meditatively gazes at an archaic mask. Even without the ancient pottery illustrations which Vernant with the aid of Frontisi-Ducroux brilliantly explored, one would gain not a worthless insight into a primal characteristic of the mask if only through looking at it. To the attentive observer the mask stands always face to face. Vis-à-vis mankind Dionysos, the mask-god, assumes a frontal position which is indicative of his calling for participation as much as it is terrifying.

254 C. Kerényi “Mask”.
255 The illustrations reproduced in Kerényi Dionysos ill. 84, 85 where the god is depicted as a mask receiving worship by two women (probably libations), are among the best examples. Cf. Paus. II, 2, 6: καὶ Διόνυσου ἔσχεται ἐπίχρυσα πλην τῶν προσώπων τὰ δὲ πρόσωπα ἀλοφῆ φύσισεν ἐφιλῇ κεκόσιμαι. It is plain that the red colour on the faces of the xoana was intended to indicate masks. From the god’s temple at Icaria comes a huge mask which represents Dionysus. (Kerényi Dionysos ill. 79).
257 The best case of the god’s frontality is to be found on the François vase, a krater by Ergotimos and Klitias (Kerényi Dionysos ill. 37).
On a par with the mask’s frontality goes its essential surfaciality. By this possibly odd term we refer to the fact that the mask, contrary to other cultic objects, is not a three-dimensional item. What characterizes the mask and distinguishes it from the rest of votive offerings which are always thought to enjoy a special relationship with the deity to whom they are presented, is that the mask lacks that spatial depth which features in all objects as such. The mask is a mere surface and the occasional, though not necessary, orifices in eyes and mouth illustrate its two-dimensionality most evidently. The mask is devoid of the third dimension and the visual perspective produced thereby, for it is a mere extension in surface. Herein, however, lies its strange mystery. Its particular profundity consists in its bringing existence to the foreground. One would even feel tempted to say that the mask is not an object at all. It is simply a veil that does not veil, a concealment that does not conceal: it alone stands as, and symbolizes, to use Platonic terminology, the World of Appearances in a state where Becoming without altering its nature (without, that is, attaining blissful eternity) is cast out as permanent.258

The gaze of the mask is frontal, hence straightforward in its direction. It immediately responds to the viewer, once he has dared even for a moment to cast an eye upon it. It is a presence which remains stable, unperplexed and unchangeable, always ready to communicate the message of its being-there. Thus it is inescapable. The frontality of the mask turns thus out to be the external aspect of a more profound attribute: its proximity. The mask as a frontal presence stands in intimate proximity. It is always close at hand. So proximate in fact that its presence, its immediacy prominently manifested in its gaze, becomes terrifying. In fact what is mostly terrifying is the World of Becoming which the mask crystallizes in a motionless (therefore all the more terrifying) stableness.259

This horrendous aspect of the mask is further enhanced by its surfaciality. There is nothing behind it, nothing to be revealed, nothing to give the impression of an eventual disclosure. What lurks behind is a mere void. But it is precisely this voidness, this absolute emptiness, this absence of a determined content which provides the mask with its awe-inspiring element. The mask dissects space. It is a manifestation which draws on, and is supported by, the eternal night which lies behind. The Dionysiac presence in the mask becomes thus not only immediate and proximate, but also alien and remote. At one and the same time, the spirit dwelling in the mask is immanent in it and transcends its limits. For the mask is simply the symbol of that of which the god represents the profound reality. And this reality is twofold, one part of which being the necessary prerequisite for the other.

258 Therefore the mask is not the ganz Andere of R. Otto (used to denote the radical otherness of the divine); but it is an Andere nonetheless. Masks dedicated to the Olympian (as opposed to Pythian) Apollo would be a contradiction in terms. Masks can only be used (worn, offered as ex-votos, employed as symbols etc.) with reference to that aspect of the divine which can "host" and deify humanity; and this is the Chthonic.
259 Cf. Cèbe "Masques".
We have, therefore, two so to speak external features of the mask, namely frontality and surfaciality, which point to, assume and summarize, a profound internal duality: that of simultaneous proximity and alienation, immediacy and alterity. The intrinsic duality of the mask is neither an essential contradiction, an unresolved tension in substance, nor a superficial contrariety to be ultimately cleared up in its oneness. The unity of mask consists precisely in its being at once familiar and alien, infinitely proximate and indefinitely remote.

To prevent misunderstanding a few clarificatory remarks are here needed. First, frontality in the sense in which the term is used above is opposed to confrontation employed by others. Instead of creating a conflict between the viewer and the mask, which has led to the notion of mask’s essential otherness, frontality is the formal trait of proximity and the visual expression of a call for participation in what the mask symbolizes. Confrontation assumes a notion of opposition alien to the Greek mind, whereas frontality is simply a sign of immediacy. Surfaciality, second, signifies spatial extension rather than lack of profundity. The presence of the god is presupposed in the mask; it is not added to it through a horror vacui complex. To say that the mask produces the god is to reverse the sequence of causal succession as experienced by the ancients. The insertion of a weird spirit from mask’s nothingness amounts to the generation of reality out of irreality through a process of psychologization. Dionysus, the god, is co-extensive with the mask, his symbol, he is not a derivation from it. On the contrary, theologically speaking it is he who produces the mask. Several myths indicating the mask’s divine origin assume that the god is the creator of the mask. And third, the alterity of the mask draws merely on its stability. Although the mask represents becoming and change, yet by being immovable and changeless, by being as it were the clearest and purest sign of worldly generation and annihilation - as it is instantly experienced (to wit, in an Augenblick) - it shows simultaneously with its proximity, and because of that, an immense alterity too. Confrontation and Otherness are anthropocentric interpretations of what, in point of fact, was a divine reality. And fourth, the intrinsic duality of the mask (and of the deity thereby indicated) consists of neither ambiguity nor ambivalence. It simply denotes the two distinct, albeit interwoven, aboriginal principles (Night and Day, Hiddenness and Manifestation) which have generated the mask so that the mask qua begotten offspring resembling its parents subsequently reveal their being.

The mask is a revelation of hiddenness, but the hidden element far from being hidden by the mask, is thereby revealed. The mask is therefore a manifestation. But what does the mask manifest? It manifests coming-to-be and passing-away, natural productivity and natural destructibility. Dionysos is a multifaceted god. He occasionally appears under

260Frontisi-Ducroux and Lissarrague "Ambiguity".
several disguises. He becomes water, fire, a lion, a panther, a snake, a bull and so on and so forth. 261 But what underlies and substantiates his metamorphoses is an essential duality. Dionysos is διήμορφος as Diodorus262 calls him. One aspect of the god is dark and cruel, destructive and bloodthirsty (ὠμιστής, ἀνθρωποφανής), casts madness and possesses women; the other is peaceful, serene, gentle, smiling and affectionate. The duality of his nature is neither the result of an interpretative theory launched a posteriori, nor merely a mythical expression aiming to reconcile the contradictory elements in an aetiological manner. It was felt by the god’s followers and became the core of some rituals held in his honour. On Naxos, Athenaeus informs us, two Dionysiac masks were simultaneously venerated, the one being of the god who βακχεύει (or brings mania), the other of his mild and pleasing face (μελιχίος)263. And again at Sicyon264 Dionysos Baccheios and Dionysos the Saviour or Liberator (Ἀλώνιος) were worshipped side by side in a nocturnal procession during which two distinct divine εἴδωλα were ceremoniously paraded which were both understood to represent the god himself and were apparently conceptualized as summarizing what we non-believers would call the basic contradiction of Dionysos’s divinity. No such contradiction was felt by the ancients to undermine or undercut Dionysian divinity, precisely when (and since) its opposite poles were ritually stressed.

An unfragmenting Heracleitean fragment

The best conceptual articulation of what religious practices ritually accentuated was uttered by the obscure Ephesian in his well-known quasi-philosophical identification of Dionysus and Hades265:

εἰ μὴ γὰρ Διώνωσις ποιμήν ἐποιεύτο καὶ ὃμεον ἄσμα αἰδώλωσιν, ἀναιδεύστατα εἰργαστ’ ἄν ὁμοί ἀ ‘Αἰδής καὶ Διώνουσις, ὅτεφ μαίνονται καὶ λημαίζονται.

This fragment I take to indicate the following points:

i) It would be impious if the phalophoria and the sexual hymns did not exist. For one aspect of the totality of the World would not have found expression in a divine being.

261Eur. Bacch. 1071; Plut. Aet.Graec. 36(=299a-b); Ant.Lib. 10; Nonn. Dion. VI, 169ff. The dynamic polymorphism of Dionysus is the main reason that has instigated so many, and usually mutually contradictory, theories about his nature. When all has been said and done, there remains an aspect of his divinity, gleaming in itself as non-unimportant, which seems to have escaped scrutiny and proper classification. See now the splendid article of Henrichs "God".
262Diod. IV, 5.
263Athen. 78c.
264Paus. II, 2, 6-7 and II, 7, 6.
265Heracl. fr. 15 (Diels-Kranz).
ii) It would be impious if the *phalloporia* and sexual hymns were performed for the sake, and in honour, of some god other than Dionysus. For the radiant Olympians cannot indulge in such a thing.

iii) Dionysus represents the Will to Life in its most radical and unbridled aspect. Notwithstanding external semblances, the Will to Life neither resembles nor relates to, but rather coincides with, Death. Life and Death are the two inseparable sides of one true reality. Hence Dionysus is *Mouvo* δότης since he is identical with the wealth-provider *par excellence* Pluto. To realize this (if momentarily) is to become mad (if ritually).266

Πρόσωπον ἐπὶ θεοῦ ἢ ἐπιφάνεια αὐτοῦ267

The epiphany of a god is the sudden tearing of the veil of appearances by a forceful divine power which wants to manifest itself in a precise and crystal-clear fashion. The appropriate symbol of this manifestation becomes the mask conceived in its gleaming activity. The mask brings to light what has been previously conceived in the dark. The mask therefore is a manifestation which ἀληθεύει in the Heideggerian etymology and meaning of the word ἀληθεία. It opens up the darkness of oblivion to the disclosure of truth.268 It is a 'petrified' illumination of Becoming. That is why masks are related to deities who stood in intimate proximity to the generative processes of Nature. Although the mask and its semantic reverberations mostly fell into the Dionysiac domain of influence (who was therefore the mask-god *par excellence*), they were by no means exclusive to it, nor restricted within its confines. A Demeter called Kidaria in the Arcadian Pheneos is recorded to have had a mask-ritual with important mystical overtones269, and excavations have brought to light a great number of masks from both the shrine of the Samian Hera and the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta270. There are certain mythical and cultic indications which could perhaps suggest that a special relationship connected the two latter goddesses from the point of view of their respective cults. It seems very probable that all three deities were later crystallizations deriving from, and drawing on, an

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266Cf. what is said about madness in "Artemis in Homer and Beyond".
267Suid. s.v. προσώπειον. It is true that Suidas (or his source) could have in mind more the epiphanies of the Jewish god recorded in the Old Testament than the pagan equivalent. But the undercurrent (and unconscious, it seems) merging of the mask qua semblance (as opposed to truth) referred to earlier (πρόσχυμα), with the divine face qua epiphany seems to derive from the Greek conceptualization of the mask qua epiphany and, at any rate, is not applicable to the essentially invisible Jahveh who forbids even symbolic representations of himself (cf. John I:18: τὸ θεὸν οὐδεὶς ἐφφαίρεν πνεύμονα τούτο, see John V:37, Deut. IV:12). The use of πρόσωπον θεοῦ in the books of the Bible is always metonymic and refers to the distinguishing glory of the truly invisible god (cf. Old Testament: ISam XIII:12; 1Kings XIII:6, Dan. IX:13; Lam. IV:16; Ps. XXXI:13; XLII:6; Ex XXXIII:14; New Testament: Matt. XVIII:10; Heb. IX:24; 2Cor. III:7; Rev. XXII:4; ).
268See Heidegger "Aletheia".
269Paus. VIII, 14, 3.
270Cf. Kipp "Hera-Kult".
earlier original Great Goddess Archetype. Be that as it may, there are certainly distinguishable affinities between Dionysos and Artemis.

**Dionysos and Artemis**

Dionysos is the vegetative spirit, the force that lurks behind, and is responsible for, the intrinsic generativeness of Nature. He is found in moisture where productivity and fecundity are mostly at home, and his sacred plants, the ivy and the vine, express in complementary ways his procreative faculty. But he is also a mad god, a deity who not only is himself mad, but also casts madness. Dionysiac madness is not a pathological aberration, but on the contrary, the enraptured condition which takes hold of a being, once it has, even for a moment dared to look with astonished eyes at the awesome generative power which the god represents. This is the reason why the god indulges in being in a particularly intimate relationship with women. He pre-eminently manifests himself to femininity, for the unlimited productivity of Nature is more intensely to be found in the female element. The enraptured ecstasy sent by Dionysus is the realization of the tremendous power of procreation. Yet, this power seen as mighty dynamism and viewed from the perspective of potency turns out to be the strength enclosed in the state of virginity. Hence Dionysus is intimately related with Artemis, the virgin goddess *par excellence*. Virginity *per se* is the necessary prerequisite for, and the metaphysical antecedent to, procreation. Virginity ontologically precedes procreation in much the same way as the flowering of a plant anticipates the maturation of the fruit. It is the condition where fertility establishes itself and enhances its effectiveness. On the other hand, this very virginity in actualizing itself becomes uncontrolled savagery and shows the crude face of pure wildness. An aspect of wildness always intrudes into natural productivity and it is at this point where Dionysus and Artemis meet. Their wild character not infrequently takes the form of crude destructibility and changes into an unopposed tendency for unrestrained annihilation. It is a kind of savage *mania* or obsessive savagery similar to that which haunts by divine command all impious opponents and faulty adherents. Both Artemis and Dionysus, their inclusion in the Olympian pantheon notwithstanding, are essentially chthonic powers which make their manifestations in distinct, yet similar, ways. The duality of their nature is exhibited in the form of the mask. The Hermaic stelae are in this sense essentially Dionysiac. They consist of a mask and a phallus which are

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271 The problem that Dionysus presents cannot be easily solved. One cannot overemphasize how the slippery god, true to himself, always escapes, in the end, all efforts to explain him away. What is said here must be understood as just one interpretation among the many possible ones, and with no aspiration to comprehensiveness.

272 Cf. Cole "Dionysus".
the visual expression of that intimate connection of the mask with the dynamism of procreation.

It has been suggested, by Wide and Ziehen notably, that Dionysus was not prevalent in Sparta. The reason for that was to be found, according to this view, in the Doric ideal which, vigorous and virile as it was, repelled the orgiastic excesses of Dionysian religion. It is now plain that K.O. Müller’s idea about the Dorian, upon which Wide and Ziehen seem to have based their claims, does not hold entirely true. Dionysus was in fact present in Laconia in more than one place, and in one particular instance he seems to have enjoyed exceptional hospitality. At Brasae, Pausanias informs us, the local people, in blatant opposition to the prevailing pan-Hellenic view, believed that the babe Dionysus safeguarded in a box was cast up by the sea-waves there, and was subsequently nursed by his errant aunt Ino. Pausanias’s phrasing of the legend shows that the appropriation of the god was very vigorously upheld by the local people who showed the cave where he was allegedly nurtured and who also called the adjacent field after him: "Διονύσου κήπος", the garden of Dionysus.

But even if a relative neglect of Dionysus could be substantiated in Laconia, we could perhaps claim that, given the intrinsic relationship between Dionysus and Artemis, the religious sentiments crystallized around, and the functions assumed by, Dionysus in other cities were undertaken by Artemis in Sparta. The most notorious Artemisian figure, viz. Ortheia, would then accordingly play the protagonist role in this truly religious drama, but other Artemises, Karyatis and Korythalia mainly, would follow in the cast.

Ortheian Masks

A passage in Pollux’s *Onomasticon* reads:

273 Dionysos Φαλλήμ on Lesbos (Paus. X, 19, 3) was the name given by a Delphic oracle to a mask of unidentified but surely divine origin which was emitted from the sea to the shore. Phallus, the symbol of Dionysus, need not entail an ithyphallic god. It is precisely because the divine figure of Dionysus presides over the ever-changing Becoming that he lies to a certain extent beyond the differentiation of sexes (cf. Jameson "Asexuality"). Once we understand that the god represents coming-to-be as organic generation, the discrepancy between his eminent symbol and himself disappears. The idea of a thing, as Plato realized with astonishment in the *Parmenides*, need not itself possess the properties of the thing of which it is the idea.

274 Wide *Kulte* 170 and Ziehen in *RE* s.v. Sparta (Kulte) IIIA, 1520, followed by Parker "Demeter".

275 Paus. III, 13, 7; III, 19, 3; III, 19, 6; III, 21, 8; III, 22, 2; III, 20, 3 (a temple dedicated to Dionysus where women only are allowed); Hesych. s.vv. διονυσόφαι and διομάντια.

276 Paus. III, 24, 3-4.

277 Artemis and Dionysus had shrines very close to each other at Alagonia (Paus. III, 11) and Taygeta, the mother of the hero Lacedaemon (conceived from Zeus) (Paus. III, 2) and an Artemisian devotee (Pind. *Ol.* III, 51) was *virginibus bacchata Lacaeonis* (Verg. *Georg.* II, 487). Moreover, at Karyae Dionysus was said to be the husband of Artemis (Serv. ad Verg. *Ec.* VIII, 30). And Marangou *Beinscherien* 18-19 has suggested that Dionysus could accompany Artemis even in the Ortheian sanctuary. Cf. Nilsson *Feste* 297ff.; Calame *Cheurs* 271ff.; Bremmer "Maenadism" 282ff.

278 Pollux IV, 104.
καὶ βρυάλιχα, τὸ μὲν εἴρημα Βρυάλίχου, προσωρχοῦντο δὲ γυναῖκες Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι.

and two Hesychian glosses explain:

βρυλιχίσται: οἱ αἰσχρὰ προσωπεία περιτίθεμενοι γυνακεία καὶ ὄμοιοι ἄδοιντες.

It is plain that the word βρυάλιχα, whatever its original spelling and pronunciation, referred to a particular Artemisian festival at Sparta and the actual description of the prosopa mentioned above could perfectly well refer to the masks found in the archaeological site of Ortheia. For the ugliness and the ridiculous element of these masks meet the requirements of the ancient sources.

Numerous similar instances of ritual masquerade and dances during Artemisian festivals are abundantly attested in the literary evidence. The case of Artemis Korythalia needs particular mention. Her cult is attested in Sparta and her name indicates, as S. Wide nicely observed, that she was a kourotrophos deity. In this sense her cult in Italy would run parallel to that of Artemis Ortheia in Sparta, and the testimony according to which wooden masks were used in her cult by people called γελοιασταί poses once again the serious problem about the possible relationships of masking of a particular (grotesque, hilarious or terrifying) kind with puberty. To put the question directly: why were puberty rites related to πρόσωπα γελοία καὶ αἰσχρά and what is the foundation of the connection between the chthonic aspect manifested by the mask and the critical period of adolescence?

Before we embark upon these questions, let us first see what the etymology of the words βρυάλιχα and βρυλιχίδεω may afford. The verb βρύο from which the first part of these compound words derives means 'to swell', hence 'to abound with', 'to be full of'. As to the second part, I take it to derive from λίχω which means 'to desire' 'to have

279 The codex on this gloss as a whole is apparently corrupt, but the word μαχράδες does not seem to me corrupt as Schmidt suggests with the cross, because the same ancient lexicographer s.v. μαχλάδας explains πορναζ; the use of an adjective instead of the corresponding noun, esp. in rather rare and idiomatic words, was not an uncommon practice and the liquid consonants λ and ρ were occasionally interchangeable. The Homeric (I. XXIV, 30) μαχλοσύη, or lasciviousness (cf. Schol. ad loc. and Herod. IV, 154), the Hesiodic μαχλοτέτας (O. D. 586) and the later uses of μαχλος (cf. Aesch. Suppl. 635; Athen. 335c; Luc. Alex. 11 = 219 Reitz.) explain the obscene character assumed in the dances mentioned by Lucian (Sal. 2 = 266 Reitz.) and Pollux. (IV, 101: μαχετρομές etc.).

280 Wide Kulte 124. Dickins’ (“Masks” 173) hesitant suggestion that Κορφυτόλα could be a corruption for κατ’ Ἡραλίαν is out of the question.

281 The connection has been established for fact by anthropology and accepted in most cases (cf. e.g. Eliade Initiations 83).

an extreme appetite for’. Hesychius informs us, means ‘dancing warriors’ and another gloss reads:

βραβιώτευν ἀκταίνειν.

The meaning of ἀκταίνειν is clarified by a gloss in Anecdota Bekkeri:

ἀκταίνοσαι. σημαίνει μέν τὸ ψιωτάς καὶ ἐπάρας καὶ μετεφηθάναι

and becomes more apparent in Etymologicum Magnum:

ἀκταίνον ἐπὶ ἑπώοι ἀκταίνειν τὸ μετεφηθεκεσθαί καὶ ἐπαίρεσθαί καὶ 

γαφριάν [...] καὶ ἀκταίνον μένος τὸ ἀνάγου καὶ δυνάμευν ἀνορθοῦν.

The desire to become full of strength, arrogance and bravery and the actual fulfilment thereof must reside in the very core of βραβιώτα. However, the word should, in my opinion, be seen to have originally had a more down-to-earth meaning. Instead of boldness, the 'swelling' must rather have implied arousal of the genitals or pregnancy. The ὁρθὸς ἐσφυδωμένος Dionysus may be a parallel to the former, whereas the γυναικεία ἰμάτια an indication for the latter. At any rate, a sexual significance must be found in the word to account for the particular function of the 'ugly masks' in Artemisian festivals. Additional evidence for the sexual implications of masks and the related dances in Laconia is supplied by Athenaeus and Pollux. The Laconian δεικτὴσταί were mimes so-called in Sparta, whereas they were elsewhere named φαλλοφόροι and αὐτοκάβδαλοι. Some dances in honour of Dionysus and Artemis seem to bear similar sexual traits.

To come back to the archaeological finds, the terrific and/or grotesque element seems to underscore the totality of the masks. The type called 'Youths' is of a relatively late date and "in all probability it made its appearance not long before 550", whereas the rest come mainly from the seventh century. On the other hand, the title of the Warrior-type masks is not only "hardly justified by the evidence", as Dickins was ready to accept, but also misleading. For the fragmentary state of the evidence does not preclude

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283 Hesych. s.v. = Ibyc. fr. 54 = Stesich. fr. 81 (Page).
284 Anecd. Bekk. I, 23.7 (cf. 23.12; 373.18).
285 Et. Magnum 54.34.
286 Athen. XIV 622a.
287 The strong association of brother and sister in the Pan-Hellenic figures of Apollo and Artemis may have caused the addition of Apollo in the gloss cited above to what were in fact only Artemisian festivals. The god's musical and choric pre-eminence may have facilitated such an incorporation.
288 Athen. XIV, 621 d-f: ἐξόλυτο ὡς οἱ μετοίουσει τὴν ταξιάτην παιδίαν παρὰ τὸν Λάκωνα δεικτὴσταί [...] Συκακυνοὺς μέν γάρ φαλλοφόρους αὐτοῖς καλύσει, ἄλλοι 8' αὐτοκαβδάλους, οἱ ἄνδρες ὡς Ἰταλοὶ, σοφιστάς ὡς οἱ πόλεις, Θηβαίοι μὲν [...] ἐθελοντάς,
2891 can smell a sexual connotation in this term too. For its obscure etymology see Pickard-Cambridge Dithyramb 232.
290 Pollux IV, 104: ἄν δὲ τινα καὶ Δακωτικὰ όρχήματα, διὰ Μαλέας Σελήνης δὲ ὅσοι ὑπ' αὐτῶν καταρχοῦν ὄρχιομενοι, καὶ ἱδομένων ἐπὶ Διονύσου καὶ καρυτίδες ἐπὶ Αρτέμιδο. The connection between masking and phallus seems to be age-old, as can be seen from prehistoric masks adorned with phallic symbols (see Gimbutas "Mask"). Dietrich (Tradition 62) excellently grasps the relationship of the two when he writes: "Both mask and phallus belonged to the basic chthonic cults of fertility in which the generative powers of Nature were invoked and celebrated."
291 Dickins "Masks" 167.
292 loc.cit.
the possibility that the so-called bearded 'Warriors' too exhibited grotesque features similar to those of other categories. Given the insistence of the literary sources on the hilarity and ugliness of the masks (παρὰ τὸ γελοῖον καὶ αἰσχρόν cited above), this comes as no surprise indeed. There are no ideal warrior-citizen types of masks which could, as Vernant wants it, strengthen the identity of the Spartan ephebes. On the contrary, repulsive faces furrowed with wrinkles and accompanied with pointed ears, stubbed noses and protruding tongues indicate the awesome fecundity of the earth, and become thus symbols of the goddess who presides thereover.

Most of the masks which have come down to us are votive offerings. The material of which they are made, their size and the occasional lack of orifices in mouth and eyes prevents them from having been worn. Of course, it may be argued that the existing masks are replicas of wooden or linen-and-plaster originals. But this argument, correct though it may be logically, presupposes a utilitarian approach to the mask regarding it as an object primarily to be worn by human beings. And I would like to test the validity of this assumption.

The actor, who is originally a religious worshipper, sinks into the power of the mask and becomes, as it were, absorbed by it. His physical facial countenance is reduced to the state of a persona, the counterfeit existence of which must be unmasked through masking. Far from being the mover of an inanimate object, the actor or ritual dancer is rather moved by it. The practice, still alive today in some traditional theatrical companies of the Far East, clearly illustrates the precedence of the mask over the actor. Before formally appearing on stage or playing his role in rehearsals, the actor is traditionally compelled to contemplate in the mask for quite a long time in advance. He ceremoniously places the mask in front of him and concentrates in order to listen to its voice. A direct communication is thus established whereby the actor becomes the recipient of what the mask wants to announce. He is not supposed to play the role as he likes or suits him, but he is obliged to be guided by, and obey the instructions of, the mask itself.

A similar conceptualization of the precedence of the mask over the playwright is attested in the ancient world. Iconographical evidence suggests that dramatic poets were not only metaphorically speaking inspired by masks, but they were in fact regarded as composing their plays with a look at a mask. Given the insistence of iconography on

293 Cf. for instance, AO pl. LIV, I classified as "Warrior".
294 See "Epilegomena I: Marginal Artemis".
295 Dickins op.cit. 174-175.
296 Green "Masks" 247: "Once a performer dons his mask, he starts to perform, and the vase-painter sees him as the character he represents, not as an actor playing a part". On the emancipation of actors and acting not only from the original religious framework that gave rise to dramatic performances, but also from the already self-sufficient and emancipated drama of the middle-fifth c. B.C. see Slater "Actor".
297 Cf. Irvine "Masks".
298 Cf. Webster "Poet".
that theme and the existence of some ancient literary passages which corroborate this view, we may believe that the practice might have some bearing on historical truth. At any rate, it plainly shows that the mask was not construed, at least primarily, as an artifact made by human hands, and the aetiological myths which narrate how such-and-such a mask fell from heaven or was ejected by sea-waves point in the same direction. It may be objected that the occasional adoration of masks as idols and cult-objects should not be confused with their actual use in ceremonial dances and theatrical performances. But the gap which separates the two seems to be more narrow than is usually supposed. I am tempted to say that in some cases the gap was entirely non-existent. And sixth-century Sparta, whence the abundance of the Ortheian masks comes, seems to fall into that category. Masks receiving specific worship, masks worn in religious festivals and votive masks are different aspects of the same reality which is originally recognized as divine. In this sense the appearance of the Mask must be placed in an age immediately following the birth of mythology. For if by mythology we understand, even more than an articulated narrative about fantastic deeds, the first expressive concretization of Man's being-in-the-World, the Mask must have appeared soon afterwards, since it most suitably combines the antithetical elements resulting from such an awareness. The use of masks in theatrical performances should, therefore, not perplex and confuse us at all. It is derivative and, although not of secondary importance once it has emerged, remains estranged a bit from the original religious experience.299

299Cf. Ebong "Masks".
TRACING A 'HISTORY' OF THE GODDESS

So far we have engaged in offering a so to speak structural picture of the cult of Artemis Ortheia, the multifariousness of its possible semantic fields and the hypothetical ahistorical origins of their symbolic functions. It is high time to make an attempt at drawing an equally hypothetical stem of the goddess’s historical development. If cults and deities evolve in an organic fashion (as I take it to be), notwithstanding occasional external influences which may interfere with their outgrowth, it follows that most (if not all) features which are apparent at a later stage have been potentially included in the original germination. However, this realization does not exhaust the subject, nor does it defy a description of the historical process. What one should always bear in mind is that a historical analysis does not necessarily assume that the final result is a more or less accidental accumulation of various irrelevant facts and a more or less haphazard outcome of unrelated causes and factors.

The historical development of the deity that was eventually to be worshipped as Artemis Ortheia could for the sake of clarity be divided into four stages or rather phases. The distinction between them is too blurred to allow for strict chronological precision, but we could perhaps distinguish the first stage which heavily draws on, and is the direct legacy of, Achaean (so-called Mycenaean) religion from the purely Dorian subsequent phases.

In the first phase we have a Great Goddess in all likelihood accompanied by a male deity of surely minor importance who represents, and is thus identified with, the unswerving productivity of the earth. This chthonic productivity is conceived as unlimited and uncontrollable; ergo chaotic. The goddess together with normal offspring of whatever kind brings forth monsters too. But teratogenesis is the wild aspect of general procreation. The wildness of Nature in general coincides in this 'primitive' outlook with the wildness of the earthly womb which is regarded as self-sufficient and omnipotent. No principle of order is needed, or conversely, when its role is acknowledged, a minor god is offered a place next to that of the Great Mother. The power which underlies such tremendous productivity in accordance with the abnormal offspring derived therefrom is seen as the potency of virginity. Thus virginity becomes the essential prerequisite of procreation. What characterizes this virginal state is its intrinsic wildness. Therefore the Great Goddess becomes a Πόνιά Θηρόω in the sense that in wild non-domesticated animals is her power better revealed. Being a Mistress of Animals does not mean that she resides in the animal kingdom or that she is a hunting deity. The wildness intrinsic in carnivorous predators is a concrete manifestation of natural savagery. Thus lions, panthers and the like become symbols of the divine activity of the goddess whose powerful supremacy is pointedly exhibited in yoking them. To appease, or, in unperplexed situations, to pay due
honour to, her involves, and culminates in, blood-shedding. Human victims are thus (legendarily or actually) presented as expiatory (or dedicatory) offerings. Sprinkling her altar with blood lies at the very core of her cult, thus indicating her intrinsic blood-thirstiness. She is also winged and/or accompanied by birds. This shows the extensive field of her sovereignty, for the air and sky (together with all creatures living high above human heads) do not fall outside the limits of her sway. The function of the goddess’s male consort could be well served by Hermes or his Mycenaean predecessor. For he was a Master of Animals and a phallic and chthonic deity too.

Human sacrifices are not transformed, as one would expect, into animal surrogate sacrifices. The attested mitigation of the original cult ascribed to Lycourgos results into a specific ritual at the kernel of which lies the flagellation of young men. It is now the scourging of Spartan youth that sprinkles the goddess’s altar with human blood. Moreover, flagellation causes erection which is a sign of divine presence with the double meaning of unrestricted potency (possibly declining into unlimited aggression) and powerful fertility. The Great Goddess becomes now the Ortheia of the archaeological finds. Most of the attributes of her previous phase are retained, but she is incorporated into what we sometimes call state-religion and some social obligations are brought under her protection. No secularization or functional transformation is involved. On the contrary, the slighter or sturdier delimitation of her domain increases the specificity of her nature as a chthonic wild force.

Ortheia becomes then associated with Artemis who on the broader plane of Pan-Hellenism contains very similar features of wildness and virginity. When the Homeric pantheon establishes itself firmly and is acknowledged as the as it were theological codification common to all Greek cities, the association of Ortheia with Artemis becomes almost unavoidable. The Taurike Artemis in particular who more that any other local deity of the same name stresses the bloodthirsty side of wildness, appropriates best

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300 Marangou Beischnitzereien pl. 1-2 = AO pl. XCI-XCII. Cf. Thomson "Artemis" and Gerald "Persische". Pausanias saw a winged Artemis depicted on the chest of the Corinthian tyrant Cypselus and he expressed his ignorance concerning the function of the wings (Paus. V, 19, 5): "Αρτέμις δέ οὐκ οἶδα ἐφ’ ὄρυγγας πτέρυγας ἠγείρα φύει τῶν ὄμοι, καὶ τῇ μεν δεξιᾷ κατέχει πάρσαλιν, τῇ δὲ ἐτέρᾳ τῶν χειρῶν λέοντα. The ignorance of the learned traveller indicates the remote archaism of that symbolism. The winged Victory could be more digestible, it seems, although she too pointed to a very early origin (Paus. V, 17, 3).

301 Marangou Beischnitzereien 151.

302 Nilsson rightly observed (Minoan-Mycenaean 496) that "the wings are not only due to the Orientalizing fashion of the time, but are a reminiscence of the old bird epiphany". However, rather than accepting his 'simple conjecture' about the association of the Mycenaean goddess (esp. Athena) with birds, we should emphasize the sovereign freedom exemplified in flying.

303 Chittenden "Master".

304 Murray Religion 76: "Originally, outside Homer, Hermes was simply an old upright stone, a pillar furnished with the regular Pelasgian sex-symbol of procreation". Cf. Kerényi Hermes 29.

305 Harrison Themis 294-297. An interesting suggestion that may relate Hermes to ritual flagellation has been propounded by Baudy "Fesselung".

306 Cf. the iconographical analysis by Pipili Iconography 41-44 and 97-98.

307 Sourvinou-Inwood "Polis Religion?" and "Further Aspects".

308 According to Herod. II, 53.
the association. However, the identification of Orthia with Artemis need not have involved the mythological pedigree of the latter. Although recognized as Artemis, Ortheia could have retained a different mythological tradition from the Pan-Hellenic goddess. After all, Artemis was not unanimously believed to be the daughter of Leto and the sister of Apollo. Aeschylus presented her as the daughter of Demeter,309 and the 'chthonicity' of her character can be found elsewhere too in the local cults. At this stage the Spartan Ortheia becomes in the mind of her worshippers the notorious Artemis Ortheia.

Her cult was disseminated in other Greek places and cities. Though always most prominent in Sparta, her distinctive features can be found elsewhere too310. As time passes by, the goddess and her rituals lose part of their original symbolism, even though their particular ruthlessness is still, albeit differently, felt down to the very extinction of her divine presence some time or other after Christianity became the dominant and sole carrier of authoritative religious credo.

Could we possibly say that the Olympian Artemis smoothed the way for the final execution of Ortheia?

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309Herod. II, 156.
310Farnell "Cults" II, 571-572. Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner ("Commentary" 61) have recognized Ortheia on the coins of Laodicea in Syria.
I have purposefully refrained from employing too often the terms 'rites of passage' and 'initiation-rites' in the above analysis of the cult of Artemis Ortheia. It is high time for some reasons to be given for that hesitancy. A brief analysis of the semantic field of these terms, their historical development in modern historiography and the general way in which they applied to ancient institutions may indicate that in particular cases they may be somewhat misleading. For the rather high degree of necessary formal generality of these terms seems to neglect one aspect which has enjoyed unanimity in the ancient discussion on puberty, adolescence and the rites involved therein. The (presumed or real) natural foundation of all puberty rites is the distinctive mark which separates the ancient discourse based on nature from its modern 'artificial' counterpart.

When in 1909 the renowned French ethnologist Van Gennep published his study on The Rites of Passage, the notion and various practices of initiation among the so-called 'uncivilized' or 'primitive' people had already been noticed by ethnographers and had become the subject of some very important works. That the life of tribal communities and savage clans was not conceived in terms of a unilinear evolution and that the various stages of their life were so separated (and the distinction between them so clear-cut) as to be thought of as entirely different, were facts already well-established in the anthropological discourse of the time. It had widely been acknowledged that, contrary to the civilized Western world, people standing at the threshold of civilization regarded the totality of life as being divided into several phases, different in men and women, the gaps between which were so immense that they needed a particular ceremonial rite in each case for the passage from one phase to the next to become possible. It had also been noticed that the ritual practices varied from one people to another. What had not, however, been stressed was the fundamentally cultural determination of those rites. People were reluctant to admit that the character which a rite assumed in a given society was entirely conditioned by the structure and modes of thought of the society in question. They must have thought, and quite rightly so, that by founding a rite on a natural basis they would diminish its otherwise arbitrary character. This was to a certain degree justified, but occasionally led to an unconscious distortion of the available material which was to be explored, analysed and codified. These unprevented distortions provoked the reaction of Van Gennep. From a methodological point of view, what was primarily new in his analysis was that he claimed that the study of initiation ceremonies should take as its starting point their social (one would nowadays say more generally: cultural), as opposed to natural, foundation. With respect to puberty rites Van Gennep emphatically writes:
The impact of Van Gennep’s work especially in the study of the ancient world which concerns us here, was huge. Could it be a coincidence that less than five years after its appearance, Jeanmaire published an article in which he argued that a Laconian institution should be interpreted as a rite of passage? Since then a great many works have been inspired or directly influenced by Van Gennep’s book, among which the later studies of Jeanmaire and the work of Brellich, Calame and Vidal-Naquet feature most promisingly. The search for more rites of passage and rituals which could perhaps exhibit an initiation-rite character in the Graeco-Roman antiquity has lately become an obsession among ancient historians. A recent handbook on Greek religion includes among its chapters one exclusively dedicated to ancient rites of passage on a par with chapters devoted to, say, the religious personnel and the Panhellenic cults. More tellingly, the ‘discovery’ of another rite of passage based on supposedly indicative differences of hair styles depicted on highly controversial (if not unintelligible) Minoan iconographical evidence (which has received as many interpretations as the scholars who have tried to render it meaningful) shows how fashionable this tendency has lately become. The focus has shifted from debates on whether the iconographical scenes studied are of a secular or of a sacred character, to discussions which attempt to reconcile the two (or rather to avoid the posing of the question) on the basis of social practices and, in particular, social techniques of soothing age-grade struggles.

The reason for the immense influence which Van Gennep’s study has exerted over other disciplines must reside in the fact that, apart from vigorously demonstrating an almost universal expansion of rites of passage (from the most primitive and remote Australian aborigines to Islam and Christianity), Van Gennep also managed to give a formal description of the basic structure which is supposed to generically underlie the diverse (in time and place) manifestations of the phenomenon. According to his scheme, every rite of passage includes three stages:

i) a preliminary stage or phase of separation

ii) a liminary stage or phase of marginality, and

iii) a postliminary stage or phase of aggregation.

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311 Van Gennep *Rites* 94 (emphasis mine).
312 Jeanmaire "Cryptie".
313 Brellich *Paides* and "Development".
314 Calame *Choeurs* and "Prairies".
315 Vidal-Naquet (2nd part: "Les jeunes, les guerriers") *Chasseur* 124-207.
316 Brui Zaidman and Schmitt Pantel *Religion* 63-79.
317 Koehl "Cup".
318 Van Gennep *Rites* 14.
For each stage particular rites are accordingly developed in any given society, the sum total of which produces what we might call a fully-fledged, complete and integrated rite of passage. The tripartite division of Van Gennep’s analysis was meant, and is usually taken, to have a universal value. However, upon closer investigation it seems to be dominated by a kind of formalism. Not all rites of passage contain the three prescribed stages, or at least not in all of them are the three stages equally well developed (as the author himself admitted). Moreover, the notion of marginality, evident though it is in some cases, seems to derive more from a logical exigency for symmetry than from the analysis of the rites themselves. The distinction between a stage of separation (which is primarily meant to be a segregation from a social group) and a liminary stage (which is supposed to be a condition of neither - nor) is very often indistinguishably blurred. In the active sense of the word, separation produces, and therefore coincides with, marginality, and there appears to be no particular reason to separate the two.

However, it is precisely this notion of marginality which has exerted in the last few decades the greatest appeal over contemporary thinking and what can roughly be described as intellectual historiography. Among other reasons a decisive role for the present emphasis on marginality (which by becoming an emancipated notion currently used in academic discussions achieved a status of independence - through a rite of passage en-gender-ed in, and by, postmodernism?) was in all likelihood played by the emergence of an emancipated and self-assuring literary theory. The pre-eminent role ascribed to irony and the emphasis put on the concomitant ambiguity produced thereby in the study of literary texts gave rise to an ongoing academic discourse which considered as its principal duty to stress the twilight zones where contours are faint. The focus has emphatically shifted to ambivalence. To show that a thing (a literary device, a social institution, a religious symbol etc.) is ambiguous, therefore fitted for repeated interpretations and susceptible to multifarious manipulation, became almost an end in itself. Ambiguity was offered a sovereign position which would entitle it to almost inexhaustible applications of its power.

Yet, in the mind of the ancients ambiguity is polluted. Far from being accorded a privileged state which would in principle facilitate the promotion of various and often antithetical interpretations on matters of social practices, ethical obligations and the like, ambiguity was almost unanimously regarded as dangerous. Just one indicative example. A dead body which, instead of being either extinguished through cremation or become indiscernible through inhumation, lies in the battlefield is a source of pollution. Why? The

319 To restrict ourselves to the study of the ancient world, it has been suggested that Artemis is ambiguous qua marginal, (see below "Epilegomena: Marginal Artemis") that Dionysus is ambiguous qua ambivalent, (see above "Dionysian Masks"); that the ancient image of woman is ambiguous qua marginal again (cf. Gallo "Donna"); that Cronus is ambiguous qua both cruel and peaceful (Versnel "Kronos" and Transition 122-135 and Vidal-Naquet Chasseur 363ff.); that Cheiron is ambiguous qua in-between animality and humanity (Versnel "Kronos" 133).
answer should be sought in the ambiguous place between the luminous terrestrial world and the dark subterranean dwelling of Hades which the dead body now occupies. A corpse, deprived of life and vitality which normally provide it with its bodiness, bereft of the full-bloodiedness which made it what it previously was and reduced to the shadowy existence of non-being, lies on the face of earth where light reigns. The eye of the luminous daily star can still take notice of its presence, although with no real presence is it any longer endowed. That the dead body has not left the cosmos of the living, has not embarked upon his journey toward the nether world, has not sunk into the domain of darkness, yet by no means belongs to where it lies, turns it into a source of pollution. By and large, ambiguity calls for purification. That is why a symbolic action such as that daringly undertaken by Antigone, manages to avert divine wrath by suspending the ambiguity of pollution. On the concrete and empirically identifiable level of individual cases, Socrates’ execution could be seen as the exemplification of the collective outrage induced by the ambiguous behaviour of a highly controversial person.

Since the second (liminal) stage of the rites of passage in Van Gennep’s scheme is in fact confounded with the previous stage of separation, his tripartite arrangement should be abandoned in so far as Sparta and the cult of Artemis are concerned. For it does not seem to apply well to the image of the ephebic initiation which we formulate from the existing evidence. I would therefore like to advance another scheme applicable to the Spartan ‘rites of passage’ instead. A threefold scheme is again required, but contrary to Van Gennep’s conviction about the social foundation of initiation practices, the first stage of this scheme must reside on the natural (i.e. biological) maturation of the adolescents. Precisely because the rites of passage do not coincide with the first signs of puberty, their natural basis is emphasized. The beginning of Ephebeia, which in accordance with biological puberty, was in Sparta placed on the fourteenth year of age, is thus the first stage. The entire period of maturation until the eighteenth year (the ephebeia proper) is the second stage. And the religious ceremonies held under the aegis of Ortheia together with other ordeals of a more ‘secular’ character (such as the crypteia) are included in the third and final stage. Temporary exclusion from the community (the best example is the Cretan segregation for two (?) months) does not result in, but presupposes, maturation. The Athenian registration of the adolescents in the tribal archives which occurred at approximately the same age as the Ortheian flagellation runs parallel to the Spartan practices and may be thus point to the natural foundation of puberty rites. At any rate, it was the biological crisis manifested in puberty that led to the institutionalization of these

320Cf. Douglas Purity 5: " [...] reaction to dirt is continuous with other reactions to ambiguity or anomaly" and 41: " [...] if uncleanness is matter out of place, we must approach it through order. Uncleanness or dirt is that which must not be included if a pattern is to be maintained. To recognise this is the first step towards insight into pollution".
rites. In this sense, the rites of passage were not social practices which happened to coincide in one way or another with that biological change of assuredly tremendous importance and far-reaching consequences for the entire life of the individual. Rather, they emerged because of, and due to the impact made by, physiological puberty.
When St. Paul came to preach the cult of what would simply be for the Athenians yet another god to be worshipped, he intuitively enough decided to introduce his sermon on the Areopagus by praising the fear of gods exceptionally exhibited by the population of Attica. The motives of his enterprise and the flattering tone of his propagandistic undertaking may undermine the historical value of the assertion. But he was not alone in perceiving the remarkable religiosity of the Athenians. Almost a century after him, an adherent of what would be in the ensuing dramatic centuries the opposite side in the great spiritual conflict of late antiquity, in the 'Age of Anxiety' in Dodds’s phrase, a man permeated with paganism to the point of naiveté, while exploring the sacred altars raised in the centre of Athens, came to the same conclusion: 'Athens is a pious and venerable city, is it not?' It is not therefore surprising that the Athenians had at least three places to honour what was concocted by the more parsimonious Spartiates under the single name of the great Artemis Ortheia - plus a tiny shrine on the hill of their Periclean imperial pride.

The cults of Artemis Tauropolos at Halae Araphenides and Artemis Brauronia at Brauron were affiliated cults, separated by a distance of less than four miles, both situated on the east coast of Attica and, more importantly, related to one another by a mythological tradition the best ancient witness of which is Euripides in a passage that is worth quoting at some length. The goddess Athena appears on stage, or rather higher up (ex machina) to supply verbally the solution of a drama that, as is often the case with the 'most tragic' playwright of classical Greece, cannot be restored internally by means of its own plot:

1 Act. XVII:23.
2 Paus. I, 24, 3; cf. I, 17, 1.
3 Of course the statement is meant ironically: the Spartans were parsimonious only in the material expression of their religiosity; otherwise, they were deeply religious, almost superstitious (cf. Herod. VI, 63, 2 and IX, 7, 1).

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The intimation of human sacrifice symbolized by the incision of the neck of the 'victim' has already been mentioned. What is of importance for the time being is the assumed relationship of the two cults, both of them deriving mythologically from the cruel Artemis Taurike. The other two places of worship alluded to earlier, the shrine of Mounychia in Piraeus and the Brauronion on the Athenian Acropolis, were even more readily related to Brauron. The sole name of the small precinct situated west of the Parthenon and southeast of the Propylaea, together with the inscriptions found in situ which have proven to be copies of Brauronian originals may suffice to establish the connection, whereas the most celebrated ritual of Brauron, the arkteia, repeated as it seems to have been at Mounychia, settles the relationship of these two cults on unambiguously firm ground. All four cults can therefore be said to find their mythological raison d'être in the distant Black Sea.

The same holds true for the Spartan Ortheia. Pausanias made a strong case in favour of the local claim in Laconia affirming that it was the Lacedaemonians who possessed the original xoanon of the barbaric goddess, but it is evident from his exposition that the Athenians were by no means willing to abandon their own right to 'authenticity' in view of the Periegete's, or of anyone else's for that matter, rational refutation of their conviction. They were so positive in believing that Artemis Brauronia was the genuine Artemis of the Tauroi, and Iphigeneia the initiator and first priestess of her cult on Attic soil, that it is hard to think of the Euripidean testimony as not echoing some official foundation myth.
Unlike the worship of Ortheia, however, the uninterrupted continuity of which goes down to at least the fourth century A.D., the cult of Brauronia has proved to be less longeval. In the second century of our era, a traveller interested in religious matters could scarcely find more things to say about it than mention the place and refer to the mythological tradition of old⁶. And according to the archaeologist J. Papadimitriou who intermittently dug the site from 1948 to 1962 and whose premature death in the following year deprived the students of the shrine of a consistent account of the excavations undertaken and the finds discovered (most of which remain officially unpublished to the present date), the cult of Brauronia was already in decline in the early post-classical era when an overflow of the nearby river Erasinos severely damaged the Π-shaped stoa of the sanctuary which, contrary to an initiative attested epigraphically, was never reconstructed; the shrine, it is generally believed, would have been abandoned by the late third century B.C.⁷

The relationship between the Tauropolos and the Brauronia Artemis⁸ is further supported by an additional architectural element. Their temples, in common with that of Artemis Aulidia, have, instead of the expected opisthodomos, an adyton which is convincingly taken by Travlos⁹ to point to the chthonic character of the three cults. A similar feature would probably also be found in the temple of Artemis Mounychia at Piraeus (if indeed there ever were a temple there, which is very plausible but far from certain), had the archaeological remnants been less spoiled by the passage of time¹⁰. The chthonic character of these three, or perhaps four (if one includes Aulidia), cults is what one would reasonably anticipate in encountering rituals where girls' initiation into the marriageable estate and parturition aspects feature prominently. For it has now been established that birth and death rites closely resemble one another and that a radical inhibition of the *elan vital* is almost universally assumed to be at stake in such critical moments of existence as puberty.¹¹ The ancient literary testimonies for these three cults may support and perhaps corroborate what would otherwise be a likely conjecture.

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⁶The brevity of the reference to Brauron by Pausanias (I, 33, 1) is very characteristic. After indicating the location of the place and touching upon the legend of Iphigeneia, he pushes his narrative to Rhamnous where he has more interesting things to describe, like the statue of Nemesis allegedly made by Pheidias (I, 33, 2-8). The Brauronion on the Athenian Acropolis (for which see Rhodes-Dobbins “Sanctuary”), however, deserved a little longer mention because it contained fine sculpture including a statue of Artemis by Praxiteles (I, 23, 7-8). The claim that Pausanias did not visit the place cannot be substantiated.


⁸Cf. Strabo 399: Βραυρώνια ὄποιο τῷ τῆς Βραυρωνίας Ἀρτέμιδος ἔρον, Ἀλαί Ἀραφινίδες ὄποιο τῷ τῆς Ταυροπόλου.

⁹Travlos "Ναός". Against this view see Hollinshead "Adyton".

¹⁰Thrapsiadias "Καταστάσεις". Cf. Palaiokrassa 'Ερείπια 49.

¹¹In accordance with the ancient classification of life-phases as hebdomads cf. the general remark by Censorinus Die Nat. 14, 9: *praeterea multa sunt de his hebdomadibus quae medici ac philosophi libris mandaverunt, unde appareat, ut in morbis dies septimi suspicati sunt et crisisimo dicuntur, ita per omnem vitam septimum quemque annuum periculosum et vetut crisisimo esse et climactericum vocitari."
THE ARKTEIA

The most important feature of the cult at Brauron (and possibly also at Mounychia, if we consider the Mounychian myth to be reflecting an underlying cult) was, no doubt, the arkteia or bear-ritual. As soon as we pronounce the name of the ritual, however, a question, similar in nature to the famous and much ink- (and intellect-) consuming riddle concerning the origin and etymology of tragedy, suggests itself: was the arkteia the rite of the bears, or was it conversely the ceremony performed in honour of the Bear? In other words, did the ritual derive its name from the divine, perhaps zoomorphic, figure that presided thereover, or was it named after the main participants? It is plain that the opposition is not a polarity, but rather one of emphasis. An examination of the available evidence about the ritual itself and the myths to which the entire cultic practices are closely related may provide us with some 'keys' and thus enable us to give a more unambiguous, though by no means less controversial, answer to the above question, than those proposed so far.

The Arktoi: Age and Representative Participation

The often-quoted passage of Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (vv. 641-647) which is the oldest evidence concerning the arkteia-ritual and the age at which young Athenian girls participated therein, runs as follows:

επτά μὲν ἔτη γεγόσ’ εὖθυς ἡρρηφόρουν12
cιτ’ ἀλετρίς ἡ δεκέτις οὖσα τάρχηγέτι.13
κάτ’ ἔχουσα τὸν κροκοτόν ἄρκτος ἡ Βραυρωνίοις
κάσανθόροιν ποτ’ οὖσα παῖς καλὴ ὥοο’
ἰσχυνδὼν ὀμηθῶν.

It is apparent from this passage that the female speaker refers to the most noteworthy religious rituals of which she partook as a young girl in their chronological sequence (ἐπτά ἔτη - εἰτα δεκέτις - κάτ’ ἔχουσα [coni. Bentley κατέχουσα codd.]).15 It therefore follows that she underwent initiation at Brauron when she was ten years of age.

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12The arrhephoria was a festival with important mystical overtones (it revolved around the ceremonial carrying away of secret objects) dedicated to Athena, the three daughters of Kekrops being also greatly involved (cf. Paus. 1, 27, 3). For ἀρρηφόρια as an initiation ceremony see Burkert "Kekropidensage" against whose interpretation see Robertson "Arrhephoria".

13Here Athena is meant" (Henderson *Lysistrata* 156 with citations of evidence).

14For the Ravenna manuscript (R) which gives the reading κατέχουσα see Appendix and note below.

15Cantarella Daughters 22, infers from the passage the existence of an ancient initiation system; but such a claim cannot be substantiated from the existing evidence on Athenian religion. The arrhephoria, for instance, as described by Pausanias, were of greater import for the community than their reduction to a pubescent initiation would entail, and the existence of a systematic initiatory pattern for female youngsters in which religious phases dedicated to different deities were parts of an overall stucture, though plausible in view of comparative evidence, cannot be supported in our case.
or soon afterwards. A much-disputed problem, however, arises when one also takes into account what the ancient Scholiast felt himself obliged to say in order to 'clarify' (a wholly inappropriate word to use, as will be shown below) the content of the passage to his apparently later-age and non-Athenian (Alexandrian in all likelihood) audience:

\[
\text{άρκτον} \, \text{μιμούμεναι} \, \text{τὸ} \, \text{μυστήριον} \, \text{ἐξετέλουν.} \, \text{αἱ} \, \text{ἀρκτευόμεναι} \, \text{δὲ} \, \text{τὴ} \, \text{θεώ} \, \text{κροκότον} \, \text{ήμψειστι}, \text{καὶ} \, \text{συνετέλουν} \, \text{τὴν} \, \text{θυσίαν} \, \text{τῇ} \, \text{Βραυρώνια} \, \text{'Αρτέμιδι} \, \text{καὶ} \, \text{τῇ} \, \text{Μουσυχίᾳ}, \, \text{ἐπιλεγόμεναι} \, \text{παρθένοι,} \, \text{οὒτε} \, \text{προσβύτεραι} \, \text{δέκα} \, \text{ἔτων} \, \text{oὔτε} \, \text{ἐλάττων} \, \text{πέντε.}
\]

The discrepancy between the comic poet and his 'erudite' commentator may not be striking, since there is room for the liminal age of ten years (especially if we reject Bentley's emendation as we should not) for the two views to hold good, but it is no less of a discrepancy for that. A. Brelich tried, unsuccessfully in my opinion, to resolve the tension between the two testimonies with recourse to a historicist hypothesis. He claimed that the time that elapsed between the staging of the technically most elaborate surviving Aristophanic play and the period in which the Scholiast lived and wrote brought a change in the prescribed age for participation in the arkteia, and that, as a consequence, the two statements need not be inconsistent, but may both be true once taken to refer to two different periods in the history of the cult. An objection to such a claim immediately suggests itself: if the arkteia was still a current practice when the Scholiast wrote his commentary, why did he bother to explain what everyone should know? or else, granted that such was the case, why did he fail to notice the difference? or again, how does his 'explanation' illuminate the Aristophanic passage? The last question of course is not restricted to Brelich's assumption; it is also valid irrespective of whether one accepts or rejects his hypothesis. But it is perhaps important to note that his solution does not in fact eliminate it.

Unless new evidence be brought to light, to enter the ongoing discussion about the precise age of the arktoi would be not only repetitive but also gratuitous. Both camps have some non-negligible arguments on their side, but none can at present be conclusive. The least fortunate among them is based on the sculpted iconography of the Brauronian precinct. Given that not only representations of young girls (interpreted as arktoi) but also representations of boys were found in the sanctuary, it is immaterial to derive therefrom arguments in favour of the less advanced age-span (between five and ten). By contrast, the iconographical evidence depicted on the small vases peculiar to the Brauronian cult that have been called \(\text{κρατηρίσκοι}\) by their main explorer, L. Kahil, may

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16 Brelich Paides, 266ff.
18 Cf. e.g. Daux "fouilles 1959", 664-6, figg. 5-7; id. "fouilles 1960", 640, figg. 4-5; Papaspyridi-Karouzou "àρκτος"; Ergon 1958, 36-37 and 1959, 16-17.
help in determining the age of the arktoi, although not in a very precise way. One point can thus be secured: participation in the arkteia-ritual should precede menarche. All the existing testimonies while focusing upon the mandatory character of the rite for all girls coming of age, stress that the ritual must be performed prior to marriage. And we know that menarche was in ancient Greece (as in many other cultures as well) considered to be the hallmark of marriageability. It is with menstruation that female productivity manifests itself and the first onset of menstrual blood is reasonably enough regarded as the sign par excellence of maturation. Before the classical elimination of the feminine role in procreation or rather its diminution to an inferior status of receptivity (receptacle, nurse) necessary for the nutrition of the by now exclusively masculine seed (a process of intellectual one-sidedness initiated in the fifth century B.C., seriously undertaken by Plato and accomplished by his most promising disciple), a female seed contributing equally, if not indeed more substantially, to the creation of the foetus was widely acknowledged.

The Corpus Hippocraticum bears ample witness to that effect. But even before the emergence of ancient medicine as a science (which not infrequently opposed superstition and ritual practices that were supposed to cure various illnesses - and the notable case of the author of On the Sacred Disease springs readily to mind) the religious mind identified in the menses the physical aspect of the female procreative power.

The observed variations and fluctuations in the age at which menarche occurs (and especially the striking decrease thereof among Norwegian girls in the relatively short span of a century) have enticed two modern researchers to inquire into the ancient evidence with the explicit aim of establishing the age of menarche in classical Greece. Predictably enough, their results conform to the best-known ancient statement on the age when the menses normally are broken:

φέρειν δε το στέρμα πρώτων ἀρχεταί το ἀρρεν ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ἐν τοῖς ἔτεσι τοῖς δίς ἐπὶ τετελεσθέντων. [...] περὶ δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν χρόνων καὶ τοῖς θῆλεσιν ή τ’ ἐπαρασί γίνεται τῶν μαστῶν καὶ τὰ καταμήνα καλούμενα καταρρήγμαται.

Menarche occurs at the age of fourteen when in most cases the breasts have already swollen by almost one-and-a-half inches (two Greek 'fingers'). The precise expression employed to denote the commencement of the menses (καταρρήγμαται) is very indicative at this juncture. For it shows that menarche was not in fact the beginning of maturation,
but rather its culmination, its τέλος, goal and end at once. And it was at this end that the initiation at Brauron must have ritually aimed. The definite terminus ante quem for participation in the arkteia would therefore be the fourteenth year of age, but, since the rite should ritually anticipate the ensuing passage to majority, or in more religious language, induce it, we may lower it to below the twelfth year which is in fact the lowest age of legally accepted marriage attested in classical Greece (in the Cretan Gortyn)\textsuperscript{26}. For at least when Artemis the Maiden came to preside over the entire ceremony it would presumably be an abomination for a girl with experience of menstrual blood to partake of a rite enacted under her auspices.\textsuperscript{27}

From Hesiod onwards the age considered best for girls to get married\textsuperscript{28} and the age of menarche, when they did not actually coincide, were very close to each other (separated by one or at the most two years). Individual differences aside (which are justified in view of the philosophical-political considerations involved)\textsuperscript{29} there is a conspicuous convergence among Greek authors as to the advantages incurred when a girl marries neither earlier nor later than the prescribed age around the fourteenth year\textsuperscript{30}. And we may reasonably suppose that to a considerable extent the received opinion could somehow reflect common practice\textsuperscript{31}, with the notable exception of the rather untypical Sparta\textsuperscript{32}.

Whether or not there was a prescribed terminus post quem for participation in the arkteia, it is redundant to ask (and, in any case, we cannot be sure about it). I believe that the fifth year given by the Aristophanic Scholiast is no more than a commonsensical inference: under that age girls would be less liable to be controlled, and the efficacy of the ritual which resided in its meticulous observance could thus be jeopardized\textsuperscript{33}. By and large, the evidence suggests that the tenth year was generally regarded as perhaps the best

\textsuperscript{26}L.C. IV, 72, xii, 17-19 (cf. Dio LIV, 16). The twelfth year was also in Rome the minimum legally accepted age for girls: Macrobi. In Somm. Scip. 1, 17; Sat. 7, 7, 6. How far this agreed with actual practice we do not really know, but we can infer from the very existence of laws and from other ancient evidence that it did not. Cf. Hopkins "Girls"; Shaw "Girls".

\textsuperscript{27}Cf. Kontis "Brauronia", 182: "πρέπει δὲ ἡ ἔναρξις τῆς ἄρτειας να συμπίπτη πρὸς τὴν ἐνάρξιν τῆς ἱμάτισ τῶν κοπασμών." (italics mine).

\textsuperscript{28}Hes. OD 697-698: γάμος δὲ τοῦ ὀφείλεται ἄδειος. ἡ δὲ γυνὴ τέτορι ἱμάτιον, πέμπτα δὲ γαμότο. The difficult expression used by Hesiod is explained by Pollux (I, 58): ὅταν ἡ γυνὴ τέτορι ἱμάτιον, τετταρακάσδα ἔτη λέγεται, προσταθημένων τῶν δεκα.

\textsuperscript{29}Cf. Plat. Resp. 460c; Leg. 785b; 833c; Arist. Pol. 1335a 11-35.

\textsuperscript{30}The Corpus Hippocraticum invigorated the traditional Greek view with 'scientific' authority. Cf. e.g. Hipp. Virg. (VIII 466 Littre): αἱ δὲ παρθένους ὁκόσας ὁρᾶ γάμον, παρανυφρομένην, τοῦτο μᾶλλον πάσχουσα ἄμα τῇ καθόδῳ τῶν ἐπιμηκῶν, πρότερον οὐ μᾶλα ταῦτα κακοπαθεῖσαν [...]. (468) κελεύω δὲ έξογε τὰς παρθένους, ἐκόστα τοῦ τοιούτου πάσχους, ὡς τάχιστα ξυνοκκίσαι αἰθρόσει· ὑπὸ γαρ κυψέω, ὑγεῖς γίνονται· εἰ δὲ μὴ ἡ αὐτίκα ἀμα τῇ ἱμή ή ὀλίγον ὀστερον ὀλίσται, εἰτερ μὴ ἐξέρχοται νυμπό. On the other hand, against the Roman practice of too early marriage of girls see Plut. Num. 77c-d. Hopkins (art. cit. 315) implies that the Greeks may have had a higher age of female marriage than the Romans, which is what Plutarch also had in mind.

\textsuperscript{31}That is what Aristotle implies when he argues against an early age for marriage, giving the case of the Troezeniene as an example to be avoided (Pol. 1335a 15-22).

\textsuperscript{32}Cf. Plut. Lyce. XV, 4; Cartledge "Wives" 94 and Hodkinson "Inheritance" 90.

\textsuperscript{33}The parallel with the Christian baptism when the christening of infants was eventually endorsed, could possibly be made: there was no set upper age limit, but fear of an immature death of the child acted as a sufficient regulation in itself for the almost general adoption of an early-age rite.
age for participation in the arkteia, and Aristophanes may be seen to have that *optimum* in mind when he enumerates the rites that must be undergone before puberty by a prospective decent Athenian matron. A false etymology attested both by Hesychius and Harpokration (s.vv. ἀρκτεύειν) points in the same direction:

[...]*ἐλεγον* δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀρκτεύειν ἀρκτεύειν, ἐπεὶ ἐπρασσοῦν αὐτὸ αἱ παρθένοι περὶ τῶν ἀρκτευτή χρόνον ὀφθαλμ. [...]*ἔσως* δὲ τὸ ἀρκτεύειν ἀρκτεύεισαι εἰρήκεν ὁ ῥήτωρ, ἐπειδή αἱ δεκάτειδες ἄρκτευον.

It is evident that ἀρκτεύειν must have originally referred either to the tithe to be consecrated for the preservation of the rest of the yield (as the grammarian Didymus explained), or, in a more profane context, to the tax to be paid (as Hesychius himself admits). If ἀρκτεύειν were used to refer to participation in the arkteia, it must have initially related to an assumed, perhaps later-stage, development of the cult, in which the original mandatory character of the rite for the entire population of unmarried girls was replaced by representative participation. The representatives could then be regarded as serving a function identical to that of the sacred tithe; hence ἀρκτεύειν became a synonym of ἀρκτεύειν. What is of importance, however, is that when the original content of the term fell into oblivion, it was the most characteristic age of the arktoi that came to supply it, in the minds of the Alexandrian scholars, with new, although inadequate, meaning.

The relatively large allowance of a span of five years for participation in the arkteia and the complications regarding the precise age of the girls may have been in part due to the quadrennial character of the rite as Nilsson suggested. From the [pseudo-] Aristotelian *Atheniensium Respublica* we know that the festival at Brauron was a πεντετερίς, and it is reasonable (but by no means certain) to assume that its most important attested rite, the arkteia, was part of the festival meant by the name of Βραυρώεια, and was thus also held only once every four years. A safe but imprecise conclusion could be that the arkteia took place when its protagonists, the female initiands, were in the middle of their second hebdomad (in the traditional reckoning accepted by 'Hippocrates').

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34 That failure to participate in the arkteia was a sign of indecency, or irresponsibility vis-à-vis the customs of the polis, is indicated by the fact that in forensic speeches such failure was used as a testimonium against the defender (Harp. s.v. ἀρκτεύειν: [...] Δημοσθένους δέ ἐν τῷ κατὰ Μέδουσος περὶ τῶν παρθένων λέγοντος οὗτος «νῦν ἀρκτεύεισαι ταύτῃ οὖσσε μῆρα», [...]).
35 Cf. Harp. s.v. ἀρκτεύειν: [...] Δίομος ὁ γραμματικός περὶ τούτου βιβλίου γράφως φησὶ ὅτι τὸ ἀρκτεύεσαι λυσίας ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς Φωβίας θυγατρὸς ἀρκτεύεσαι εἰρήκεν. ἀρκτεύεσαι μέντοι, ἤς, κυρίως ἐλέγετο τὸ καθεροῦν, ἐπειδὴ ἔτη τούν ἐμπρός τῶν δεκάτων τῶν περιγυμνεύον τοῖς θεοίς καθερων.
36 Hesych. s.v. ἀρκτεύειν τελωνεῖς, ἀρκτήν εἰσπράττεσθαι.
Moving from the age of the arktoi to the arkteia itself we realize that very few things are known about what was actually done there. In a post-Rankean era the problem may seem trivial and be dismissed out of hand. But it is only with reference to the practice itself, to the 'thing done', that almost any question in the field of ancient religion can be justified in looking for an answer. Two interrelated phenomena are beyond doubt in the arkteia-ritual at Brauron: the use of a saffron-coloured robe, the krokotos, which should have indicated the culmination of the rite (since it is the only thing mentioned in the Aristophanic passage and the post-classical literature) and the pre-eminent role of the bear which the girls were meant to imitate.

**The krokotos**

The saffron robe related to the arkteia has a history of its own. In Homer κρόκοπεπλος is an adjective that characterizes Eos as she smoothly brings daylight to the world⁴⁰, although it is disputed whether the dye produced from the *crocus vernus* was already known in the Homeric Age⁴¹. In the classical era, as is amply shown from various Aristophanic passages⁴² the krokotos was a garment worn by licentious women (or women having sexual seduction at the back — better: at the front — of their minds, though not necessarily prostitutes and hetaerae) and was therefore a sign of debauchery. Its use in, and relationship to, Dionysian festivals, on the other hand, are beyond doubt. Pollux describes it as an *himation* used by Dionysus⁴³, and the iconographical evidence demonstrates that if not by the god himself⁴⁴ the krokotos was at least worn by the female members of the divine thiasus, by dancing women and maenads.⁴⁵ The exclusively feminine function of the krokotos is also clearly attested. When in another passage of his *Onomasticon* the same ancient grammarian presents a list of the names of tainted garments, he emphatically asserts that the krokotos and the krokotion (its diminutive) are

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⁴²Aristoph. *Lys.* 42-48; 219-220; *Ecc!.* 878-879; *Nub.* 51; *Thesm.* 138; 939-945.
⁴³*Pollux* IV, 116: ὁ δὲ κροκωτός ἱμάτιον· Δίονυσος δ᾽ αὐτῷ ἔχρητο.
⁴⁴That the *krokotos* was worn by Dionysus is shown in Aristoph. *Ran.* 46; *Athen. 198c and Cratinus *Dionysalexandrus* 1 (Meineke II 37) [where in all likelihood the effeminate Alexander was presented on stage with Dionysian attire (cf. Pollux VII, 56: τοῦτο τῷ χρώματι καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον ἡδεσθαι λέγων. which I take to refer to krokotos rather than the immediately preceding omphakion; given the latter’s name (from ὀμφακόι being the unripe grapes), the two may, nonetheless, be chromatically similar)].
⁴⁵Sure "Krokotos". The Dionysian character of almost all the scenes where a krokotos is depicted is unmistakable: whenever the god is physically absent, a symbol such as the vine and/or a figure such as a satyr point to his virtual presence. The date of the kylikes and skyphoi of what has in awkward, art-historical terms been called 'the Krokotos Period' is the last quarter of the fifth century B.C. (p. 102).
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\textsuperscript{40}Hom. II. VIII, 1; XIX, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{41}Cf. LSJ s.v. κροκός. In Aesch. Agam. 239 the κρόκου βαφάς refers to the dyed robe (cf. Aristoph. Lys. 51) worn by Iphigenia before her sacrifice.
\textsuperscript{42}Aristoph. Lys. 42-48; 219-220; Eccl. 878-879; Nub. 51; Thesm. 138; 939-945.
\textsuperscript{43}Pollux IV, 116: ὁ δὲ κροκωτός ἰμάτιον. Διόνυσος ἀπό τοῦ ἑρίτου.
\textsuperscript{44}That the krokotos was worn by Dionysus is shown in Aristoph. Ran. 46; Athen. 198c and Cratinus Dionysalexandrus 1 (Meineke II 37) [where in all likelihood the effeminate Alexander was presented on stage with Dionysian attire (cf. Pollux VII, 56: τοῦτο τὸ χρώματι καὶ Ἀλέξανδρον ἡδεοθα λέγων which I take to refer to krokotos rather than the immediately preceding omphakinon; given the latter's name (from ὀμφάος being the unripe grapes), the two may, nonetheless, be chromatically similar)].
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intended to be worn by women only, a statement which is corroborated by a fragment of the comic poet Araros (mid-fourth c. B.C.) that apparently refers to a man who

\[ \text{parbénos elinai dokēi} \]

fooroi krokōtois kai γυναικείαν στολήν. It is plain that the robe under discussion was considered to be erotically alluring and fitted for those occasions, ceremonial or otherwise, where the sexual appetite was to be preponderate. But then how did it come about that this garment overburdened with erotic connotations was the solemn dress of the arktea to be borne by young girls of approximately ten years of age? Was the ritual meant to serve as a moralistic imperative of precisely what should be avoided by the girls in their future matrimonial life, as Sourvinou-Inwood seems to imply by maintaining, against all existing evidence, that Sourvinou-Inwood op.cit. 127-134.

46Pollux VII, 55: αι δ' ἀπὸ χρυσάτων ἐσθήτες καλοφύνειν ἀλοιφής, πορφυρός, φολικὸς καὶ φώσκοις χίτων, βατραχίς, αὕτη μὲν ἀνδρῶν, γυναικῶν δὲ κροκότων, παραλοιφής, ὁμφάκιον.

47Arari Kaeneus 1 (Meineke III 273). The comic effect of the passage must have related to the legend according to which Kaeneus was a woman before being transformed into an invulnerable man by Poseidon (Schol. ad Hom. II, 1, 274; Apoll. Rhod. Argon. I, 57-64; Apoll. Epit. I, 22). The symbolic function of the krokotos is nicely captured by Sourvinou-Inwood when she states that it is an emblem of feminism (Studies 127).

48Sourvinou-Inwood op.cit. 127.

49Since the reading of the most numerous manuscripts of the Aristophanic passage concerned (Lys. 645) is katexousa (duly emended for pragmatic and metrical reasons into kai exousa by Bentley) Sourvinou already in 1971 ("Lysistrata") had to adopt the less well documented katexousa (insisting on the strength of a lectio difficilior argument) in order to support her interpretation. All the ancient commentators understood the passage in its traditional sense (Schol. ad Aristoph. Lys. 645 Leyden MS: ἡμιφίεστοττο; Ravennas MS: περιέπειν φορούσαν; Suid. s.v. ἀρκτος ἡ Βραυρωπίος: ἡμιφίεσμένα) nor is there any ancient testimony mentioning a ritual throwing off of the ceremonial dress of the arktoi. Stinton ("Iphigenia") joined the discussion with a more elegant suggestion, καὶ ἥσουσα, which is accepted by Henderson (Lysistrata 35, but cf. also 157). This conjecture, or its manuscript-attested predecessor, was accepted by Wallbank ("Artemis") in his unconvinced interpretation of the entire Aristophanic passage (Lys. 641-647) as referring exclusively to different Artemisian rites, not to rituals performed in honour of other goddesses too, as the standard exegesis suggests.

In order to substantiate her interpretation and provide it with parallels Sourvinou maintains (Studies, 127) that "the rite of undressing, throwing off the special garment characterizing the status of the initiand [...] is frequently associated with, and is an important ritual act in, initiations and initiatory type institutions in Greece and elsewhere. About elsewhere I have no idea (and the mere numerical abundance of cultures would make, statistically speaking, the opposite claim almost impossible), but as to Greece all the secondary literature that Sourvinou cites as evidence refers to male initiation with special emphasis on the Cretan ekdoxa and the Spartan γυμνοσάβδια. By way of conclusion to the case-studies he examined, Lincoln says (Emerging 103): 'In the female rites we have studied [...] the symbolism of clothing is entirely different [viz. from male initiation or puberty rites]. Instead of the removal of clothing, we find the addition of new clothing or bodily adornment-- a marriage token, a feather headdress, elaborate jewelry, or a set of scars. Attendants deck the initiand in ceremonial finery, often piled layer upon layer, feather headdress, elaborate jewelry, or a set of scars.' The general tendency in women's rites seems to be toward an additive process (clothes put on) rather than a subtractive one (clothes taken off). This serves to express another contrast with male initiations: whereas men (who have status) must lose their status in order to assume another, women (who have no status) need not do so. For them there is no true liminality, no stress on nudity, no "being ground down to nothing". Their initiation proceeds along quite different lines." (emphasis mine). Studying the iconographical evidence of the Artemisian kraterskoi Kahil ("Attique" 30) (not cited by Sourvinou at this juncture) says, it is true, that the assumed arkto "gardent parfois une nudité qui doit être rituelle", but she immediately goes on to add "mais qui n'est attesté sauf dans certains cas tout à fait exceptionnels pour des personnages féminins" (emphasis mine). Which these cases are we are not told. At the religious race in Olympia the maidens wore a short tunic, their right shoulder down to the breast only being bare (Paus. V, 16, 2). The athletic nudity of Spartan girls, on the other hand, was exceptional and thus became notorious in ancient times as a sign of libertinism and indecency.
the central act of the rite was the shedding (i.e. undressing as opposed to wearing) of the krokotos?

As early as the end of the last century, students of Greek religion suggested that the ceremonial garment worn during the arkteia stood for the skin of the bear which the girls were said to imitate. At first sight this seems to be a reasonable assumption to make (for the krokotos and the 'bear' are very close to each other in the evidence), but upon closer inspection the 'solution' presents various difficulties. The afore-mentioned use of the krokotos in secular instances (and, at any rate in cases where a wild animal, let alone a bear specifically, would be the last thing involved) is one of them. Even more noteworthy is the objection according to which one does not see how the bright colour of the robe resembled in any way the dark bear-skin. Religious symbolism, it is true, does not always pay attention to realistic affinities, but in our case the difference is striking and hard to 'bear'. How then did it come about that the saffron-robe and the 'bear' became part and parcel of the same ritual? I suggest that the link should be sought in the symbolism of the Bear. Schematically speaking, if in the early history of the cult the Bear represented the symbol of a Great Mother, as I take it to be, the introduction of the krokotos in the ceremony at a later stage would be effected in order to put more emphasis on the core of the rite: namely that the young girls ritually anticipate their eventual coming of age in its most important function. They ritually become mothers so that they may also in reality attain motherhood. Let us therefore turn to the foundation myth of the arkteia.

In the exegetical works of the Hellenistic epoch we find two versions of the myth that was narrated to account for the ritual in question. Both versions conform to the well-known and widespread pattern for the institution of Artemisian cults: act of devotion - human failure - pestilence or famine cast by the goddess - expiation of her wrath, hence finally: ritual repetition of the mythical archetypal act. The difference between them lies primarily in the introduction in one of them of a mythical figure who took the initiative in appeasing the offended goddess by deception with a view to keeping henceforward the priesthood of the cult. This mythical figure seems to be more related to the Mounychian cult than to the cult at Brauron, and later became a paradigmatic instance of prudence (or of folly). Reduced to its essential components the foundation myth narrates that a she-bear appeared in Athens and was later killed. Artemis became outraged at the murder of her beloved animal and in order to punish the transgression she inflicted a devastating pestilence (or a famine) across the Attic territory. The Athenians realized (through a Delphic oracle or by themselves) that expiation was urgently needed and to that end they

50 Cr. Farnell Cults II, 436 and n. c.
51 Cr. Calame Cheurs 190.
decreed that no girl should marry before having imitated the bear in advance. The arkteia was thus instituted.\textsuperscript{52}

Such a schematic reduction of the myth may be useful for instructing us on what the worshippers unanimously \textit{said} about the ritual which they performed, but can hardly shed more light on the issue. Similarly, the state of our sources prevents a rigid taxonomic classification. Any attempt to move from the existing mythical variations up to an assumed Ur-mythologeme is bound to be highly speculative. By contrast, a selective use of the existing accounts, arbitrary though it may appear at first sight, could perhaps provide some insights into the meaning of the cult.

At the kernel of the myth stood the sacrifice of a maiden. The sacrifice is meant to atone for the wrath of the goddess. But why is Artemis angry? She is angry because the Athenians killed a she-bear. But again, why? Evidently because the bear is an animal sacred to the goddess. More than that, the bear is a manifestation of the goddess. This may have originated in an early religious stage when anthropomorphism had not as yet prevailed. Theriomorphic representations of gods are spread throughout Greece\textsuperscript{53}, and some Homeric epithets can be seen as being relics of a previous stratum of religious consciousness. When theriomorphic representations of deities withdraw into the background of religious imagery, the animals become \textit{symbols} of divine presence. The presence in question is Artemisian. The she-bear is in this sense an epiphany of the goddess herself. If Artemis originally \textit{was} a bear, she is now \textit{represented} by the bear.\textsuperscript{54}

In our context, the killing of the bear is in a way the killing of Artemis. And the killing of Artemis is the divine paradigm for the killing of the maiden. However, the latter is also a propitiatory killing in honour of Artemis, an appeasement of her wrath. How are we to combine the two diametrically opposed features of the myth?

A. Brelich\textsuperscript{55} in a very convincing article focusing primarily upon the cults of the Ortheian and Brauronian Artemises argued that "the complex of myth and ritual [viz. of these cults] did not aim to give a symbolic equivalent of the human sacrifice, but rather of that symbolic \textit{killing} which is characteristic of the procedures of initiation." The initiatory character of the arkteia is beyond dispute. But what precise experience the symbolic equivalent of a symbolic human sacrifice, the "symbol of a symbol", is meant to disclose is rather harder to find. Any interpretation reduced to its fundamental notions hinges upon the way in which we understand the role and function of Artemis in the ritual enactment.

I think that the Homeric image of Artemis as the Beautiful Virgin par excellence is rather misleading if brought without modification into the arena of the Brauronian cult.

\textsuperscript{52}For a collection of the relevant sources see Appendix.
\textsuperscript{53}Cook "Animal". This article, though in many respects antiquated, retains still some referential value.
\textsuperscript{54}The difference between the two is one of emphasis, not of quality. Never is a theriomorphic deity identified with the animal through, or in, which (s)he appears; for, had it been so, (s)he would be an animal, not a deity. This is not playing with words: we cannot emphasize too much the \textit{hominis religiosi} seriousness.
\textsuperscript{55}Brelich "Symbol" 207.
For this image stresses luminous maidenhood in extremis, i.e. at the expense of the potential procreative power that is the most essential content of virginity. If Artemis presided over the ritual at Brauron, it was under a different aspect of her divinity that she did so. And this other aspect may perhaps be found more openly in the role of the initiator and first priestess of the cult, in the role of Iphigeneia.

Iphigeneia

As her very name plainly shows, Iphigeneia is "She who gives strong offspring". Even if other etymologies be possible (such as "She of the strong descent" or "She of the powerful birth"), the connection of the heroine with childbirth and with power (Iφι)\(^56\) in securing or attaining birth, is unmistakable. But is she, or rather was she a heroine from the beginning of her career in Greek mythology? By simply posing the question, the expected answer is implied. In my view, she was not. Ever since the publication of an excellent article by Clement\(^57\) the divinity of Iphigeneia scarcely comes as a surprise. Originally Iphigeneia was an independent goddess. Hesiod\(^58\) and Stesichorus\(^59\) generously testify to her divinity by identifying her with Hecate. Their accounts bear, no doubt, the stamp of her subordination to Artemis. Her deification is supposed to be an act of benevolence on the part of the Olympian goddess. But we can readily see the influence of the epic tradition here. "Homer", the chief supplier of Greek mythology (in the pointed Herodotean statement), exerted such an appeal to the formation of gods, demi-gods and

\(^56\)It has been claimed that the Mycenaean name Ipemedoja should be etymologically connected with Ἡπείρος (Ventris and Chadwick Documents, 288: "Ipemedoi = Ἡπείρος, the mother of Otus and Ephialtes by Poseidon, Od. XI, 305. The absence of initial W- and the spelling -pe- show that this name does not contain ἱδα [...]) Almost certainly a pre-Greek deity, whose name has been modified by popular etymology; the confusion of e and i seems to be confined to non-Greek words." and Kearns Heroes 32, n. 14. Without claiming any special knowledge of Mycenaean Greek, I find that the banishment of ἱδα from the name on the basis of the inscriptions lack of the later entirely extinct digamma is a rather exaggerated conclusion, and that the popular-etymology explanation sounds rather unlikely. On the basis of parallels like Diogenes and eugen-es (in which the second part of the admittedly compound word refers to the birth of the person that has the name, as opposed to the birth of his offspring) and an Hesychian gloss (s.v. ἱδα καλιπ) Dowden (Death, 46) suggested that Iphigeneia = Kalligeneia. He seems to have silenced another gloss (Hesych. s.v. ἱδα ταχυς) that proves once again that ἱδα is a root denoting strength and power; hence perhaps also beauty qua enchantment and beguilement. At any rate, that the name was regarded as composite and that its prefix was considered to be ἱδα are beyond dispute.

\(^57\)Clement "Evidence". On this seminal article much of the later work on the issue is based (with or without acknowledgement). Clement was not the first to claim that Iphigeneia originally was a goddess. Her divinity had been suggested before (cf. e.g. Grégoire Euripide, 85-111; Séchan "Sacrifice"), but nowhere was it so convincingly argued as by him. Iphigeneia’s divinity is not, of course, unanimously accepted (cf. e.g. Rose Handbook 119).

\(^58\)Hes. fr. 23(a) (Merkelbach-West) 15-25. That Iphimedia is a variant of Iphigeneia (or that it was taken so) is proved by the next fragment (23 (b) (Merkelbach-West) = Paus. 1, 43, 1: οἶδα δὲ Ἡπίδουν ποτέ ένομα Ἐνταλγον Ἰφίγειειαν ὡς ἀποθανείεν, γνώμη δὲ Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐκάτην εἶναι;); Einodia is an epithet of Hecate who was, among other things, a childbirth goddess (esp. when associated with Artemis as in Aesch. Suppl. 647-677).

heroes that, we may reasonably suppose, whenever Iphigeneia was subsequently spoken of, she was immediately recognized as the daughter of Agamemnon. I wrote "Homer" because in Homer Iphigeneia does not appear. Among the daughters of the chief commander of the Achaean camp is, not Iphigeneia proper, but a semblance of hers: Iphianassa. Perhaps this is not without significance. "She who powerfully reigns", "The Mighty Queen" is a 'title' more befitting the royal maiden than would be a name alluding to female fecundity. In the diptych of epic 'twin sisters', Iphianassa seems to keep the aetherian pole, whereas Iphigeneia dwells more down to earth. The Iphigeneia of the Cyclic Epics (for the ancients) and of Euripides (for us), the Iphigeneia who was sacrificed at Aulis to liberate the power of Aeolus and to permit the setting out of the Greek vessels was, however, not the sole heroic figure under that name. Other Iphigeneias of different pedigrees and with different legends existed too. In one of these (explicitly of Argive origin, but also perhaps prominent in Athens) she was a daughter of Theseus.

Iphigeneia relates to the life-cycle. She relates to birth - and consequently also to death. Her name alone would be proof enough. But we have more indications. It is to her, not to Artemis, that, in the Euripidean aetion (vv. 1464-67 quoted above), the garments of the women who have died in labour are dedicated. The third-century-B.C. dramatic poet Euphorion, following perhaps a passage of the most beloved (in the Hellenistic era as opposed to his own) classical tragedian (v. 1464), mentioned the grave of Iphigeneia at Brauron. And the excavator of the site using a traditional method of archaeological identification, the validity of which has recently been seriously challenged, recognized that cenotaph in the shape of a small building situated south of the main temple of Artemis.

60 Schol. ad Hom II. I, 106 (quoted by Clement art. cit. 394, n. 2): τὸ γὰρ Ἰφιγενείας ὁμοια οὐδὲ οἴδε ὃν ὁ ποιητής.
61 Horn. II IX, 144-45: τρεῖς δὲ μοι εἶσι θυγατρέσ εἰν μεγάρῳ εὐπήκτη, Χρυσόθεμος καὶ Λαδίη καὶ Ἰφιάνασσα.
62 Horn, I, 106 (quoted by Clement art. cit. 394, n. 2): Ἱφιγενείας ὁμοίως οὐδὲ ὃν ὁ ποιητής.
63 Of course, I mean this metaphorically, but cf. Cypria p. 123 (Allen), XV.
66 Gregoire is both right and wrong when he writes (Euripide 92): "La «mort» d’Iphigénie est la conséquence naturelle de la disparition de son culte, de la fusion de sa personnalité avec celle d’Artemis". Right, because he sees Iphigeneia as a pre-existing goddess; and wrong, because he thinks that a chthonic cult centred in a tomb could be caused by divine succession in the history of a precinct. Iphigeneia's subordinate position at Brauron is of course an indication of the glory that she must once have had, but her relation to death and the underworld are relics thereof, rather than subsequent changes in status.
68 Cf. Snodgrass Archaeology 38ff.
The cruelty and bloodthirstiness (ergo, the 'chthonicity') of the daemon Iphigeneia is most conspicuously revealed by a passage in Herodotus in which the 'father of historiography' points out that the Virgin to whom human sacrifices were offered in the Black Sea is identical, so the barbarian performers claimed, with the daughter of Agamemnon. The usual 'looking-glass' device of Herodotus may, of course, be intensively at play in this instance. But it is interesting that neither the divinity nor the mercilessness of the daemon seem to have lacked verisimilitude for the Halikarnassian. These traits were, no doubt, noteworthy, and perhaps even striking. No attempt, however, was made to refute a claim which struck at the heart of classical Greek self-consciousness as displayed in the re-interpretation of the Homeric Trojan War, then seen as the exemplification of the conflict between the Civilized and the Brute: the daughter of the chief commander of the Greeks asking for human sacrifices? How could such an allegation be accepted, if Iphigeneia had not already been something similar (perhaps milder) in speech (mythology) and/or in deed (cult)? So much for Herodotus. On our part, we may ask whether it was really the barbarians themselves (as opposed to Greek inhabitants of the Tauric peninsula) that made the mythological claim to the legend of Homer - of all poets.

That as late as the fifth century, and presumably later, Iphigeneia was worshipped at Brauron should be taken for certain. Euripides would not have included what is obviously an aetiology, if it did not add to the verisimilitude of his play. That by that time she was anything but a goddess is, nonetheless, also certain. But that she probably was there before Artemis, could be inferred from some very indicative parallels. Hesychius glosses Iphigeneia to mean Artemis; at Hermione there was a shrine of Artemis where the goddess was worshipped under the epiklesis of Iphigeneia (which is in itself proof enough that the Olympian took over a pre-existing cult); and, more interestingly, at Aegaeira the ancient Baedeker saw an Artemisian temple about which he reported:

Not only is the conclusion drawn by Pausanias indicative of ancient alertness to the (possible) divinity of Iphigeneia, but also the priesthood by a virgin there, held until marriageability, comes very close to the Brauronian state of affairs. In these and similar

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68 Herod. IV, 103: τούτων Ταύρων μὲν νυμφοποιηθεὶς θεωρεῖται· θεοῦσα μὲν τῇ Παρθέ νῳ τοὺς τε ναιηγοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἢν λάβοντο· Ἐλλήνων ἐπαναχείρες πρῶτοι τούτοις· [...] τῇ δόμῳ τοῦτον τῇ θυσίαν λέγουσι αὐτοῖς Ταύρῳ Ἰφιγένειαν τὴν· Ἀγαμέμνονος εἶναι.
69 Hartog. Mirror.
70 Hesych. s.v. 'Ιφιγένεια· ἢ 'Ἀρτέμις.
71 Paus. II, 35, 1: καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος ἐπίκλησιν Ἰφιγένειας ἔστιν ιερῶν.
72 Paus. VII, 26, 5.
cultic contexts, and also in legends, folklore tales and even myths proper, Iphigeneia, Artemis and Hecate have become so intermingled that endeavouring to clarify the situation once for all, and to assign a fixed place to each one of them, is not only a futile attempt, but perhaps a pointless effort too. For reasons of analysis, however, such an enterprise may yield some results, if not with reference to the historic reality, at least with a view to an understanding of the symbolic meaning involved.

The Bear

At the end of the first quarter of the century when anthropology was already an established independent discipline Hallowell published a book-length article under the modest title "Bear Ceremonialism". As is evident from the acute and sensitive Introduction, the universalizing fallacies of Frazer and the Frazerians have been ingeniously spotted and an increasing awareness of the methodological problems that would thereafter preoccupy the discipline has already appeared. In the same decade Malinowski publishes most of his seminal studies. Because Hallowell is extremely alert to the pitfalls of gross simplification he strenuously dismisses the then prevailing interpretative method which he disparagingly calls "the psychological hypothesis". Facts, however, are facts, and a mere glance at the available ethnographical evidence suggests that "no other animal was found to attain such universal prominence as the bear, nor to have associated with it, over such a wide geographical area, such a large series of customs." Hallowell understands that to state this is to raise a question which can only be answered with reference to the context of a culture. However, it would be unwise to deprive of all explanatory strength a reason that immediately suggests itself:

[...] the ursine species are distinguished by characteristics which lend themselves more readily to anthropomorphization than those of other animals.

Some sixty years before the appearance of Hallowell’s article, the jurist who would remain known in the intellectual history of the West as the initiator (or the mythologist?, as the modern perspective wants it?) of Matriarchy (or, to be precise, of 'Motherright') published a study about 'the Bear in the Religions of Antiquity'.

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73 It may be worth mentioning that a small statue of Hecate (τρίμορφος) was also found at Brauron (BCH, 73, 1949, p. 527).
74 Hallowell "Bear".
75 art.cit. 148-152.
77 loc.cit.
78 Georgoudi "Matriarchy".
79 Bachofen Bär.
Expectably enough, the bear was seen as a symbol of femininity in its most valuable function, ergo as a symbol of motherhood *par excellence*. Was he wrong, or at least so wrong, as we would be all too ready to assert?

Several years would pass by until the city that welcomed Bachofen’s publication should greet another, still more thought-provoking, work (and better-known, at least among classicists), composed by the editor of the *Corpus* of the Swiss matriarch: Karl Meuli’s *Griechische Opferbräuche*. As the title indicates, the essay deals with sacrifice; with ancient Greek sacrificial customs, to be precise. Yet, the bear which is our theme and which *prima facie* would look very unlikely to find a place within such a (con)text seems then to have emerged from hibernation. Bears, Meuli argues, were the most important game of prehistoric hunters; (he means: of those prehistoric hunters to whom his sacrificial theory had recourse in order to explain historic sacrifice as a ‘comedy of innocence’). Hence, continues Meuli, faithful to himself and his method of arguing, the eminent role of bears in later myths and cults should be seen as a relic of the (distant) past when people depended entirely on hunting in order to subsist themselves. Could the new utilitarianism of Meuli’s serve as the basis for an explanation of the presence of arkteia at Brauron?

The reply of Lloyd-Jones seems to be in the positive. Meuli’s theory is certainly attractive, and so is Lloyd-Jones’ adaptation, but as against the latter’s justified fury at the structuralists’ neglect of the historical dimension, a more synchronic approach could also deserve a place in a discussion on the ancient Bear. Thus, we are back with Hollowell and his contextualizing point of view.

With the notable exception of Perlman, the modern accounts of the Brauronian rite seem to have bypassed the problem presented by the bear, its meaning and function in the collective representations of the ancients and the position it occupied in what we would now call imaginary Greece - or, la Grèce imaginaire.

The following features stand out in the ancient Greek descriptions of the bear:

**(i)** ability to stand upright  
**(ii)** susceptibility to only relative domestication  
**(iii)** licentiousness and sexual excess  
**(iv)** maternal affection toward the cubs  
**(v)** fierceness and aggressiveness after parturition  
**(vi)** formation of the formless offspring  
**(vii)** subversion of the rule that wants male animals to be stronger than female  
**(viii)** hibernation.

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80 Meuli "Opferbräuche".  
81 Lloyd-Jones "Artemis" 89-90 and 100ff.  
82 Perlman "She-Bear".
The first trait is a confirmation of Hallowell’s canon and has in many instances been noted by Hellenists. The last will be discussed presently. All the other features (ii-vii) converge in one point: the emphasis seems to be on femininity and motherhood. In reversing the historical order, let us then present some crucial sources whence the above deductions are derived. In his insightful treatise on the *Interpretation of Dreams* Artemidorus writes83:

"Ἀρκτὸς δὲ γυναῖκα σημαίνει (φασὶ γὰρ ἐκ Καλλιστούς τῆς Ἀρκαδίκης μεταβαλεῖν τὸ ζῷον οἱ περὶ μεταμόρφωσιν μυθολογίσαντες) καὶ νόσον διὰ τὸ θηριόδες καὶ κίνησιν καὶ ἀποδημίαν, ἐπειδὴ οἱ ὀμοίωμοι ἐστὶ τῷ ἀεὶ κυνομένῳ ἄστρῳ πάλιν δὲ τὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ τόπου στροφήν μαντεύεται· καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἄστρον ἀεὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ κυνομένῳ οὐ καταδύεται.

There is much aetiology and much Hellenistic constellation speculation in this passage. Yet the first four words remain valid irrespective of what explanations one adduces to substantiate their content: in prophetic dreams (for not all dreams reveal the future; many are irrelevant to the ‘science’ of dream-interpretation) the bear stands for a woman. And we know what to be a woman means: to give birth - the most essential function of all.84

Aristotle noticed (in a verbally ironical way) the exceptional strength and bravery of the female bears, especially after parturition:85

ἄθυμότερα δὲ τὰ θήλεα πάντα τῶν ἄρρενων, πλήν ἄρκτοι καὶ παρδάλεως. τούτων δὲ ἡ θήλεια δοκεί εἶναι ἀνδρειότερα.

χαλεπαὶ δὲ αἱ θήλειαι ἄρκτοι ἀπὸ τῶν σκύμων ὕσπερ καὶ οἱ κύνες ἀπὸ τῶν σκυλακίων.

He also emphasized the maternal care which the she-bears show to their cubs:86

αἱ δὲ ἄρκτοι ὅταν φεύγουσιν, τὰ σκυμνία προωθοῦσι καὶ ἀναλαβοῦσιν φέρουσι.

What is most worthy of mention, however, is the ancient observation attested in several ancient authors that the she-bear not only gives birth but also in a way imparts form to her otherwise amorphous and shapeless young. Aelian describes this curious feature in language that betrays bewilderment and admiration:87

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83 Artem. *Oneir.* II, 12.
84 Callaway "Birth".
kaí tòde tò thàímà tòde tòu ἔριου ἰδιῶν. τεκείν βρέφος οὖκ οἶδεν ἀρκτός, ὁδὲ ὁμολογήσει τις ἐξ ὁδίων ἰδιῶν τὸ ἐκχυννον ἰσογόνον ἐναι αὐτῆς, ἀλλὰ ἡ μὲν ἔλοχεσθη, τὸ δὲ εἰκή κρέας καὶ ἀσημίν τέ καὶ ἀτύπωτον καὶ ἀμορφήν. ἣ δὲ φιλεῖ καὶ γνωρίζει τὸ τέκνον, καὶ ὑπὸ τοὺς μικροῖς θάλπει, καὶ λεαίνει τῇ γλώσσῃ, καὶ ἐκτυποὶ ἐς ἀρθρά, καὶ μέντοι καὶ κατὰ μικρά ἐκμορφοῖ, καὶ ἰδιῶν ἐρείς τοῦτο ἀρκτοῦ σκυλάκουν.

Plutarch while combining the bear's fierceness with her peculiar trait of imparting form goes a step farther to claim that the she-bear seems to create her cub: ⁸⁸

ἡ δὲ ἀρκτός ἀγριώτατον καὶ σκυθροπότατον θηρίον, ἀμορφα καὶ ἄναρθρα τίκτει, τῇ δὲ γλώσσῃ καθάπερ ἐργαλείῳ διατυπώσα τοὺς ὑμένας οὐ δοκεῖ μόνον γεινῆς, ἀλλὰ καὶ δημιουργεῖν τὸ τέκνον.

Parturition is the end-result of pregnancy; what causes pregnancy is conception which is in turn caused by sexual intercourse. Oppian insisted on this aspect. ⁸⁹

On the basis of such evidence it seems safe to conclude that, if in religious symbolism the she-bear played a major part, it must have been for reasons similar to those that led ancient biologists (and biologisers) to express their wonder at the bear’s particular characteristics as a mother. As is shown from various anthropological reports, the observations of so-called primitive people about the physical world that surrounds them are often very acute. And they usually exhibit a sensitivity in observing details in 'wild life', which would pass unnoticed to a Western eye, that has frequently struck the observers of their life and customs - both biologists and anthropologists.

Among the votive offerings that have been released from the dark earthly recesses back to daylight through the spade of archaeology, there are several artefacts depicting animals. Among them there are also some images of bears. Their distribution is indicative of the nature of the dedication. To the present knowledge, dedications of bears are confined to five sanctuaries only. These are the Acropolis of Athens, the Heraion at Argos, the Artemision on Thasos, the sanctuary of Ortheia at Sparta and the precinct of Athena Alea in Tegea. We can assume that those of the Athenian Acropolis derive from the Brauronion. Could it be a coincidence that all the sanctuaries that have produced images of bears were dedicated to the cult of a Great Goddess?

The bear is an image of the Mother. The big belly of this animal, like that of the swine (for the chthonic and motherly character of which the Thesmophoria would be sufficient indication), recalls pregnancy. Unlike what a superficial reading of the foundation myths of the arkteia would show the she-bear represents motherhood.

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⁸⁹Opp. Cyn. III, 139-182.
⁹⁰Bevan "Artemis".
⁹²Cf. Harrison Prolegomena 124ff.
That the bear symbolizes virginity, by contrast, is what readily comes to mind when one is accustomed to think by means of structuralist logic. In such a framework of meaning the wildness of the animal is the symbolic equivalent of the wildness of the maiden, and the mythological domestication of the bear is the imminent domestication (literal93 as well as metaphorical-representational94) of the maiden attained through marriage. Furthermore, the killing of the bear is the consumption of virginity; hence it causes Artemis’s wrath. The entire bear-ritual is then seen as a propitiatory / placatory ceremony which aims at appeasing the Virgin goddess for the imminent loss of virginity on the part of the girls to be married.95

Now, the sources emphatically stress that the arkteia is not only as its very name indicates, a bear-ritual but moreover an imitation of the bear. This fact seems to have been denied due attention in the relevant recent studies96, since it was taken simply to indicate the interplay between cultic activity and a posteriori mythological narrative. But perhaps the affirmation that the ritual consisted primarily of an imitation of an archetypal act performed in the remote, yet ever-present, time of mythology should be taken more seriously into consideration.

93In the sense of bride’s moving away from her paternal oikos to the household of the groom which will be her real domus for the rest of her life. Cf. Vernant “Hestia - Hermès” [1963] in Pensee (a brilliant paper - perhaps his best).

94In the sense of the ancient taming of the ὅμαρα.

95So, more or less, Montepaone “Mito” [since the article is concerned with an analysis of the Munychian, as distinct from the Brauronian, legend (cf. Montepaone “Arkteia”)— a distinction which, if drawn too sharply, may lead to odd results— the polarity between the bear and maternity assumes a more sophisticated form, inscribed as it is in the context of both myth and ritual practice (74): “Orsa-capra, polarità sacrificiali, presenti nel mito, esprimono la dialettica interna ad esso, di cui Embaros segna il momento di sintesi e mediazione: (natura-orsa-fanciulla-capra)-(sacrificio-Embaros)-(cultura-donna);” Osborne Demos 167ff.; Brulé Fille 179-283; id. “Pattes”; id. “Retour”; Kearns Heroes 21-36; Dowden “Myth”; Sourvinou-Inwood “Lire”. The primary instigator of these thoughts was Vidal-Naquet (“The finest analysis to date [viz. 1985] is Vidal-Naquet (1974) [= tes jeunes: le cru, l’enfant grec et le cuit” in J. Le Goff and P. Nora (edd.) Faire de l’histoire, vol. III, pp. 137-168] who perhaps puts too heavy a stress on the ‘wildness” Osborne Demos 251, n. 30). But if one lets him speak for himself, one realizes that his interpretation is even more of an artificial construction a posteriori - a fully-fledged aetiology: “Variants or no, the myth is not difficult to explain: in exchange for the very advance of culture implied by the killing of wild animals, an advance for which men are responsible, the girls are obliged before marriage - indeed before puberty - to undergo a period of ritual ‘wildness’. Study of the pottery evidence from Brauron reveals that the rituals in honour of the goddess involved (sequentially?) nakedness and the wearing of a special form of clothing (the ‘croesus’ is a saffron-robe) - perhaps a means of dramatizing the transition between savagery and civilization” (“Recipes for Greek Adolescence” [revised version of the above] in Gordon Myth, 163-185 (179) cf. Vidal-Naquet “Revisited”). A mixture of Meuli and Lévi-Strauss with a hunt of Jeanmaire: the final flavour may be pleasant (and indeed it is), but does it hold good? The historiographical introduction to the subject (163-174 to which I am much indebted) is splendid, but the explication of the following case-studies does not seem inter alia to conform to the methodological principle, emphatically pointed out (177), on the necessity of distinguishing between historical origins and synchronic functions. The repeated versions of the essay (1974, 1979, 1981, 1991) may indicate the author’s unsatisfiedness with the handling of those case-studies.

96Again with the exception of Perlman “She-Bear”.

97In the sense of bride’s moving away from her paternal oikos to the household of the groom which will be her real domus for the rest of her life. Cf. Vernant “Hestia - Hermès” [1963] in Pensee (a brilliant paper - perhaps his best).
Potsherds, Masks and the Bear

The task of publishing the pottery found at Brauron was accorded by the excavator of the site to L.G. Kahil. In a series of articles that have appeared during the last thirty years\(^97\) Kahil gave a fair picture of the Brauronian ritual as it emerges from the study of iconography. The most conspicuous trait of the Brauronian pottery is a particular sort of vase baptized krateriskos because of its relatively small size, representatives of which, the christener informs us, were found, apart from Brauron, at:

(i) the Agora of Athens
(ii) the Brauronion on the Athenian Acropolis
(iii) the sanctuary of Artemis Mounychia
(iv) the sanctuary of Artemis Aristoboule
(v) the cave of Pan at Eleusis
(vi) the shrine of Artemis at Halae Araphenides.

The cases of the Agora and the cave of Pan should not cause us to panic: the Athenian market-place apart from being a site in which, because of the intense trading activities, all sorts of objects could be, and have been, found without prompting much surprise, was also a place where Artemis received under the epiklesis Boulaia an epigraphically attested cult\(^98\), whereas for the the cave of Pan, Kahil's explanation\(^99\) that Artemis was intimately related to the Nymphs, hence also to Pan, is plausible. It seems therefore safe to conclude that the krateriskoi and the scenes depicted on them are exclusive to Artemis and her festivities\(^100\) (and, moreover, I think, they relate to the Taurike Artemis in particular). In the same spirit, it has been argued that these scenes represent ritual phases of the arkteia with special emphasis on girls' footraces and singing. The very rare representations of female nudity on ancient vases (except when prostitutes and hetairai are shown) have been considered to indicate that the nakedness of girls on these pots is of a ritual character. The literary description of Pausanias of footraces of maidens performed among three distinct age-groups in Elis has been taken to be a parallel case in point. Although the similarity cannot go very far, it may be certain that most, if not all, scenes depicted on the krateriskoi are representations of some ceremonial act or other. But do they display the kernel of the arkteia?

Apart from the krateriskoi found through digging in Artemisian precincts, Kahil brought into the discussion on the meaning of Brauronian iconography three more vases of unknown provenance, larger in size than, but of identical shape to, the usual type of

\(^{97}\) Kahil "Attique"; *ead.* "Rite"; *ead.* "Déesse"; *ead.* "Cratérisque"; *ead.* "Repertoire".

\(^{98}\) Wyckerley *Agora*, 56ff. and *Long Gods* 181ff.

\(^{99}\) Kahil "Rite" 88.

\(^{100}\) This view is strengthened by the important semantic discovery of Sourvinou-Inwood "Altars", according to which 'altar + palm-tree' denotes a sanctuary and cult of Artemis. Many krateriskoi exhibit this 'sign'. For a 'reading' of the Artemisian 'palm-tree' based on the Vernantian Artemisian marginality see Monbrun "Artémis".
krateriskoi. Her assumption that they too depict scenes pertaining to the Brauronian ritual, though not unequivocal, is very plausible. In these vases, two very important (for our purpose) scenes appear. First, there is a representation of a bear (to judge from the skin, since the head of the animal is missing)\(^1\). And, secondly and more interestingly, there appear two human beings, one male, the other female, wearing masks which in all likelihood represent bears\(^2\). Here then is the missing link between the literary testimonia and the iconographical evidence.

The 'bears' at Brauron imitated the Bear in more than a merely figurative sense of the word: they were to ritually act as bears by wearing appropriate masks and perhaps also by putting on, in conjunction with the masks, the celebrated krokotos. If such were the case, then the assumed relation of the krokotos to the bear-skin would be easily explicable: it would be a relation that was fixed, not prior to, but after the two elements, i.e. the symbolic function of the animal in question and the ritual use of a secular robe, had come together and had thus become associated with each other in, and by means of, the same cultic practice. As to which one came first, we cannot be entirely sure, but in view of the predominance of animals in Artemisian cults (and the world-wide reported cases of bear-worship) we may assume that the bear was the more original emblem. Be that as it may, it seems reasonable to believe that 'bear' and 'krokotos' represent (albeit not necessarily in that order) two distinct successive stages in the cult at Brauron; although it sounds equally plausible that the introduction of each element followed a similar, or even selfsame, pattern: it was made possible because of a pre-existing connection of each emblem with motherly femininity.

Two principal objections will be raised. To anticipate them does not mean to render them ineffective; nor to inoculate my argument against their stings. The first will dwell persistently upon a detail mentioned above: the two sole persons that wear masks on the krateriskoi-iconography belong to both sexes, and, to judge from the size of the breasts, the female one is more feminine, i.e. more advanced in age, than we would like her to be. That is true: the masked woman is not an arktos. But is she not an Arktos at all? The second objection will run as follows: given the quantity of the surviving fragments of krateriskoi, a great many of which are painted, is it not unwise to lay too much stress, indeed to base an entire theory, on two of them at the expense of the rest that show no comparable scenes? I shall try to reply to both in conjunction.

As Osborne nicely observed\(^3\), the literary sources relate that the arkteia was not only a τελετή\(^4\) (which alone would be very indicative) but moreover a μυστήριον\(^5\). The mystery character of the rite would include, among other things, a vow or injunction

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\(^1\)Kahil "Rite" 91, fig. 4 and fig. B.  
\(^2\)"Rite" 92-93, figs. 6-8 and fig. C.  
\(^3\)Osborne Demos 165, following, and elaborating on, an allusion by Jeanmaire Couroi 261.  
\(^4\)Hesych. s.v. ἀρκτεία ἢ τῶν ἀρκτευομένων παρθένων τελετή.  
\(^5\)E.g. Schol. ad Aristoph. Lys. 645 (Leiden MS): ἄρκτων μημομίεναι τὸ μυστήριον ἐξετέλουσ.
of secrecy. Several anthropological parallels pertaining to rites of initiation can be adduced. As a mystery rite, the culmination of the initiation at Brauron, the imitation of the Bear, should be prevented from profanation; it should be kept in secret. Therefore, as Cole noticed in support of the ritual, as distinct from the mystical, character of the iconographical scenes, "it is unlikely that any secret ceremony would be represented on a vase". That we do not possess such scenes would hardly come as a surprise. But why the existing ones then? An examination of the iconography of the vase as a whole may give us some clue. On the left of the scene, Artemis holding a bow side by side with her brother Apollo are seen; at the centre there is a deer which is in fact the target of the Artemisian arrow; next to it there is a laurel, and, further to the right, the masked man; next to the man the frontal figure of the masked woman appears, and the scene is brought to an end with the depiction of another deer which, given the circularity of the painting, runs towards the goddess. The presence of the laurel, as opposed to the expected palm-tree, cannot be without significance: the scene as a whole is not placed in an Artemisian sanctuary. The laurel may indicate an Apollonian sanctuary instead, but I would be tempted to make the hypothesis that the setting is rather a figurative Olympus. If that is so, then the divine persons on the left would have their equivalent on the right. The further consequence would be that profanation of the mystery scene was prevented by means of it being located in a divine setting. If no humans appear 'on stage' then no sacrilege is committed. Thus, this scene could be the prototypical act, of which the imitation formed the secret core of the arkteia-ritual. Purely tentative though this 'reading' is, it seems to conform with the ancient notion of what the profanation of a mystery consists. The revelation of the secret, hence non-theatrical, appearance of a Kore in the Eleusinian Mysteries, according to Kerenyi's interpretation, would be regarded as a sacrilege deserving capital punishment, but both poets (like the author of the Homeric Hymn) and vase-painters alike would be allowed to describe the anodos of the divine Maiden. Or, according to a complementary interpretation of the same ceremony, the ceremonial exhibition of an ear of grain should be kept in utmost secrecy, but the prohibition did not equally apply to the sculptor of the grand votive relief of Eleusis where the local hero Neoptolemos receives the gift of agriculture, in the form of 'the miraculous seeds', from Demeter herself.

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106Cf. Van Gennep Rites; Eliade Initiations. Cf. also the interesting, but not very convincing, view of Lincoln "Persephone", who discerns a female rite de passage at the bottom of the Eleusinian Mysteries.
107Cole "Maturation" 241.
108Kerényi Eleeusis 93ff.
109Otto "Mysteries".
110Cf. Mylonas Eleusis 192-193 and fig. 68.
Brauron: An Etymology

Brauron is a toponym. And Artemis Brauronia is commonly assumed to derive her epiklesis from the place in Attica where her cult was predominant. This is certainly so, verified, in addition, by inscriptions which reads "Ἀρτέμις ἤ ἐν Βραυρώνη"¹¹¹, and by a lemma in Photius where a certain hero with the same name is also mentioned to account for the divine epitheton¹¹². But is this the whole story, or merely its prelude? Why Brauron the place, and why Brauron the name?

As to the place, its appropriateness for an Artemisian cult is as indisputable as is its inaptness for conducting archaeological excavations. Overflows of the nearby river Erasinos occasionally made the site suitable for rice-cultivation, rather than ritual celebration, and, when the blessing was not so great, incessant underground currents of water kept it fairly moist anyway. Not only are the modern participants in the digging well aware thereof, but the ancient architects must have faced similar difficulties - which may perhaps explain the relatively early abandonment of the sanctuary buildings. Technical human inadequacy aside (or should we rather say: notwithstanding it ?), the place was chosen as suitable for divine veneration. In such an 'environmental' context, what sort of divinity would readily fall into place is quite easy to see: a deity whose main function was manifested as Generative Power; Iphigeneia-Artemis. Once again¹¹³, moisture and wetness are physical manifestations of coming-into-being, or procreation.

Now, before attaining 'visibility' (i.e. before reaching a stage in which it is easily perceptible) any process of coming-into-being is preceded by a phase of preparation. Expressed in organic terms, the procedure of preparation is a kind of pregnancy. And of pregnancy the salient external feature is amorphous physical augmentation or expansion; it is swelling. Such was the place at Brauron, and the deity presiding thereover.

Except wherever nominal transparency predominates, to discover the origin of a word is not an easy enterprise. This holds true for both endo-linguistic (i.e. confined within the language under investigation) and comparative attempts. But to have recourse to lost or hypothetical languages (to Pelasgians of some sort or other¹¹⁴) may sometimes be equivalent to begging the question of etymon. The most recently proposed etymology

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¹¹² Photius Lex. (Theodoridis) s.v. Βραυρώνεια 'Ἀθήνης οὕτως ἢ Ἀρτέμις ἐκαλεῖτο ἀπὸ Βραυρώνου τόπου, ἐν ὧν μᾶλλον αὕτη ἔτιμάτο· ἐκλήθη δὲ ὁ χώρος ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν οὕτω καλουμένων· καὶ ἦν ἱερὸν πρὸς τῷ Ἐρασίνῳ ποταμῷ καταφυσικῶς ὑπὸ Πεισιστράτου. Steph. Byz. s.v.Βραυρώνια δήμος τῆς Ἀττικῆς ἀπὸ Βραυρώνου ἱερῶν. ἀφ' ὧν καὶ Βραυρώνια ἢ Αρτέμις. τὰ τοπικά Βραυρώνιον· Βραυρωτάδε· Βραυρώνια· ὡς Μαραθίαν. Anecd. Bekk. I, 220: Βραυρώνεια· 'Ἀρτέμις οὕτως καλουμένη ἀπὸ Βραυρώνου τόπου, ἐν ὧν μᾶλλον ἢ θεὸς τιμᾶται. ἐκλήθη δὲ ὁ τόπος ἀπὸ Βραυρώνου ἱερῶν τινως.
¹¹³ Cf. what is said about Ortheia.
¹¹⁴ Cf. e.g. Popov "Brauro", where Brauro is supposed to be the Greek translation (meaning what?) of the original name of the goddess. It is certain that Artemis Brauronia was (con)fused with Bendis (about which see below 'Bendis and Oupis'), but nothing proves that the approximation of the two left its marks on the linguistic plane too (which, in principle, sounds very probable).
sees a bear in 'Brauron'115, but, much as this would fit in the picture of the cult that has been presented above, the process which leads to such result leaves, both semantically and grammatically, something to be desired.

The etymology which I would like to advance connects the name with the several Greeks words that have as their main lexical component the biliteral root *br*-.. The most salient representative of this group of words is the verb *βρύω*, meaning 'to be full of, to abound with, hence to thrive in, to swell'. Pollux writes116:

\[ \text{ἐπὶ φυτῶν καὶ δέντρων καρποφόρων ἔρεις ἄκμαξει, ὄργα, σπαργά, βρύει - μάλιστα δὲ τούτο ἐπ᾽ ἐλαιῶν - ἀνθέι, καρποφορεῖ, βλαστάνει, θάλλει.} \]

and Hesychius (s.v.) explains:

\[ βρυεῖ· ἰέει, πηγάζει, ἀναβλύζει, πηδᾶ, ἀνθέι, ἀνύησι, αὐξέται. \]

The element of thriving fertility is unmistakable in all related words (e.g. *βρύαξω* [= be pregnant], *βρύον* [= moss], *βρύτος* [= a fermented beverage made of barley, a kind of beer] and also our embryo [which is τὸ ἐν γαστρὶ βρύον, according to Eustathius]),117 An Orphic Hymn to Dionysus118 stressing the god’s chthonic aspect says:

\[ ἀλά, μάκαρ, χλοϊκάρυα, κερασφόρε, κάρπιμε Βάκχε, βαὖν ἐπὶ πάνθειαν τελείν γαμώντι προσώπῳ εὐέροις καρποίσα τελεσαγόνοις βρύαξων. \]

and a fragment from the lost tragedy *Athamas* by Aeschylus (or by Sophocles) reads:

\[ βρυαξοῦσης λεαίνης \]

which Hesychius glosses as:

\[ [...] ἄκμαξούσης ἡ ἐγκύμονος. \]

This may be particularly relevant here, because it relates the word to the acme of a pregnant lioness, like the lioness that Artemis was to women119.

That the derivatives of *βρύω* had strong sexual overtones, and that the verb itself may have been originally meant to denote sexual flowering120 are shown from the following fragment of Hipponax:121

\[ τὸν θεόντα ἐχθρόν τούτον, ὅς κατευδοῦσιν τῆς μητρὸς ἐσκύλευσε τὸν βρύσσον \]

where *βρύσσος* stands for the female pudenda.122

115Antoniou "恪ευνα".
116Pollux I, 230.
117Cf. Curtius Grundzüge 531.
118Orph. Hymn. LIII, 8-10 (Abel).
119Hom. II. XXI, 483.
120Even in later ages the genitals were approximated to blooms.; cf. Arist. *HA* 581a: ἀμά δὲ καὶ τρίχουσιν τῆς ἄμυ αἵρεται, καθάπερ καὶ τὰ φυτὰ μέλλοντα στέρμα φέρειν ἀνθέιν πρῶτον ἄκμαϊν φαίον ἄδιβλιν τριβίον ἀδούν Ἀρμακίον ἐφοι ὁ Κροτωπατάς.
121Hippon. fr. 70, 7-8 (West).
There is, however, another group of semantically different words that derive from the same, or a similar, lexical root. These words revolving around βρύω, βρυχάωμαι, \(^{123}\) are used to denote the roar of wild animals\(^ {124}\). Such noise, especially when artificially produced by men (called 'bull's roar' in anthropological jargon), is intimately related to rituals purporting to promote fertility. The orgiastic deities of the ancient world almost invariably rejoiced in such noise and the Homeric epithet that usually accompanies Artemis (and once\(^ {125}\) is even substantivized - so characteristic of her is it), κελαδελνή, or the noisy one, may be a case in point. Another Hesychian gloss seems to bring this latter meaning into closer contact with 'Brauron':

βραυώσα: κεκραγυília.

Appropriate to the actual setting as one can experience it even today, the name Brauron implies unconstrained vegetation and generative growth. The fecundity involved, however, is of an earthly order: it is matter to be moulded, formless material to be bestowed with form, indeterminate power to be endowed with purpose.

The phallic connotations of the verb βρύω and of its derivatives are shown in the names of the Artemisian masks discussed earlier. In Brauron, it seems, 'the reign of the phallus'\(^ {126}\) was less dominant than elsewhere. The feminine side of existence must have here taken the upper hand, in myth and ritual alike.

**Callisto and Kalliste**

The feminine side of existence: where did it manifest itself more pointedly and pervasively than in the workings of myth? And the workings of myth are its constant alterations and changes in the passage of time. Often, but not always, alterations affected not only genealogies and personal interrelationships, but also the actual heroes involved. These, from a later poet, we have come to know as Metamorphoses.

There was a place in Greece, Arcadia, in which Change took some pains to invade.\(^ {127}\) Its inhabitants believed that they were the first persons to see the morning star,

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\(^{123}\) Cf. Chantraine *Dictionnaire*, s.v. βρυχάωμαι: "Terme expressif, reposant sur une onomatopée s'appliquant proprement au rugissement, mais susceptible d'autres emplois dès les premiers exemple. Se croise et se confond souvent, surtout dans les derivés avec βρύω, βρυχόω. Les deux séries ont-elles une commune origine? C'est possible". Chantraine does not connect this series of words with βρύω for which (s.v.) he gives no etymology. But there are some indications that the two are etymologically related.

\(^{124}\) Cf. Pollux V, 88.

\(^{125}\) Hom II, XXI, 511. The scene is the notorious instance in which Artemis, like a little girl, tearfully complains to her father about the humiliating treatment she received from Hera. The use of the adjective as the proper name of the goddess may have been intended to be ironical. Nevertheless, its use shows the prominence it had in describing / denoting Artemis.

\(^{126}\) Keuls *Phallus* 310ff. misses, as usual, the religious point by speaking persistently about the oppression of women (320: [the Brauronian] repertoire covers the full span of tales and symbols that spelled subordination [viz. to male chauvinism]). Of what use such commonsensical analyses are, I cannot see.

\(^{127}\) Cf. Borgeaud *Pan* 1-22.
or more poetically expressed, the first upon whose ancient city, Lycosoura, the sun shone.\textsuperscript{128} Before becoming paradigmatic cases of idleness and idyll,\textsuperscript{129} they were not rarely ridiculed for feeding on acorns, like pigs, or for being older (and more antiquated) than the moon.\textsuperscript{130} Two classical authors (the one, exact and serious in what he says; the other, exact and serious in what he means) testify to that effect.\textsuperscript{131} Their backward manners can be inferred from their institutions.\textsuperscript{132} But in the sphere of piety, backwardness means an Hesiodic stage before, therefore a life closer to the gods, to the original disclosure of the divine.

Among them is set the myth of Callisto.\textsuperscript{133} Or rather, not among them, but at the very top of them, for Arkas, their eponymous hero, was the son of Callisto. Her myth was therefore central in their local legends. Callisto, the Most Beautiful One, as K.O. Müller early in the last century noticed\textsuperscript{134}, was a hypostasis of Artemis. Though the identification has been seriously challenged in recent years\textsuperscript{135} and the current tendency is to avoid the Teutonic reversed Euhemerism which in attested heroes discerns faded gods of old\textsuperscript{136}, such outmoded approach may in fact be closer to what has pejoratively been termed as 'religious syncretism' which is, indeed, the hallmark of a religious feeling kept alive. If not to identity, alertness of the indigenous population to at least intimate resemblance and close relation between the Arkadian heroine and the Panhellenic goddess is indicated by the cultic monuments dedicated to them as reported by Pausanias\textsuperscript{137}:

\[
\text{σταθίους δὲ ώς τριάκοντα καταβάντι ἐκ Κρουμών, τάφος ἐστὶ}
\text{Καλλιστοῦς, χώμα γῆς ὕψηλον, δένδρα ἔχουν πολλὰ μὲν τῶν ἄκάρτων,}
\text{πολλὰ δὲ καὶ ἥμερα. ἐπὶ δὲ ἄκρῳ τῷ χώματι ἱερὸν ἐστὶν Ἀρτέμιδος}
\text{ἐπίκλησιν Καλλίστης.}
\]

The Arkadian origin of the cultic epitheton of Artemis is demonstrated by the subsequent remark of Pausanias according to which the epic poet Pamphos who first gave this epiclesis to Artemis was so instructed by the Arkadians (\'μαθὼν τι παρὰ Ἀρκάδων). There is an unmistakable allusion to a local mystical legend here. The tomb of Callisto

\begin{footnotes}
\item[128] Cf. Paus. VIII, 38, 1.
\item[129] On the mythicopoetical spiritualization of the Arcadian landscape see Snell Discovery 281-309 and Sichterman "Mythology".
\item[130] Cf. Herod. II, 66; Schol. ad Aristoph. Nub. 397; St. Byz. s.v. Ἀρκάς; Suid. s.v. προσέληνοι; Plut. Mor. 282a; Paus. VIII, 42, 6.
\item[131] Thuc. I, 2; Aristoph. Nub. 397: βέκκακεσέληνοι; the word being a combination of βέκος (cf. Herod. II, 2) and σέληνη is an allusion to the claim of the Arkadians that they were προσέληνοι. Cf. Arist. fr. 549, 1549a2.
\item[132] Cf. Rose Primitive 65ff.
\item[133] See Fontenrose Orion 69-85.
\item[134] Müller Dorier 1, 372; "Denn Kallisto nur der wenig ungewandelte Name der Artemis Kalliste ist, geht daraus hervor, daß der Heroine Grab im Tempel der Göttin gezeigt wurde, und daraus daß Kallisto in eine Bärin verwandelt sein sollte, die Symbol der Arkadischen Artemis war. Es ist leicht zu begreifen, daß, wie man Apollo zu Delphi in der Gestalt eines Wolfs darstellte: so Artemis unter den Arkadern als Bärin symbolisiert wurde; hernach aber sollte es bloss durch den Zorn der Göttin geschehen sein, daß ihre geliebte Nymphe diese Gestalt annehmen mußte" Cf. Id. Prolegomena 73ff.
\item[135] Jost Cultes 406ff.
\item[136] Dowden Death, 44ff. and 182ff.
\item[137] Paus. VIII, 35, 8.
\end{footnotes}
would perfectly well fit in such context. Moreover, the reference to the fruitless and the
tame trees that grow on the earthly hill considered worthy of mention by the Periegete,
cannot be without significance. It must have been regarded as indicative of the twofold
nature of the venerated heroine. Which twofold nature? Let us see the myth in the
variations that the later literary sources ascribed to it.\textsuperscript{138}

According to a lost Hesiodic poem, Callisto, daughter of Lykaon, chose to devote
herself to Artemis and remain a virgin huntress for life. She was one of the close
adherents of the goddess that went under the generic name of Nymphs. However, she did
not manage to keep her vow of chastity, because Zeus desired to rape her—and so he did.

On realizing the resulting pregnancy, Artemis transformed her into a she-bear in which form Callisto gave birth to Arkas.\textsuperscript{139} Others related that not Artemis but Hera, out of
jealousy at her husband’s infidelity, was responsible for the metamorphosis, and they
added that later Artemis shot the arktos dead.\textsuperscript{140} The salvation of the offspring is a
recurrent feature of the myth.\textsuperscript{141} Either through the intervention of Hermes, or, less
miraculously, through the humane compassion of some encountering goat-herds is Arkas
in all accounts saved. His name indicates his origin: he is the son of the bear\textsuperscript{142} And the Arcadians, being his descendants, all derive from the same wild beast. Is this not
demonstration enough for the symbolic motherhood in which the ancient bear indulged?

\textsuperscript{138}For the variants of the Callisto myth admirably and meticulously arranged according to what Henrichs
calls 'applied mythography' see his "Approaches", 254-267.

\textsuperscript{139}Hes. fr. 163 (Merkelbach-West) (= Ps. Eratosth. Catast. 1 = Comment. in Aratum reliqu. p. 181
Maass): "Αρκτός ὁ μεγάλης ταύτινς Ἡπιόδος ἔφη Λυκανός θυγατέρα ἐν Ἀρκαδία ὄντες, ἔλεσθαι δὲ μετὰ Ἀρτέμιδος τὴν περὶ τοὺς θησαυρὸς ἄγων γήν ἐν τοῖς ὀρείσ puncta: φθαρεῖσαι δὲ ὑπὸ Δίος ἔμμεναι λαθάναισσαι τὴν θεόν, φωραθήναι δὲ υπέτοικον ἤδη οὖναι, ὀφθάσθαι ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς λουφομένην ἐφ᾽ Ἡ ὀργοθείσαι τὴν θεόν ἀποδημῶσα αὐτὴν, καὶ ὑδῶς τεκεῖν, ἄρκτον γενομένην, τὸν καλεῖσθαι Ἀρκάδα, οὖσαν δ᾽ ἐν τῷ ὁρεί θηρεύσαι ὑπὸ αὐτῶλων τυμῶν καὶ παρασσιπρότερα μετὰ τοῦ βρέφους τῷ Λυκαίῳ.

\textsuperscript{140}Schol. A ad Hom II. XVIII, 478 (= Call. fr. 632 Pfeiffer): Ζέες Καλλιστοῦ τῆς Λυκανόου ἔρροσθε ἐμψυχοτετοῖον την αὐτὴν λαθάναν "Ἡραν" ἐπιγνόσα ὅτι ἡ θεὸς μετέβελε αὐτὴν εἰς ἄρκτον, καὶ ὡς θηρὸν Ἅρτεμις ἀποστεῖκα τοξεύσαι. Ζέες δὲ εἰς οὐρανὸν αὐτὴν ἀναγαγὸν πρῶτη φαίνεται καταστρέψας, ἢ ἱστορίᾳ παρὰ Καλλιμάχου. 


\textsuperscript{142}Cf. Hesych. s.v. ἄρκτος; [] καὶ τῷ Ζώου; Eust. 1535, 20: εἰ δὲ τοῦ ἄρκτου ὑπεκαθεδείτος τῷ ἀρχαῖον ἁγαλαγος καὶ τῷ ἑρμοὶ νομίζον, ὡς άρρητος, οὐ γέγονεν σημασίαν ἐναλαγηκα, κτλ.
The original divinity of Callisto is indicated by the two other names under which she was also known: Μεγίστως,143 or the Greatest One, and Θρομώτως,144 or She Who Dispenses Justice. Better than the widespread versions of her myth, these names account for the pre-eminent role she played in Arcadian mythology. From such a great deity the Arcadians were descended.145 The original theriomorphic appearance of Callisto, on the other hand, is intimated in a corrupt Euripidean passage for which various emendations have been proposed.146 The exact wording may still escape us, but it is plain that, in this version, Callisto is already in animal form when she jumps onto Zeus’s bed:

ω μάκαρ 'Αρκαδία ποτέ παρθένε Καλλιστοί, Δίος
ά λεχέων ἐπέβαζ τετραβάμοι γυῖας.

Once pregnancy appears, a woman is no longer a virgin. She becomes a mother, hence a bear.147 In the surviving versions of the myth of Callisto, the animal transformation, the apotheriosis, is a punishment. One of the best iconographical depictions of the scene, an Apulian vase of high-quality painting,148 captures the transformational sentence while in process of being executed. Viewed from the perspective of Homeric Maidenhood, of Artemisian Dynamism, the apotheriosis is certainly a punishment for lost virginity. But an Aristotelian fragment149 reveals a possible original meaning of the symbolic process:

Κέφαλων κατὰ χρησίμων ἄρκτω συγγενέσθαι, τὴν δὲ ἐγκύμονα
γενομένην μεταβαλείν εἰς γυναῖκα καὶ τεκεῖν παιὰ 'Αρκείσιον.

We could infer, therefore, that Callisto was originally a bear. She was beautiful because she was a mother. The eponymous hero of the Arcadians was her son and proof of her maternity. The Arcadians descended from a bear. That fitted well in the context of the mountainous place which they inhabited, and was moreover, in conformity with the pre-Homeric outlook. The distinction between the animal kingdom and the sphere of humankind was not yet sharply drawn. The animals were, rather, venerated, because of the awe-inspiring properties and capacities lying beyond human reach. They were therefore seen as disclosing aspects of divinity. In the present case, the supernatural power in

144Steph. Byz. s.v. 'Αρκάς.
145For a remarkable opposite view see Sale "Virginity". Sale denies that the mythology of Callisto can be attributed to Artemis and he has very strong arguments to make the claim. More importantly, he argues against the theories that assume an early stage of maternity for Artemis, because, so he claims, her virginity is conspicuous and essential in all ancient accounts. This is certainly so for the Homeric Artemis. But does it also apply to local cults (where, I would think, virginity is not incompatible with motherhood)?
146Eur. Hel. 375-380; cf. Diggle "Helen". For an interesting emendation of the Euripidean passage based on the Apulian vase-painting discussed below, see Musso "Callisto".
147Cf. Henrichs "Approaches" 261: "The original story pattern will have comprised, at the very least, the two elements which appear consistently in the written sources, the loss of virginity and the bear transformation."
148Trendall "Callisto".
question is *Artemis, or Callisto which amounts to the same. The killing of the bear (a killing which the goddess herself performs in one version of the existing mythologemes) is the appropriation of her procreative power.

We may, therefore, claim that it was only later that the beauty of Callisto underwent a change. Artemis took over her cult and subordinated the heroine. But the Artemisian beauty was the beauty of the dynamic potency of motherhood, rather than the beauty of maternal accomplished actuality. Hence in the mind of worshippers the sequence was reversed. The aboriginal symbol of maternity lost its prior primal position; it became a secondary stage, and a punishment. Being no longer specific about its content, the bear-symbol was included in the broader generic category of 'animality'. Artemis usually punished human transgression with the sentence of apotheriosis, and the particularity of each animal form in which her victims were enveloped no longer counted for much. The myth of Callisto could now be recounted as a variation of the broader motif which also comprised the transformation of Atalante into a lionness and all the other similar stories. However, even though the myth related the story in a way suggesting that Callisto deserved anything but admiration, the cult preserved her previous glory alluded to in the worship which her tomb, a chthonic sign of motherhood, received. Arcadian coins dating to the fourth century B.C. show Artemis and Callisto respectively on their two sides. The two sides of the coins are the two sides of the female identity: virginity and motherhood. The by now fully anthropomorphic Callisto is depicted at the precise moment of death, the Artemisian arrow striking her breast, the goddess, kneeling, having just discharged the lethal blow. The infant Arkas is beside the dying heroine: regeneration. The closing of the procreative circle is effected at the exact time when the mother re-assumes the form of a maiden. In myth this is signalled as a death: it is the moment of Artemisian victory.

Artemis under the epiklesis Kalliste was not confined to Arcadia. Her presence in Attica, just outside the city walls on the road to the Academy (all along which there were public tombs) is attested by Pausanias:

150 Cf. Anecd.Bekk. 1, 444: καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτον αἱ κόραι πρὸ τοῦ γάμου ἀρκτεύειν οὐκ ὄντων, ὡσπερ ἀφοσιοῦμεν τὰ τῆς θηρίας. That the θηρίας is an ἀπαξ λεγόμενον (Montepaone "Mito" 69) is an overstatement: it is simply a misspelled and substantivized form of θήριος (cf. Plat. Phaedr. 248d: θήριον φῶς).
151 Cf. Eur. Hel. 379 where Callisto, if the text does not need emendation which is far from certain, is transformed into a lionness, like Atalante.
152 Cook Zeus II, part 1, 229 and fig.158.
153 Papachatzis Periphrasis 1, 383f. Somewhere along this road which at its start near the Dipylon was as wide as 40 m., Pericles delivered his famous Funerary Speech. The chthonic character of the site cannot be overemphasized.
154 Paus. 1, 29, 2.
As is not seldom the case, the expressed and purposeful silence of Pausanias regarding a mythological variant which he decides not to relate indicates the mystical overtones of the λόγος in question. If not the secret myth, the archaeological spade revealed at least artefacts pertaining to it. The tangible confirmation of the Pausanias report came in the 1920's when the sanctuary of Artemis Kalliste was discovered. Inscriptions verified the identification and, more importantly, ex-votos revealed the content of the cult. One of them depicts two female breasts, whereas the other two are dedications of female genitals to the goddess. To judge from the inscribed letters, they date from the third century B.C., but similar offerings are elsewhere found dating from the previous centuries. The beauty and 'bestness' of this Artemis, no doubt, referred to the female reproductive cycle.

Keeping the above in mind, if we ask once again about the appropriateness of the bear-symbol to signify motherhood, we shall touch upon the last feature of the ancient accounts of the bear mentioned earlier (viii). Aristotle is our main informant. The bears are the only quadruped mammal of considerable size that hibernates, the other being the relatively small hedgehog. The minimum period of hibernation is forty days during which the she-bear gives birth to her cubs. When the appropriate time for them to face the world comes, then hibernation is brought to an end. This happens in the third month after the winter solstice, i.e. in March. To translate our calendar into the complex and far from uniform Athenian calendar is an arduous process. However, a general agreement has been reached according to which our March would fall between the Athenian Elaphebolion and Mounychion. Both months are dedicated to Artemis, from whose festivals, the Elaphebolia and the Mounychia, they derive their names respectively. This can hardly be a sheer coincidence.

The period of hibernation is a period of preparation. Moreover, it coincides with gestation. When hibernation terminates, new life is brought forth. The she-bear disappears.

155 Cf. Paus. I, 38, 7; VIII, 37, 9; VIII, 38, 7.
156 Philadelpheus "Sanctuary" and Roussel "Bas-relief".
157 Philadelpheus art. cit. figg. 3 and 4.
158 Van Straten "Gifts".
159 Arist. Hist. Anim. VIII, 17, 600a28-b17: τῶν δὲ ζωοτόκων καὶ τετραπόδων φιλοῦσιν οἱ τε ζώιτες καὶ οἱ ἄρκτοι. ὡς μὲν οὖν φιλοῦσιν αἱ ἄρκτοι, φανερῶν ἐστι, πότερον δὲ διὰ φύεσιν ἢ διὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν, ἀμφιβαστεῖται. γίνεται γὰρ περὶ τῶν χρόνων τούτων οἱ ἄρρητες καὶ θηλείαι πίστασιν, ὡστε μὴ εικόνισθη εἶναι. ἢ δὲ θηλεία καὶ τίκτει περὶ τούτων τοῦ καὶ τοῦ καιροῦ, καὶ φωλεῖ ἐάν ἄξαγεν ἀρα ἢ τοῖς σκέπουσιν· τοῦτο δὲ ποιεῖ τοῦ εἴρος περὶ τρίτων μηρὰ ἀπὸ τροπω, τὸ δὲ ἐλάχιστον φωλεῖ περὶ τετταράκονθ᾽ ἡμέρας· τούτων δὲ δὲς ἐπὶ λέγεται ἐν αἷς οὐδὲν κυιστεῖται, ἐν δὲ παῖς πλείον τοῖς μετὰ ταύτα φωλεῖ μὲν κυιστεῖται καὶ ἐγείρεται, κύρια δὲ ἄρκτος ἡ ὑπ᾽ οὐδενὸς ἢ πάντων όλιγον ἐλημπται, ἐν δὲ τοῦ χρόνου τοῦτο φανερῶν ἐστιν ὡς οὐδὲν ἐσθίοισι· οὕτω γὰρ ἔξεχοντα, ὡτιν τε ἀρρήσθω, κείναι διαγίνεται ἢ τε κολλᾶ καὶ τὰ ἐντερα. λέγεται δὲ καὶ διὰ τὸ μήδε προσφέρεσθαι τὸ ἐντερόν όλιγόν συμφόβεσθαι αὐτή, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο πρῶτον ἐξύσθαι γενέσθαι τοῦ ἄρου πρὸς τὸ ἀφιστάναι τὸ ἐντερόν καὶ διευρύνειν. Cf. 611b34; Mitr. 835a30.

160 Cf. what is said later in connection with Artemis Mounychia.

from the face of the earth, she as it were dies, like Callisto the Bear, in order to produce her offspring, her Arkades, the little cubs, and in order to reappear in the world in a postpartum state, revirginated in a sense, like Hera, after her bath in the spring Kanathos near Argos. The broad cosmic cycle of life and death finds, in the symbol of the bear, a more specific content meant to illuminate the two recurrent phases in feminine existence: virginity and maternity. Between these two states women's life always oscillates. And the she-bear becomes their archetypal image. By imitating the bear the young Athenian girls participate for the first time in their life in the duality which is their portion and their fate. Such duality, which is wrongly taken to be an ambiguity, is intrinsic in the feminine nature, so the ancients thought. That there is neither ambiguity nor ambivalence here is proven by the fact that there is an end, namely procreation, and that the two phases of maternity and virginity are accordingly, and in that order, subordinated to that end. For ambiguity implies hesitation and uncertainty and ambivalence denotes an intrinsic contradiction. With reference to the end of procreation Virginity and Motherhood become meaningful as being the two sides of the same coin.

The krokotos should, I think, be seen in the same light. In Cyrene insessional evidence shows that the priestess of Artemis was called ἀρκός, which is, as we have seen, a variant of ἀρκτός. In the same place, the name of a ceremonial garment is testified: καταγωγής. The name itself indicates the chthonic character of the item. Using this as a parallel, we could assume that the 'descent' of wearing the krokotos is the hibernation of the bear. In both cases, a phase of preparation precedes manifestation. The imitation of the bear was thus the anticipation (and magical induction) of actual manifested fertility, i.e. of maternity.

Relying on the Euripidean passage quoted above (vv. 1465-67), Kontis suggested that the arkteia was performed in honour of Artemis, whereas the dedication of garments known also from the Brauronian inscriptions was made to Iphigeneia. By the time the Iphigeneia in Tauris was staged (in 414 B.C. according to the most plausible date, and at any rate, between 421 and 408 B.C.) the subordination of Iphigeneia to the

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162 Cf. Devereux Femme 67-94.
163 Sokolosky Suppl. 115 B16.
164 I follow Perlman ("She-Bear" 127) in identifying καταγωγής as a robe (in accordance with Hesych. s.v. καταγωγής and Pollux VII, 49).
165 Cf. also the Grizzly Bear dance of the North American Indians where a robe plays a prominent role in a ceremony held in spring to celebrate the end of bear-hibernation described in Harrison Themis, 112-113 and 328 (cf. 450).
166 The induction was certainly of a magical character, but, as Osborne suggested without sufficiently elaborating (it is interesting to note that two most important and acute observations are made by Osborne in the same page (Demos, 165), but neither is driven to its consequences; thereafter structuralism predominates; but Osborne's perspective is, of course, different, not directed to religious symbolism as such) it may also have been something more: special conditions have been scientifically proven to instigate the onset of the menses. If that were the case, then the efficacy of the ritual in granting to mortals the consent of the divine would be inferred from the ensuing menstruation.
167 Kontis "Βραυρωΐα".
168 See Linders Studies; Peppas-Delmosou "Inventaires"; Tréheux "Inventaires".
Olympian spell of Artemis was certainly complete; if Iphigeneia played any role in the cult, it was definitely a secondary one, for instance that of the first mythical priestess. But if the distinction is of any value, I would think that the opposite claim is more plausible. Dedications of clothes to goddesses abound in Greek religion. Artemis in particular, who was held responsible for the death of parturients would be in need of placation, angry as she would manifest herself to be through the fatality she sent. Iphigeneia, by contrast, was more of a feminine deity, a feature that would make her more suitable to preside over the bear-ritual. At the time of her sacrificial death at Aulis she was substituted for a deer, the emblematic animal of Artemis who saves her; at Brauron, however, some local (?) legend had it that the surrogate was a bear.\textsuperscript{169}

\textsuperscript{169}Et. Magn. s.v. Ταυροπόλοι' [...] οἱ δὲ λέγουσι ὅτι τῶν Ἐλλήνων βουλομένων ἅνελειν τὴν Ἱφιγένειαν ἐν Ἀυλίδι, ἢ Ἀρτέμις ἀντέδωκε ἑλαφον' κατὰ δὲ Φανόδημον, ἄρκτον (= FGrHist. 325 F 14); Schol. ad Aristoph. Lys. 645 (Leyden MS): δοκεῖ δὲ Ἀγαμεμνόνων σφαγίαται τὴν Ἱφιγένειαν ἐν Βραυρώι, οὐκ ἐν Ἀυλίδι, καὶ ἄρκτον αὐτ' αὐτίς, οὐκ ἑλαφον, δοθήναι.
ARTEMIS MOUNYCHIA

Following the testimony of epigraphical evidence modern scholars have claimed that the correct spelling of the word 'Mounychia' and its derivatives must be with an iota instead of an epsilon, as the literary texts have transmitted the name to us. The etymology of the word is still highly debatable. Expectedly enough, the difficulty has given rise to etymological attempts arguing for a foreign origin, mainly Semitic. Leaving these aside, the remaining etymologies can be divided into two groups. The *principium differentiae* between them is the presence or absence of 'night' (*νυξ*). Those following the obvious etymology would interpret the divine epiklesis as 'She Who Alone Rules at Night', 'The Sovereign of the Night' (*μοῦνη + νυξ*). The others would insist on 'loneliness' adding the suffix *-χος*, characteristic of locality, in the sense of territorial origin, with an implicit meaning like "the only, absolute, ruler of this (unnamed) place". The structure of the word seems to be Greek; it sounds Greek and is, in all likelihood, composite. Hesychius can, once again, provide the solution to the riddle. He glosses

ʻΧαίος as νυξ

and thus eliminates the difficulty envisaged by the adherents of the first etymological group, namely that originally the epitheton should have been *Mounonychia*, rather than Mounychia. The existence of a sacred month under the same name (ʼΓχαίος) at Delphi testifies to such a possibly religious and antiquated naming of night. For otherwise even this month’s etymon will remain irretrievably obscure, whereas now a nocturnal festival (ʼΓχαία?) may be supposed to have baptized it. Thus, if from a different path, we are back to the traditional spelling. For when vulgate manuscript transmission persistently spelled the divine name with an epsilon, apparently the reason was that the authors recognized the presence of 'night' which must, in their view, have well accorded with the other known aspects of the ritual.

But who is the sole and undisputed Queen of the Night? The festival Mounychia was celebrated on the sixteenth day of the homonymous month. Ideally, this day...
situated at the very middle of the ancient month, coincided with the fullmoon.\textsuperscript{175} The correlation seems scarcely haphazard. The choice of this precise date must, therefore, have been highly indicative. On that night an epiphany would crown the festival and fill the worshippers with religious awe. Artemis, who, contrary to modern scepticism that attributes her lunar aspect to Hellenistic syncretism, was already in the classical era identified with the Moon\textsuperscript{176}, must have been also visually present in the enactment of the sacred ceremony.

The Moon

The moon comes into being, grows, becomes full and then steadily declines. Its cycle is completed in twenty nine days. Of the same duration is the cycle of the female period. By a process which we would be inclined to place under the generic rubric of an outlook permeated by sympathetic magic an assimilation between the two occurred. The moon was believed to cause and control the recurring feature of female existence. Anthropological parallels abound to the point of universality. We could even suspect, as a modern scholar has hesitantly done\textsuperscript{177}, that the correlation went farther than we would readily accept. In a traditional pre-industrial society with a characteristically agrarian economy where the daily patterns of human life were not only likely, but also to a certain extent compelled, to follow the natural alternation of day and night, and where extreme attention to natural phenomena and strict adherence to received methods of interpreting the signs of the natural environment (and particularly those of a meteorological order) were necessitated by the fundamental drive of survival (which would be jeopardized if the appropriate precautions, measures and calculations were not made), we may expect that some faculties of human sensitivity had been developed to a degree superior to ours. If such were the case in ancient Greece, the waxing and waning of the moon may indeed have had a greater part to play in regulating the periods of women and in making them aware of its influence than in our rather disenchanted lives. At any rate, Ovid’s proclamation\textsuperscript{178} that

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\textsuperscript{175}Plut. \textit{Glor. Athen.} 349f. τὴν δὲ ἐκτην ἐπὶ δέκα τοῦ Μουναχιάων Ἀρτέμιδι καθήρωσαν, ἐν ἱ τοῖσ Ἐλλήνην ἐπὶ Σαλαμίνα νυκτὸς ἐπελαμβάνειν ἡ θεός παυσέλπησι. The statement of Plutarch concerning the battle of Salamis may be mistaken, for he himself elsewhere (Plut. \textit{Kam.} 19) states that the battle was fought on the twentieth of Boedromion (cf. Hammond \textit{"Salamis"}, 43; Munro in \textit{CAH}, IV, 313 and Badian and Buckler \textit{"Salamis?"} 226ff.) Nor is the reason given for the consecration of the day very plausible. The sixth day of the month was the γυναικεία of Artemis and, given the tripartition of ancient months, the sixteenth could also be reminiscent of the event. The connection with the moon, however, in Plutarch’s report is unmistakable. Cf. Deubner \textit{Feste} 204.
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\textsuperscript{176}Cf. Kerényi \textit{Zeus} 13ff. (cf. Adkins \textit{"Review"}).
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\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{177}Kerényi \textit{Zeus} 13ff. (cf. Adkins \textit{"Review"}).
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\textsuperscript{178}Ovid \textit{Fasti} III, 883.
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was, in the domain of at least the ancient perception of the world, as true of months as it was of menstruation. And since the civic calendars were anything but consistently adjusted to the lunar months, the relationship between the moon and menstruation should be granted similar allowance too: a binding mechanistic necessity must, of course, be precluded. Aristotle, for whom, be it noted, the orbit of the moon divided the universe between the sublunar sphere of decay and corruption and the truly heavenly sphere of ethereal, unimpeded and regulated existence, put a strong emphasis on the moon’s influence upon women’s lives. In the Enquiry into Animals he writes:179

'Η δὲ τῶν γυναικείων ὄρμη γίνεται περὶ φθίνουτας τοὺς μῆνας· διὸ φασὶ τινὲς τῶν σοφίζομένων καὶ τὴν σελήνην εἶναι θῆλυ, ὅτι ἄμα συμβαίνει ταῖς μὲν ἡ κάθαρσις τῇ δ’ ἡ φθίνις καὶ μετὰ τὴν κάθαρσιν καὶ τὴν φθίνιν ἢ πλήρωσις ἄμφοιν.

Citing a couple of scientific authorities to support their rather superfluous claim, Aubert and Wimmer, in their annotated edition of the Aristotelian text already in the previous century, bluntly proclaimed that "die Sache is unrichtig; die Menstruation ist an keine bestimmte Zeit gebunden"180. But it is precisely the ease with which such a thing can be checked through personal observation (against the factual menses of one’s wife, for example), that would tempt me to see more in the Aristotelian statement than a blatant mistake. The blatant mistake that immediately follows in Aristotle’s account, viz. that menstruation occurs either monthly (more rarely) or three-monthly (more commonly),181 can be accommodated, in view of the early marriage age in Greece, as an error caused by undetected pregnancies; the third month is indeed the month when most miscarriages occur, which may in turn have been taken as more or less normal menstrual blood. In the quoted passage, rather than the correlation itself, what Aristotle is skeptical about is the opinion of those 'sophists' who from the existing correlation between the phases of the moon and menstruation infer the moon’s female sex. However, to Aristotle’s astonishment, both grammar and religion had already granted that too.

Already in the Hesiodic Theogony Selene is a goddess on a par with her siblings Helios and Eos. Their remote antiquity in the formation of the universe is indicated by their descent: they are children of Theia, or the Divine One, and Hyperion who both are products deriving from the amorous embrace of the primordial couple of Heaven and Earth.182 The parents of Selene belong, therefore, to that aboriginal race of divine beings who later, when the Olympians established their undisputed authority under the fatherhood of Zeus, were, rather pejoratively, best known as the Titans — a title that they

180Aubert and Wimmer Thierkunde II, 340.
182Hes. Theog. 371-374 and 126-135; cf. Hom. Hymn XXXI, 3-6. A different origin is ascribed to Selene in the comparatively late Homeric Hymn to Hermes (vv. 99-100): she is the daughter of Pallas.
bear, if with different implications, in Hesiod as well. The properties and functions of the Moon were then absorbed by Hecate, but Artemis had a share in them too. In the same theogonic account Hecate enjoyed among the Titans a privileged status. She is described as plenipotentiary, her power being extended to the entire world. Hesiod’s exceptionally lengthy disquisition on her attributes is suggestive of a great goddess. Her endowments are, it is true, by now subordinated to the potency of Zeus. They are seen as distinctions which the father of gods has generously bestowed in order to exalt her. Nonetheless, her original independent grandeur can be glimpsed, on the one hand, from the way in which she is presented and, on the other, from the variegated application of her power over animate and inanimate nature alike. Of all the progeny of Earth and Heaven she is the most honoured:

δοσσοι γὰρ Γαῖης τε καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἔξεγένυτο καὶ τιμὴν ἔλαχον, τούτων ἔχει αἶσαν ἀπάνων οὐδὲ τί μιν Κρονίδης ἐβίβαζο τούτῳ ἐν χώρᾳ δοσσὸ ἔλαχεν Τιτήρα μετὰ προτέρους θεοῖς, ἀλλ’ ἔχει ὡς τὸ πρῶτον ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ἐπλετοῦ δασμός: 425
οὐδ’, ὅτι μουσουγενῆς, ἡγοσόν θεᾶ ἐμμορε τιμῆς, καὶ γέρας ἐν γαιή τε καὶ οὐρανῷ ἕδε θαλάσσην, ἀλλ’ ἔτι καὶ πολὺ μᾶλλον, ἐπεί Ζεύς τίται αὐτήν.

Two points are striking in this account. First, the admission on the part of Zeus of Hecate’s prerogative to power since she belongs to the previous generation of gods (v. 424), a prerogative which Zeus is unwilling to violate. He, instead, lets things be as they were at the very beginning, at the time when the division of honours was originally made (v. 425). And second, the fact that Hecate is the only daughter, in fact the only begotten, of her mother’s (v. 426). The significance of this last point is brought into high relief by a consideration of the mother’s name: Asteria, or She of the Stars. Could we have a better indication of Hecate’s lunar character than that inferred from her being the sole offspring of a starry mother, if taken in conjunction with her ruling over the starry sky?

The Amphiphontes

Among the few things that we know about the ritual of Artemis Mounychia are the ἄμφιφωντες. These were round cakes encircled with lit candles and consecrated to Artemis and/or Hecate. Five antiquarian lexicographers mention them with reports only

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184 The verse is suspected as spurious by Heyne (app. crit. ad loc. Merkelbach-West) but cf. vv. 413-4.
186 Hes. Theog. 416.
partially overlapping, hence complementary. Athenaeus is our sixth, and perhaps most precious and earliest, source: 187

Among the Artemisian cults it was that of Mounychia in which the amphiphontes seem to have featured most prominently 188, whereas in the case of Hecate, her capacity of protecting crossroads seems to have particularly favoured such offerings 189. Whenever an etymologizing explanation is attempted, the name of the cakes which literally means "[the cake] that shines in both sides" is brought into relation to the two most conspicuous heavenly bodies. The surrounding candles are thus understood to imitate the sun and the moon, especially when they simultaneously brighten the sky early in the morning. This reference is not without significance. The coincidence of the two heavenly bodies in the sky happens at particular times in the year, primarily at spring, the sources imply, and could have been welcome as a divine sign. But even more than this coincidence, the symbolism of the moon, especially when full, cannot be missed. We know of sacred cakes that were called οἴων and the precision of the date in which the cakes were dedicated to Artemis, the sixteenth of Mounychion, points again to the fullmoon 191.

Crossroads are dangerous places. The straight course of the normal route is there arrested. A decision must be made. But any decision-making is the balancing of equal possibilities. A dilemma is posed. The mythologeme of Heracles when he met Arete and

187 Athen. 645a.
188 Pollux VI, 75: άμφιφώτες μὲν οὖς ἐφερον εἰς Μουνυχίας Ἀρτέμιδος, δόρδας περιπέφευτες.
189 Phot. s.v. άμφιφώου (Theodoridis): πλακοῦς τις Ἐκάτη καὶ Ἀρτέμιδι φερόμενος δόρδα ἐν κύκλῳ περικειμένα ἑχον. Φιλόχορος εὖ τῇ Περὶ Ἡμέρων (FGrHist III, 328 F 86a) «ἐξ ἐπὶ δέκα και τῶν καλομέονος μὲν ἀμφιφώτας ταύτη τῇ ἡμέρᾳ πρῶτον ένόμισαν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι φέρειν εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ ἐπὶ ταῖς τριόδους. ταύτῃ γὰρ συμβαίνει περικαταλαμβάνεσθαι τὴν σελήνην πρὸς ταῖς δυομαίς ὑπὸ τῆς ἀνατολῆς τοῦ ἡλίου».
Kakia at such a crossroads presents the dilemma invested with moral value. Morality, however, can hardly belong to the original problem raised when one encounters a crossroads. What afflicts the traveller when faced with the possibility, or rather the practical obligation, of choosing is a crisis, and a concomitant confusion. But confusion is a state of mind that seems to inhibit the mind’s normal functioning. Hence it is justifiably regarded as sent by a divine agent. The Homeric heroes realized and accepted what is at stake in confusion. Their demeanour testifies to the effect that such wholehearted acknowledgment of divine intervention is not incompatible with human agency. For only when one realizes that the crisis is real, can one find its source, appease its divine cause, and, perhaps, overcome it. (This seems to me to be the most important lesson to be learnt from the re-discovery of the psyche this century.) No wonder, therefore, that a particular divine power manifested itself at crossroads. The most famous name of that power was Hecate, or "She from Afar", the moon-goddess.

The crisis envisaged at and by the arkteia was puberty. In cult, to transcend a crisis is to perform the appropriate ritual. The ritual is directed to the divinity who is held responsible for the crisis in question. Appropriation of power and placation are, in religious symbolic language, equivalent expressions pointing to the hidden common origin of opposites. But for a crisis to be brought to the fore, two conditions must be fulfilled. The realization that two conflicting principles are involved, is the first. And the second, and most crucial, consists in an understanding that the two principles are only seemingly opposed to one another. The round 'doubly-shining' holy cakes offered to Artemis Mounychia could therefore be seen as the symbols that 'materialized' the underlying duality of femininity: virginity as the presupposition of procreation; and procreation per se, ergo motherhood.

A relief from Brauron, now at the local museum, may support the lunar aspect of the goddess. It represents Artemis, Apollo and Leto, all three holding long double torches. Artemis’s is the most prominent. Now, torch-carrying processions are characteristic of chthonic deities and the association of them with the light-bearing aspect of the moon is a far from negligible element. Artemis Phosphoros whose cult is attested at several places was in fact very close to being identical with the moon, and a passage in Aeschylus’ Suppliants, granted that Hecate is primarily a divinization of the moon, may be taken to support the claim that such a connection had already gained firm ground in the classical authors.

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192 Prodikos fr. 2 (Diels-Kranz).
193 No 1152; cf. Antoniou BPAIPO 307, fig. 8.
194 Cf. Kahil "Artemis" (LIMC) 749.
195 Cf. L. Kahil "Déesse" 77ff. The association is attested by Aesch. Eum. 1021ff.
197 Aesch, Suppl. 576: "Αρτεμις δ’ ἐκάταυ τυναϊκῶν λόχων ἐφορεῖν."
The relationship of Artemis Mounychia and Hecate must, therefore, have been based *inter alia* on their common relationship to the moon. The amalgamation of the two deities was completed in the Hellenistic era when the interchangeability of divine attributes became a more widespread practice among religious thinkers (poets and philosophers) than had previously been, although, in most cases, allowance for such liberty was given by, and founded upon, pre-existing acknowledged similarities. Thus in the Orphic *Argonautica* the epiklesis Mounychia of the Taurike Artemis characterizes Hecate too.198

A NOTE ON TAUROPOLOS

Few things are known about the cult of Tauropolos at Halae Araphenides. The Euripidean passage mentioning what is apparently a religious act that aims to simulate human sacrifice is one of them. Menander’s Epitrepontes is our main source of information to be discussed presently. Archaeology has provided the third feature to be taken into account, consisting primarily of the foundation of a classical temple. What remains to be examined is the epiklesis of the goddess.

It goes without saying that the bull is a symbol of male sexual potency;¹⁹⁹ maybe one of the most evident and easily-recognizable among such sexual symbols, as well as one of the most impervious to the corruption of time. No less a skilful mythologist of modernity than Pablo Picasso ingeniously captured and brilliantly visually expressed the symbolism of the bull. His numerous drawings depicting scenes of bullfights where the phallic horns penetrate the horse’s belly that is so portrayed as unmistakably to evoke the female sexual parts, bear ample witness to that. The bull’s connection with Dionysus is well known. In one of the most famous instances of his cult, the women of Elis summoned up the god in the form of a bull.²⁰⁰ What were they invoking, Dionysus the god or Dionysus the phallus? Both at once.

Ταύρος was used to designate a part of the male sexual organs, just behind the testicles, where all sexual potency seems to be grounded.²⁰¹ Iphigeneia is called ἄταύρωτος in Aeschylus’ Agamemnon, because she has not experienced copulation.²⁰² With a similar meaning the word is used in Aristophanes’s Lysistrata to refer to the future sexual abstinence that the women have decided to maintain in order to force their husbands to end the devastating war.²⁰³ Moreover, Hesychius explains that ταυρίνδα denotes a phallic game (φαλακρίνα, παιδά).²⁰⁴ We can, therefore, conclude that more than a deity who rides on bullback, who has bulls harnessed to her chariot, or who comes from the land of Tauroi, Tauropolos is the goddess who controls erections.²⁰⁵

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¹⁹⁹ Cr. Bodson Ζάδα 144-151 and Bédard “ΤΑΥΡΟΠΟΛΟΣ” 68ff.
²⁰² Aesch. Agam. 244. The connotations are quite different from the more frequently used ἀδύμης, ἀδύμητος etc. Cf. Suid. s.v. ταύρος: τὸ αἰδοῦς τοῦ ἀνδρός, καὶ ἀταύρωτη, ἢ ἀμεκτος, ἀγη.
²⁰⁴ Hesychius s.v. ταυρίνδα.
²⁰⁵ Cf. Suid. s.v. Ταυροτόλος: ἢ Ἀρτέμις ἢ ἐν Ταύρος τῆς Σκηνῆς τιμωμένη, ἢ ἀπὸ μέρους, τῶν ποιμέων ἐπιστάτης, ἢ ὅτι η αὐτῇ τῆ σελήνη ἐστί καὶ ἐποχεῖται ταύρος· ἢν καὶ Ταυρωτῶν ὀνομαζόμενη, ἢ ρα το Ταυροτόλος ὄφρωμεν ἐπὶ βοες ἀγωγείαις. This last statement which is, in fact, a shortened and smoothed quotation from Sophocles’ Ajax 172-175, may derive from an original mythologeme that indicated lustfulness and was subsequently adjusted to the needs of the play: the tragic hero has already butchered a cowherd, thinking that he was slaughtering the Achaeans. Cf. Suid. s.v. Ταυροτόλος and Apollod. FGrHist 244 F 111b.
Lloyd-Jones suggested that an equivalence between Brauron and Halae Araphenides could be discerned so far as the Artemisian cults are concerned. What would hold in Brauron for girls, he argued, would hold at Halae for boys: different but complementary rites of passage could have been performed in both places. The available evidence is too scarce to demonstrate the claim positively, and may be undercut by Menander’s testimony. His *Epitrepontes* allows for the following inferences about the cult of Tauropolos:

i) Women (alone?) did take part in the rite.

ii) There was a πανυχίς, or all-night festival for women only.

iii) Choruses of virgins performed dances.

What is more, there are some allusions to the effect that maidens with no previous carnal knowledge (virgins like herself not knowing what a man is, as Habrotonon, the slave singer, comically put it) were not only among the participants (which must be taken for certain), but perhaps formed the very nucleus of the entire ceremony. Irrespective of that, Artemis Tauropolos seems to be the closest Attic equivalent to the Spartan Ortheia. Divine guarantee for the efficiency of male procreative power can be of variable concern to either males or females. Male sexuality is relevant to both sexes. Hence, the Artemisian supervision over erections may have, accordingly, been directed to either gender, depending on the specific character of each particular ritual.

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206 Lloyd-Jones *Artemis* 97.
207 Men. *Epittr.* 451-452; 474
For reasons to be intimated below, another great goddess enters the scene of the theatre where the parts of Brauronia, Mounychia and Taurapolos are successively played by the same divine actress in her interaction with the deuteragonist Hecate: the Thracian goddess Bendis. The particulars of her entry to Athens remain unknown. Political considerations may well have been involved in the acknowledgement and sponsoring of her cult by the state authorities around the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, but can hardly account for her initial introduction to Athens which must have happened earlier on. The comic poet Cratinus wrote a drama called Thrattae in which Thracian women formed the chorus and in which in all likelihood the chastisement of the cult of the barbaric Bendis was among the purposes (or the purpose) of its staging. From a remark by Plutarch who quotes a few lines from the drama, it can be inferred that the play was staged shortly after 444/3 B.C. when Pericles who is satirically presented as recovering from the menace of exile was last threatened by ostracism. On the other hand, not so early a date can be accepted for the banquet during which the discussion on the Platonic Republic is assumed to take place. The opening monologue of Socrates indicates that he descended to Piraeus in order to attend the first state celebration of the Bendidia. On meeting Polemarchos the once again (but now justifiably so) ignorant Socrates learns that an equestrian torch-race and an all-night festival are among the agenda of the new cult. Granted that the Platonic reference has any bearing to the historical situation which it describes, we should distinguish the introduction of Bendis into Attica (which Cratinus seems to have had in mind) from the first public celebration of the cult (which, in view of the inscriptional evidence now available, must have happened before 429/8). Another comic poet, best-known to posterity unlike his predecessor, also commented critically on the cult of Bendis. A great deal of the information that we possess about the goddess in question seems to derive from commentaries on this lost Aristophanic play, the Lemniae, produced perhaps around the time of the Sicilian expedition when Athenian superstition, invigorated by the instability of the war, reached new heights.

The passage from Harpocration’s Lexicon of Ten Orators where ἀρχευόσαι is explained shows that the word was used by Euripides in Hypsipyle and by Aristophanes

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210 Cf. Garland Introducing 111ff. (cf., however, id. "Priests" 85, n.28) ; Dodds "Maenadism" 171ff.
214 IG I, 3, 383, 143.
215 Contrary to Garland’s claim, loc. cit., which identifies the two by an argument that derives its power mainly ex silentio. By contrast, Ferguson "Orgeones" 97ff. seems to be right as he supports his claim with much evidence, inscriptional and otherwise.
216 Cf. Meineke CGF II, 1097: "At Aristophanis aetate videtur subito illa superstition aucta et firmata esse, quod quidem accidisse puto eo tempore, in quod Sicilienis expeditio cadit: nullum enim unquam fuit tempus quo et impietas et superstition vehementius Atheniensium perturbaverint animos."
in *Lemniae*. Contrary to what one would expect, the plot of the Euripidean tragedy is situated in Argos and relates the myth of Hypsipyle after she was expelled from the island of Lemnos. By contrast, Aeschylus and Sophocles in their homonymous plays must have dramatized the arrival of the Argonauts. Because the female population of Lemnos, several ancient sources inform us, paid no due honour to Aphrodite, the goddess of love punished them by inflicting bad odour on the Lemnian women. Their husbands stopped having sex with them, as a result of their δυσοσμία. Dishonoured, the women decided to kill all the men on the island, husbands and fathers alike. And so they did, except for Hypsipyle who spared her father. When later the Argonauts reached the island of gynaecocracy, they were forced to promise sex before they were allowed to cast anchor. Hypsipyle got married to Iason and a happy end ensued. Another version had it that she was banned together with her father from Lemnos once her perjury became known.

As is evident, the myth is very favourable for comic handling, because female sexual desire, a constant Aristophanic preference, dominates and directs its course. But Aristophanes seems to have involved Bendis also in the plot (in Aphrodite’s stead?), a foreign deity that he perhaps felt the need to differentiate from the received Artemis of old.

Now, Lemnos is adjacent to Thrace to which it geographically belongs and from where the cult of Bendis seems to have been disseminated all over the Greek world as far away as South Italy. In Lemnos Bendis was venerated as a Great Goddess. Μέγαλη θεός is the title under which Aristophanes referred to (or perhaps ridiculed) the goddess. Her cult in Piraeus, situated as it was very close to the precinct of Artemis (showing the assumed affinity of the two) on the Mounychian hill, must have included a λαμπαδηφορία in the context of a παννυχίς. Both features seem to point to the connection of the goddess with the moon to which some later sources identify her. In fact, the association of Bendis with Selene, Hecate and Artemis is a persistent and salient trait of almost all ancient references to her. When Herodotus undertook the task of describing the religion of the Thracians, he reported that they worshipped three deities only, namely

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217 Appendix I, 2.
218 For all three plays see the testimonia in Dindorf *PSG* and Nauck. *TGF*.
220 For a structuralist analysis of the myth see Dettienne *Jardins* 173ff. (cf. Dumézil *Lémniennes*).
221 Lemnos is a place where matriarchy has supposedly been detected from Bacrofen *Myth* 173ff onwards (cf. Thomson *Studies* 172ff).
222 For a 'ritual' reading of the myth in conjunction with the extinction of all fires for nine days see Burkert *Jason* (cf. Versnel *Transition* 74ff. and Burkert *Necanz* 190-196).
223 Cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Δίμηνος· ἰδρος πρὸς τῇ Θάκη [...] ἀπὸ τῆς μεγάλης λεγομένης θεοῦ, ἢν Δίμηνος φασι.
224 Popov "Bendis" 297.
225 For a recent general discussion see Simms "Bendis".
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226 Aristoph. fr. 332 (Dindorf) (= II, 1100 *Lemn*. VIII Meineke = Phot. and Hesych. s.vv. *Μεγάλην θεόν*).
Ares, Dionysus and Artemis. Apparently by referring to Artemis the father of historiography was translating the Thracian Bendis into her closest Greek equivalent. The earliest mention of her name in the sources goes back to the sixth century and the lyric poet Hipponax of Ephesos. The surviving fragment consists of a single line and prevents a definite conclusion. It seems, though, that she was identified with Kybebe (a variant form of Kybele), the mother of gods as Hesychius explains, and she was considered to be a daughter of Zeus. In religious symbolic thinking the two are not mutually exclusive, nor are they even contradictory.

We reach firmer ground if we make the allowance of trusting the later evidence. Hesychius glosses Bendis to denote the goddess Artemis in the Thracian language and elsewhere identifies her with Hecate. A great deal of controversy seems to have taken place in the Hellenistic period over the precise identity of the barbaric deity, but again the Herodotean statement shows that the problems involved were not of an antiquarian nature: if the Alexandrian scholars debated over which Greek divinity the Thracian goddess resembled the most, it is precisely because the question was already rigorously raised in the classical, or even perhaps the Archaic, era. An Hesychian gloss aiming at shedding light on the Cratinian Thrattae seems to summarize the entire controversy:

\[\text{διόλογχιν' τήν Βενδίν οὖτω Κρατίνος ἐν Θράτταις ἐκάλεσεν, ἦτοι ὅτι δύο τιμᾶς ἐκληρώσατο, ὦφρανάν τε καὶ χθονιάν (λόγχας γάρ ἐκάλουν τοὺς κλήρους) ἢ ὅτι δύο λόγχας φέρει κυνηγητική οὖσα. οί δὲ ὅτι δύο φώτα ἔχει, τὸ ἵδιον καὶ τοῦ Ἥλιου, τὴν γὰρ σελήνην Βενδίν καὶ "Ἀρτέμιν νομίζουσιν.}\]

The wild nature of the Thracian goddess, exemplified in her hunting activity, is corroborated by an Aristophanic fragment in which the altar of "the most powerful deity" is described as being still hot with the blood of the victims:

\[\text{kαὶ τὴν κρατίστην δαίμον' ἥς τῶν θερμῶς ἐσθ' ὁ βωμός.}\]

What is most important is the lunar aspect of the goddess and her assumed dual nature pointing in the direction of the already discussed ἀμφιφοίντες. It seems that Bendis too manifested herself in the moon (the horn-shaped crescent is among her iconographical...}
characteristics) during the all-night festival held in her honour and, although the 'scientific' interpretation of the Hesychian passage is apparently a later aetiological account, the fact remains that in her divinity the earthly and the heavenly merged. Or rather, since the goddess was primarily referred to as a Mother, the chthonic element must have originally been her due to which Olympianism later accrued to denote her Sovereignty.

The sovereignty of Bendis may be glimpsed in another Herodotean statement. When the Halikarnassian historian describes a sacrifice performed by Thracian and Paeonian women on the island of Delos in which fertile chthonicity symbolized by the indispensable stalks of corn ranks high, he claims that the ritual is enacted in honour of the Royal Artemis, or Artemis the Queen. In doing so, he seems to have rendered the Thracian goddess into a more familiar Greek divinity with the addition of a special epitheton (βασιλεία) to distinguish roughly between the two. The passage is followed by the Herodotean description of the cult of the Hyperborean Maidens on Delos233 where the chthonic cycle of life and death features prominently. The entire report is very illuminating à propos the earthly aspect of Artemis.234 Two couples of Hyperborean Maidens can be discerned in this passage. As Herodotus himself seems to recognize, that of Arge and Opis is the more ancient and more divine. To the former couple (Hyperoche and Laodike) the dedication of locks of hair is made (prenuptial in the case of girls, at puberty in the case of boys). Their connection with Eileithyia is explicit, and their names transparent in their Greekness. The latter couple is more puzzling and their cult has an unmistakably mystical character. The Delian women celebrants call them by their names. Opis and Arge are summoned from death. When the prescribed sacrifices are over, the remaining ashes are ceremonially scattered on their tomb which faces, indicatively enough, the east. From Callimachus we know that Oupis is an epiklesis of Artemis with lunar content:235

Οὔπι ἄνασσ’ εὐώπι φαεσφόρε,
and in Troezen οὔπιγγος was the name of an hymn dedicated to Artemis.236 But even without these clarifications the Artemisian character of all four maidens is unmistakable. Their cult is situated inside, or next to, the sanctuary of the Delian Artemis; sacrifice of hair prior to marriage is performed to them by young girls; the protectress of childbirth, Eileithyia, is also involved. What is more, according to a different tradition237, Arge was

234Herod. IV, 33-35.
236Athen. 619b and Schol. ad Apoll. Rhod. Argon. I, 972: ὑμνος εἰς Δήμητρα [sc. ὁ ίουλος], ὡς ὁ οὐπιγγος παρὰ Τροζηνίως εἰς Ἀρτέμιν.
237Paus. I, 43, 4; ἀπόθεαι δὲ αὐτῶν φαί [sc. ἦμινῳ] ἔτι παρθένων, καθότι ἄνδρες ταῖς κόραις χοϊς ἀπὸ τῆς ἦμινος μνήμης προφέρετο πρὸ γάμου καὶ ἀπάρχοντα τῶν τριάδων, καθα καὶ τῇ Ἐκαέργη καὶ ἔπειδο ἐν θυγατέρες ποτὲ ἀπεκείρατο αἱ Δήλοι.
replaced by Hekaerge as the receiver of the prenuptial 'first-fruit' hair dedication (or else, Arge and Opis take the place of the Herodotean Hyperoche and Laodike). This name comes very close to many well-known traditional Artemisian epitheta\(^{238}\) and is, in fact, identical with one of them\(^{239}\). Loxo, a female figure who in another mythological variant is included among the Hyperborean Maidens\(^{240}\) is not "of obscure origin"\(^{241}\), but readily relates to \(\lambda\omega\chi\epsilon\iota\alpha\), or delivery and parturition.

It is futile to seek the original core of divine personages and rituals. The complexity of the mythological figures involved \textit{a priori} defies such an analysis. It is safer to infer that the chthonic character of all the persons mentioned is beyond doubt. The two graves (\(\sigma\iota\eta\mu\alpha\, \theta\iota\mu\iota\pi\eta\)), one for each Hyperborean couple, unambiguously testify to that.\(^{242}\)

How does all this relate to Bendis? Indirectly. Opis or Opis is not a Greek name\(^{243}\) and, given the supra-northern\(^{244}\) aspect of the Hyperborean maidens, a Thracian linguistic and cultic origin cannot be excluded. The supervising presence of Artemis on Delos is indisputable. And if my interpretation of the Herodotean passage on the Royal Artemis be correct, if, that is to say, Herodotus in accordance with his usual practice translated the Thracian Bendis into her Greek equivalent, or, even more significantly, if the Delian priests had already done so, then we may assume that the sovereign Thracian goddess had been fused into the Hellenic pantheon perhaps prior to the introduction of her cult in Attica. This, in turn, would explain the ease with which she was incorporated into public religion in spite of the opposing views of conservative poets. Before the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War political considerations are likely to have been involved with reference to Thrace, with which Periclean policy wanted to strengthen Athenian ties. Yet, Delos (from where the Athenians in 454 B.C. removed the treasury of their alliance) may have played a mediating role in the initial introduction of the cult of Bendis before her incorporation by the state.

\(^{238}\)E.g. \(\epsilon\kappa\eta\beta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\delta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\), \(\epsilon\kappa\alpha\tau\omicron\beta\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\), \(\iota\omicron\chi\epsilon\omega\alpha\rho\alpha\) etc. Cf. Miroux "Épithetes".

\(^{239}\)Clem. Alex. \textit{Strom.} V, 8 refers to the divine siblings Apollo and Artemis: \(\mu\ell\pi\pi\epsilon\tau\iota\; \omega\; \pi\alpha\idots\ \epsilon\kappa\alpha\epsilon\gamma\nu\; \kai\; \epsilon\kappa\alpha\epsilon\gamma\nu\).

\(^{240}\)Call. \textit{Hymn ad Delon} (=IV Pfeiffer), 292.

\(^{241}\)Sale "Maidens" 86, n. 22.

\(^{242}\)Cf. the archaeological evidence gathered in Long "Greeks".

\(^{243}\)Willamowitz \textit{Glaube} I, 103.

\(^{244}\)By contrast, Picard "Crète" seems to disregard the northern aspect altogether (which, although it does not necessarily indicate an origin, at least points in a certain direction; cf. the implication of Boreas, or the North wind, in the myth) when he assumes Crete to have been the birth-place of the Hyperborean legends.
TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

The virginity of Artemis is not asexual. It refers to the potency that is necessary for, and precedes, procreation. The mystery rites performed in the shrines of Artemis on Attic soil relate to the fertility cycle. The specific content which they had referred to the pre-puberty stages of being when the generative faculty has not yet been developed. The rites aimed at inducing the first signs of puberty which were regarded as the first manifestations of effective sexuality.

The imitation of the bear was a symbolic anticipation of maternity. In the eyes of the religious participants, the efficacy of the rite consisted in inducing maternity, by bringing about the first pre-pubertal indication of maturation which must have been seen as the result of the benevolent influence of the goddess. This explains why the compulsory character of the rite is so pronounced in the relevant ancient sources. Unless the rite was duly performed, marriage was bound to remain fruitless and incomplete: no issue in the form of the children would ensue. That was apparently a great threat, which found mythological expression in the presumed wrath of Artemis.

Artemis, the virgin goddess, who supervises all spheres of wild, because uncontrolled, Becoming, wants the power of virginity to be enhanced. There her influence stops. Intensified virginity would bring about strong offspring. But Artemis is not preoccupied so much with the final outcome. Her divinity presents her as the power that secures the dynamism of fertility as distinct from, but not opposed to, actualized fertility itself. The mythological offence against the Bear is also the offence against the prolific potency that resides in the virginal state of being. Any maiden who refuses to see the potential maternity which her virginal state highlights, and with reference to which it finds its raison d'être, commits the same outrage against the goddess. But on equal footing, any maiden who consumes her virginity before it reaches the state of utmost powerfulness—before, that is, her biological and psychological constitution reaches its apex—similarly commits an offence against the deity whose main function is to promote chastity, i.e. to increase the inner might of an organism, intensify its cohesion, raise its tonality and finally enhance the dynamism grounded in sexuality.

On the one hand, virginity is a mode of being that will be irretrievably lost with the first sexual intercourse (to be normally experienced on the first nuptial night). But on the other hand, virginity is also enhanced potentiality and as such it represents the prerequisite state for any coitus that is to be fertile and result in childbirth. The idea of irreparable virginity (the loss of which is touchingly deplored in poetry from Sappho onwards) lay at the core of the initiation of the maidens. The secret of the initiation must have drawn on the realization that puberty is the first manifestation of fertility. In the ordinary process which leads (in a rather linear way for us) from infancy to puberty, the ancients saw an
extra-ordinary miracle and assigned a divine power to the task of maturation. The operation of that deity alone, her 'ordinary' intervention, would bring about what we call natural development. Such a sense of the miraculous aspect of the ordinary process must have led to the establishment of a θελτη in which rituals were symbolic acts imitating, and repeating in standardized form, the prototypical personality of the goddess.

The idea of virginity as the foundation of fecundity and the necessary precondition of effective procreation facilitated the introduction of the otherwise widespread symbolic assimilation of the menstrual cycle with the cycle of the moon into cults performed under the auspices of the Virgin goddess. The waning and waxing moon, more than archetypal symbols of women’s lives in general, were, in the case of the Artemisian cults in Attica, the symbolic images of menstrual periodicity. The full moon was the manifestation of the deity in concrete, this-worldly form, and, at the same time, the swelling preceding menstruation (seen as the dynamism that causes, and results in, giving-birth) augmented in cosmic proportions.

The Homeric representation of Artemis is an idealized Olympian figure. What characterizes her is Olympianism, i.e. the endowment of the terrific power as manifested in local cults, with the attribute of Beauty qua Form. The beauty of Callisto and Kalliste are of a different order than their Homeric counterparts. They express the dark feminine potency of increased dynamism, whereas the Olympian goddess emphasizes the celestial beauty as exemplified in superlative maidenly form. This is the distinctive trait of the by now notorious Homeric anthropomorphism. And it is this pan-Hellenic image of the goddess that in a way impedes our understanding of what was at stake in local cults.

For the young initiands the key-words are ritual anticipation and ritual imitation. For the community as a whole, the emphasis was on securing the transition of the initiands from infancy to puberty which alone could guarantee the perpetuation of society. On the divine level, the figure of Artemis was a frozen type of what can exist in this world only in perpetual flux. The clear-cut articulation of Artemisian divine prerogatives summarized in Celibacy qua Independence and Virginity qua Dynamism, is typical of an outlook that discerns the permanent in the ever-changing realities of life.

245Cf. "Artemis in Homer and Beyond".
APPENDIX

Ancient Sources for the Arkteia

I. General


2. Harpocr. s.v. ἁρκτεύσαι (50, 4 Dindorf): Λυσίας ἐν τῷ ὑπὲρ Φρωνίχου, εἰ γνῆσιος, τὸ καθερωθήναι τὰς παρθένους τῆς Ἀρτέμιδι τῇ Μουνχία ἢ τῇ Βραυρωνίᾳ. τὰ δὲ συντείνουτα εἰς τὸ προκείμενον εἰρηται παρά τε ἄλλοις καὶ Κρατέρῳ ἐν τοῖς Ψηφίσμασιν (=FGrHist. 342 F 9), ὅτι δὲ αἱ ἁρκτεύομεναι παρθένοι ἁρκτοί καλοῦται, Εὐριπίδης Ἠσιπύλη (=fr. 767 Nauck), Ἀριστοφάνης Λημνίας (=fr. 337 Dindorf = II, 1102 Meineke) καὶ Λυσιστράτη (v. 643).

3. Anecdota Bekkeri I, 206, 4: ἁρκτεύσαι τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ τῇ Ἀρκτῷ ἀφοσιώσασθαι καὶ θύσαι, ὅπερ ἐποίουν πρὸ τῶν γάμων αἱ κόραι διὰ τὸν τῆς θυσίας χρησιμὸν.


5. Hesych. (Schmidt) s.v. ἄρκος· ἁρκεσμα, βοήθεια ἢ τὸ παιόνιον. καὶ τὸ ζῷον. καὶ λέρεια τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος.

6. Hesych. (Schmidt) s.v. ἁρκτεία· ἢ τῶν ἁρκτευομένων παρθένων τελετῆ. ἁρκτεύειν δὲ τὸ καθεροῖν.


II. The Foundation Myth of the Arkteia.

A. The Brauronian Version


B. The Mounychian Version

1. Anecdota Bekkeri I, 444: ἀρκτεύεινι. Λυσίας τὸ καθιερωθῆναι πρὸ γὰρ τῶν παρθένων τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι ἀρκτεύειν ἔλεγεν, καὶ γὰρ αἱ ἀρκτεύομεναι παρθένου ἄρκτοι καλοῦνται, ὡς Εὐρύπίδης καὶ Ἀριστοφάνης. καὶ ἄλλως ἅρκτεύειν λέγεται τὸ ὀσπερ ἄριστον ἄφοιτοσσαθᾶ τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ θύσαι. ἐρήθη δὲ ἐκ τοῦ ἄρκτου ποτὲ φανήσαι, ὡς λόγος, ἐν Πειραιεί καὶ πολλοῖς ὁδικεῖσ, ἐστὶν υπὸ νέων τινῶν αὐτὴν ἀναφεθῆναι, καὶ λοιμὸν ἐπιγενέσθαι, χρήσαι τα τῶν θεών τιμήν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ θύσαι κόρην τῇ Ἀρκτῳ. τῶν μὲν ἢν Ἀθηναίων πράσσειν τῶν χρησιμῶν μελετῶν, εἰς τις ἄνθρωπός εἶ, αὐτός εἰπόν τινος καταθύμουν, ἔχων ὄν καὶ ὀνομάζων ταῦτην θυγατέρα ἔθυσα λάβῃ: καὶ ἐπαύσατο τὸ πάθος. εἰτα τῶν πολλῶν ἀνακαρδίων ἐφι σή ἄνθρωπον ἔπεσαν τῶν θεῶν, τῶν δὲ ἢν εἰπόντα θύσαι καὶ τὸ λοιπόν ὦντος ποιεῖν φήματος, ἔξειπε τὸ λάβῃ γεγονός, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦτον αἱ κόραι πρὸ τοῦ γάμου ἀρκτεύειν ὦν ὀξιοῦ, ὀσπερ ἄφοιτοσσαθᾶ τῇ τῆς θηρίας.

2. Suid. s.v. Ἑμβαρός εἶμι (ε 937, II, 252, 19-28 Adler) νουσχής, φρόνιμος. ἢν πρότερον ὁ Πειραιεύς νήσος: ὅθεν καὶ τοῦνομα εἶληφεν ἀπὸ τοῦ διατεραν. οὗ τα ἄκρα Μούνικας καταστῶν Μουνυχίας Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν ἱδρύσατο. ἄρκτον δὲ γενομένης ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ υπὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀναφεβεθῆς λίμος ἐπιγένετο: οὗ τὴν ἀπαλλαγήν ὁ θεὸς ἔχρησε, ἀν τῆς τῆς θυγατέρα θύσῃ τῇ θηρίας. Βάρος δὲ μόνος ὑποσχόμενος ἐπὶ τῷ τὴν
ιερωσύνη τού τό γένος διά βίου ἔχειν, διακοσμήσας αὐτοῦ τὴν θυγατέρα αὐτῆς μὲν ἀπέκρυψεν ἐν τῷ ἀδύτῳ [correx: αὐτῷ codd.], ἀλὰ δὲ ἐσθήτι κοσμήσας ὡς τὴν θυγατέρα ἔθουσεν, ὅθεν καὶ εἰς παροιμίαι περιέστη, τάττεται δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν παραπαντῶν καὶ μεμηρτῶν.


Artemis in Homer and Beyond

χαίρε, χαίρε μοι, ὃ κόρα
Λατοῦς Ἀρτέμι καὶ Δίως
cαλλίστα πολὺ παρθένων
Eur. Hipp. 64-66

The female divinities of the Greek religion have so much of common character as to suggest the belief that they are all different forms under different names of the same divine personage. Such a theory can only be criticized a posteriori, after a minute examination of the various cults and the various ideas attaching to those cults. And it is at any rate convenient to study side by side such cognate forms as Artemis, Hekate, Demeter, Persephone, and Aphrodite. Of these the most prominent among the scattered tribes and communities of the Greek world was Artemis. Perhaps no other figure in the Greek Pantheon is so difficult to understand and explain, not because the conceptions that grew up in her worship are mystic and profound, but because they are, or at first sight appear, confusing and contradictory.

Thus Farnell a hundred years ago: the long section of his *Cults of the Greek States* devoted to Artemis is introduced with the above words.¹ The publications that appeared in the intervening period have seriously shaken the foundation of the belief that all ancient Greek goddesses stem from a prehistoric (Aegean, Minoan, Mycenaen or Near-Eastern) Great Goddess,² but have not managed to clarify the 'confusing and contradictory' character of the supposedly hunting-deity.

The confusion caused by encountering Artemis in all her mythical and cultic manifestations was already felt in ancient times as when for instance Plato said that she, a virgin with no experience of parturition, was assigned the task of presiding over childbirth: ἀλόχος οὔσα τῷν λοχείαν εἶληξε.³ There is a sense of ironical alienation in the passage (intimated also by the peculiar consonance of λαμδα and χι), because ἀλόχος means both 'wife' and 'childless'. Moreover, the midwives that present the prototype of the Socratic method of presumed ignorance⁴ are sterile because they are past their prime, whereas Artemis, (by imitating whom Socrates has the old women admitted to the

¹Farnell *Cults* II, 425.
²Cf. now the article of Dickinson "Comments" which elegantly explores and reasonably refutes the assumptions of the Evans-Nilsso theory (or rather the interpretations offered to this theory by its lesser recipients) regarding the almost monotheistic worship of the Great Goddess in Minoan religion. Cf., however, Kahl "Déesse" 84 and, more generally, Dietrich *Origins* 128-190.
³Plat. *Thaet.* 149b.
⁴Cf. Burnyeat "Midwifery".
profession) is not sterile but simply celibate. Nevertheless, it is plain that, at least in
philosophic rationalism, the virginity of Artemis presented a problem of incompatibility
with her function as a child-birth deity, which was understood to call for an argument of
explanation.

Halfway through the imaginary temporal line that separates the appearance of the
second volume of Farnell's *magnum opus* from the present, a study was published in
Zurich that, unpublished dissertations aside, is, to my knowledge, the sole book that has
been exclusively dedicated to an inquiry into the goddess in question. But it is by no
means the most important contribution to the field. The best accounts of Artemis are to be
found in the comprehensive works on, or the general histories of, Greek religion of the
most distinguished scholars of this and the last centuries, Nilsson's in particular, who,
for some, monopolized the study of Greek religion for more than fifty years. Recently,
Artemis has attracted the scholarly attention of the so-called Paris School revolving
around the leading figure of J.-P. Vernant who, as is shown from the notes of his lectures
at the *Collège de France* in the late 1970's and early 1980's, was driven to an
investigation of the deity that concerns us here by means of an increased interest in the
ways in which the gods were represented in ancient Greece. Part of the fascination was
due to the unintelligibly but intriguingly weird masks of the Spartan Ortheia which
brought Artemis into contact with Dionysus, the indisputable mask-god that of all ancient
deities has exerted by far the most absorbing enthrallment in modern times. Another
factor that facilitated the flourishing of Artemisian studies has been the awakened (and
constantly awakening) realization of the irrational element in Greek religion that has
steadily captivated the imagination of some scholars since the publication in 1951 of the
seminal Sather Lectures delivered by Dodds two years earlier. The creatively mystifying
(as distinct from scholarly) small book on Artemis (that was first published in 1956,
reappeared in a second edition in 1972 and was exuberantly praised by no less a
perceptive critic than M. Foucault) of the then much-admired in France P. Klossowski
may have propelled the fascination exercised by the goddess. But as Wittgenstein
succinctly remarked in one of his notebooks, "religion as madness is a madness springing

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5 Cf. e.g. Ellinger *Recherches.*
6 Hoenn *Artemis.*
7 Apart from the articles in *AL* (Th. Schreiber) and *RE* (K. Wernicke) cited above, see also Preller -Robert *Mythologie* 296-336; Farnell *Cults* II, 426-607; Gruppe *Mythologie* 1265-1304; Picard *Éphèse*; passim *Wilmowsky-Moellenдорff* *Glaube*, passim (esp. I, 177-185; II, 147-150); Otto *Gods* 61-90; Guthrie *Gods* 99-106; Lévéque and Séchan *Divinités* 333-365; Kahil s.v. *Artemis* in *LIMC*.
8 Nilsson *Feste* 179-258; *id.* *Geschichte* I, 481-500.
9 Vernant *Figures*.
10 Cf. Henrichs "Loss".
11 Dodds *Irrational*. Cf. Lloyd-Jones *Blood* 292: "Many readers have found it the most illuminating contribution to classical studies in our time, and it will be long before it loses its power over its readers".
12 Klossowski *Bain*.
13 Foucault "Actéon".
from irreligionness". Since we cannot escape our inner impulses we would rather spell them out.

14 Wittgenstein *Culture* 13.
ARTEMIS THROUGH HOMER
or, the Homeric Obsession with Form

The divine figure that through her archaic statue inflicted madness on those who first cast an eye upon it or the same supernatural being that in another of her cultic manifestations was explicitly to come very close to the god of frenzied insanity is not absent from the Homeric epics. But as Homer's treatment of Dionysus, we can now affirm with certainty, does not reflect any reality of worship, nor does it indicate any abatement of Dionysian religion in the early Archaic Age, but is, rather, emblematic of the repulsiveness that the epic clarity feels when confronted with any deeply mystical kind of religious experience (which profoundly offends ethereal Olympianism); likewise, the treatment of Artemis in the 'Hellenic Bible', binding in many respects, like everything Homeric, though it was, neither represented nor deeply affected the cultic practices of the Greek cities. Homer received the mould of Artemis from the collective imagination of the Greek world, but before casting his words into it in order to form his poetic ideal (as later sculptors would cast bronze following his image of the goddess), he had to modify the mould to permit the artistic result to meet his Olympian demands.

In studying those local cults which resisting the innovating temptation of time stressed the chthonic aspect of divinity, here in its crudest form, there embellished with reluctant flashes of celestial light, to bear the plastic forms of the gods continually at the back of our minds and semi-consciously take them to be the ideal types against which local divinities must be measured or to which they must conform, can not only be unhelpful, but also misleading. The serene divine figures carved out of marble and cast in bronze, which since the discovery of Greece in Renaissance Europe have become the trademark of ancient culture as a whole, are all expressions of the Olympian ideal, of the Homeric gods. And just as heroic epic poetry by its very nature abhors the drunken frenzy of a Dionysus and rejects the possibility of describing the coiled mystery of a snake-god like (Zeus) Meilichios or the arcane knowledge revealed at Eleusis, so the plastic arts are incapable of presenting the dark and earthly side of existence, the telluric deities. For the plastic work of art, the relief and mostly the statue, derive their existence from the sharpness of edges and contours, from the clearness of the outline which is the immediate and ultimate product of light and its form-imposing principle. The plastic arts cannot impart form to the chthonic divinities, because the latter lean towards the sphere of the indeterminate apeiron. On the level of the fine arts, the statue is the symbolic expression of Olympian luminosity, whereas music, i.e. the 'Oriental' kind of music performed by the Greeks — an approximation of which may be caught in the ney-and-tambour music of dervishes and the vocal music of traditionalist Orthodox Churches — is the expression of chthonic darkness.
The name of Artemis and, in all likelihood her divinity as well, are surely pre-Homeric. Less unexpectedly than Dionysus, but no less ambiguously for the devout (i.e., unsceptical) sceptic, she too manifested herself in the Linear-B tablets from Pylos. But the earliest account that we are still left with about her is to be found in the *Iliad*. The handling that Artemis receives from Homer in the famous battle of the gods is very indicative of the entire Homeric attitude towards powers of darkness. Artemis is ridiculed as a helpless girl who weepingly complains to her sovereign father about the patronizing and contemptuous way in which she has been humiliated by Hera. Zeus is amused to see his little daughter in such a hilariously bad state which cannot but prompt his ambrosial laughter. The goddess of Independence that most forcefully rejects any kind of subjugation is reduced to a pitiful being needing assistance, consolation and sympathy. Hera, the legitimate spouse of the father of men and gods and the protectress of civil marriage, Hera who secures that kind of orderliness that is not entirely devoid of a certain artificiality, is a more suitable divinity for the orderly world of the Homeric epics and the style of heroic poetry. To this extent the confrontation of Hera with Artemis in the twenty-first book of the *Iliad*, rather than bringing 'nature' in opposition to 'culture' as the new allegoresis of structuralist analysis would suggest, may be emblematic of the overall Homeric outlook.

Recognition of that for which Artemis must have stood in the mind of the people who venerated her mighty presence is, of course, absent in neither the *Iliad* nor the *Odyssey*. What seems to be, however, the specific contribution of Homeric poetry to the Greek conception of the gods is to be found in what could be called 'the extreme adoration of Form', or Olympianism. The much-discussed Homeric anthropomorphism can be seen as the culmination of a long process that aimed at endowing divine Powers with Forms. Such a process could be traced back to the circles or groups of Ionian rhapsodes which, long before Homer’s time, established the epic tradition. The elaborate artificiality but, at the same time, integrity of the Homeric 'dialect', which are worked out in such a sophisticated fashion that it attains a high degree of naturalness, are an indication of, and, on the linguistic level, a phenomenon parallel to, the treatment of the divine in the Ionian epic tradition.

Ironically, it is in the same passage of the Homeric divine battle that Artemis receives her due. In the speech of Hera that precedes the practical humiliation of Artemis, recognition of that for which Artemis must have stood in the mind of the people who venerated her mighty presence is, of course, absent in neither the *Iliad* nor the *Odyssey*. What seems to be, however, the specific contribution of Homeric poetry to the Greek conception of the gods is to be found in what could be called 'the extreme adoration of Form', or Olympianism. The much-discussed Homeric anthropomorphism can be seen as the culmination of a long process that aimed at endowing divine Powers with Forms. Such a process could be traced back to the circles or groups of Ionian rhapsodes which, long before Homer’s time, established the epic tradition. The elaborate artificiality but, at the same time, integrity of the Homeric 'dialect', which are worked out in such a sophisticated fashion that it attains a high degree of naturalness, are an indication of, and, on the linguistic level, a phenomenon parallel to, the treatment of the divine in the Ionian epic tradition.

Ironically, it is in the same passage of the Homeric divine battle that Artemis receives her due. In the speech of Hera that precedes the practical humiliation of Artemis,
and so that the eventual derision has an object not too weak to deal with, Hera reveals the Artemisian prerogatives of power:\textsuperscript{19}

πῶς δὲ σὺ νῦν μέμονας, κύου ἄδεις, ἀντὶ ἐμοίο στήσεσθαι; χαλεπὴ τοι ἐγώ μένος ἀντιφέρεσθαι τοξοφόρῳ περ ἐουσὴ, ἐπεὶ σὲ λέοντα γυναιξὶ Ζεὺς θήκεν, καὶ ἔδωκες κατακτάμεν ἦν κ’ ἐθέλησα. ἦτοι βέλτερόν ἐστι κατ’ ὀόρεα θήρας ἐναίρειν ἀγροτέρας τ’ ἐλάφους ἢ κρείασοσιν ὕψι μάχεσθαι.

Artemis is 'a lioness to women'.\textsuperscript{20} She can kill whichever woman she pleases and this represents a function of her divinity sanctioned and legitimated by the sovereignty of Zeus. The application of her power is intimated in several Homeric passages.

When Penelope full of despair about the situation in the palace of Ithaca and having lost all hope regarding Odysseus's return prefers death to the life that she has been forced to live, she wishes to be mildly killed by Artemis:\textsuperscript{21}

ἡ μὲ μαλ’ αἰνοπαθὴ μαλακὸν περὶ κώμ’ ἐκάλυψεν. οἴθε μοι ὅς μαλακὸν θάνατον πόροι "Ἀρτεμίς ἁγνη αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα μηκέτ’ ὀδυρομενή κατὰ θυμὸν αἰῶνα φθινόθα.

And again, later in the Odyssey, the same wish is expressed in a more straightforward way, since Artemis is herself addressed in a prayer:\textsuperscript{22}

"Ἀρτεμί, πότινα θεά, θύγατερ Διός, αἰθε μοι ἡδη ἵνα ἐκ στήθεσσι βαλόι τ’ ἐκ θυμὸν ἔλοι αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα ἐπειτά μ’ ἀναρπάξασα θύελλα οἴχοιτο προφέρουσα κατ’ ἡφόρειτα κέλευθα, ἐν προχορὶς δὲ βάλοι ἄφορρὸν Ὀμελενίο.

The prayer does not precisely follow the usual pattern.\textsuperscript{23} There is no mention of the gifts offered and the honours paid to the goddess on the part of Penelope previously, but this is easily explicable in view of the fact that more than anything else the present prayer is a subjective description of a hopeless situation. Nevertheless, Penelope refers to the mythical past which would invest her wish with effectiveness. She mentions the daughters of Pandareos who through Zeus's will were given by Harpiae to Erinyes; or else they suddenly died. Penelope is not preoccupied with the divine agent of her killing, but she wishes to depart from the world of the living suddenly and unexpectedly, i.e. painlessly.

In the symbolic imagery of Archaic Greece such an abrupt death can be effected only by

\textsuperscript{19}Hom. II. XXI, 481-486. 
\textsuperscript{20}Schol. ad loc.: τὸ λέοντα ἀντὶ τοῦ λέανα λέγει δὲ αὐτὴν λέαιναν διὰ τὸ ἀναρπητικῶν. Cf. Artem. Oneir. II. 12. 
\textsuperscript{21}Hom. Od. XVIII, 201-204. 
\textsuperscript{22}Hom. Od. XX, 61-65. 
\textsuperscript{23}Versnel "Mentalité" ; Aubriot-Sévin Prière.
means of an arrow. And the divine figure who is most suitable for the purpose is, Penelope reminds us, Artemis:

\[ \text{ος \'ει' \'αιστώσειαν 'Ολύμπια δώματ' \'εχοντες,} \\
\text{\'η\'ε \'ευπλόκαιος \'βάλοι 'Αρτεμις.} \]

The disjunction (\'η\'ε) is not meant disjunctively as if it referred to two alternatives. Penelope simply passes from the general domain of power (the Olympian gods) to the particular divine executive (Artemis).

The mildness of the sudden death brought by Artemis is made even more explicit when it is polarized to a chronic disease by Odysseus addressing his mother whom he unanticipatedly finds dead in the dark recesses of Hades:

\[ \text{τις \'υ \'ε σε \'ε δάμασες \'αναλεγέοσ \'θανάτωο;} \\
\text{\'η \δολιχή \νοώσος, \'η 'Αρτεμις \ιοχέαρα} \\
\text{οις \'άγανοις \'βελέσσου \'έπωρομένη \'κατέπεφεν;} \]

The alternative to a death coming as the unavoidable culmination of a lingering ailment is the sudden death brought about by means of the sweet arrows of the daughter of Zeus. The salient characteristic of the Artemisian death is that it is imminent. In the scene of reconciliation between Achilles and Agamemnon, 'the best of the Achaeans' wishes that the object of their dispute, the beautiful daughter of Briseus, had been killed by Artemis, thus preventing many an Achaean from prematurely meeting death:

\[ \text{τὴν \'δφελ' \'εν \'νησα \'κατακτάμεν 'Αρτεμις \'ιώ,} \\
\text{\'η\'ματι \τι \'δτ' \'εγών \'ελώμην \'λυρισσόν \'δλέσσας.} \]

In Homer the Artemisian deaths are not only inferred \textit{post eventum} and longed for \textit{a priori}, but also known from the (mythological or familial) past to which the heroes of the epics refer in order, by drawing parallels, to establish their claims and to explain the situations which they face. Thus Glauces in his speech to Diomedes mentions Laodameia:

\[ \text{τὴν \'δε \'χολωσαμένη \'χρωσήμος 'Αρτεμις \'έκτα.} \]

Andromache knows of the Artemisian death through a first-hand experience:

\[ \text{μητέρα \δ' \'η \'βασίλευς \'υπό \'Πλάκω \'υλήσσῃ} \\
\text{[...]} \\
\text{πατρός \δ' \'εν \'μεγάροις \'βάλ' 'Αρτεμις \'ιοχέαρα.} \]

In the face of Hermes who brings the bad news of the decision of Zeus to liberate Odysseus from her embrace, the divine Calypso, being angry at the envy shown by the gods when they happen to encounter a 'female of their species' being delighted by a

\[ {24} \text{Hom. \textit{Od. XX}, 79-80.} \\
{25} \text{Hom. \textit{Od. XI}, 171-173.} \\
{26} \text{Hom. \textit{II. XIX}, 59-60.} \\
{27} \text{Hom. \textit{II. VI}, 205.} \\
{28} \text{Hom. \textit{II. VI}, 425-428.} \]
wretched mortal, reproaches the resentful immortals by referring, inter alia, to the case of Eos:

ōς μὲν ὄτ' Ὄμιοι ἔλετο ὑδαδάκτυλος Ἡώς,
tόφρα οἱ ἁγάσσηα θεοὶ βέα γίνοντες,
ἣς ἐν Ὄρτυγιά χρυσόθρονος "Ἀρτεμίς ἁγνή
οἶς ἀγανοῦς βελέσσα ἐποιχομένη κατέσπηκεν.

In all these cases, Artemis is a power that unerringly brings death: she is a butcher or in Greek she is ἀρταμὸς. In later times a composite adjective was invented to indicate the people who suffered an unexpected death: they were called Ἀρτεμιδόβλητοι, and the ancients were well aware of the meaning attached to it. Strabo explicitly says that:

καὶ τὰ λοιμικὰ πάθη καὶ τῶν αὐτομάτων θανάτων τοῦτοι [sc. Ἀπόλλων καὶ Ἀρτέμιδι] ἀνάπτουσι τοῖς θεοῖς.

Artemis was definitely less involved in casting plagues than her brother Apollo, but she did show her devastating wrath at a community of men if she were denied honours and sacrifices. The myth of Oeneus mentioned in the speech of Phoenix to Achilles in the Iliad is a case in point. The adjective that, in the Homeric formulaic manner, pre-eminently characterizes the goddess brings her death-sending aspect into a prominence almost indicative of her 'real nature'. Artemis pleases herself in discharging arrows (ἰοξέαρα), the target of which is mainly represented by female victims, and she can be described as the goddess of the golden bow (χρυσιλάκητος). Although never called ἐκαέργη in Homer, the later poets who added this epithet to the variegated nomenclature of her appellations were not alienated in spirit from Homer who now and again gave to her brother Apollo the titles of ἐκατηθόλος, ἐκηθόλος and ἐκάεργος, and who in two instances brought, from more than a functional point of view, the two siblings together. On the other hand, Apollo’s sublime detachment from the grievous sphere of mortal affairs is magnificently shown in his speech to Poseidon, at the Homeric battle of the gods, which was followed by a castigation on the part of his sister. At this instance we can glimpse the elements that differentiate the twin siblings of Leto who otherwise look so similar to one another, their mainstream difference being that of sex: Apollo’s detachment is more sublime and fully-fledged, it is more celestial than its Artemisian counterpart. The similarity of the two

30See below.
31Macrobi. I, 27 (273).
32Strabo XIV, 6 (=635).
34Miroux *Epithetes*.
35Hom. Il. XXI, 461-477.
deities is nonetheless striking. In begging Priamus to put an end to his funereal fasting and allow himself the taste of some food, the appeased Achilles appeals to the miserable case of Niobe who saw her twelve children shot dead, after she committed the hybris of boasting that she surpassed the goddess Leto in prolific fecundity:

καὶ γὰρ τ’ ἥμικομος Νιόβη ἐμνήσατο σῖτου,
τῇ περ δώδεκα παίδες ἐνι μεγάροι διόλουτο,
ἐξ μὲν θυγατέρες, ἐξ δ’ οὐκετὶ ἠμόμοντες.
τῶς μὲν Ἀπόλλων πέφυκεν ἀπ’ ἀργυρέοι βιοί
χωρίων Νιόβη, τὰς δ’ Ἀρτέμις ἱοχέαιρα,
οὕνεκ’ ἀρα Λητοὶ ἰδάσκετο καλλιπαρήφ.
φη δοῦ ἔκειν, ἦ δ’ αὐτὴ γείνατο πολλοὺς·
τῷ δ’ ἀρα καὶ δοῦ ἔως ἀπὸ πάντας ἀμεισαν.

An act of divine retribution to punish the arrogant mortal mother, the killing of the twelve children is not marked by agonizing torture: once the arrows are discharged, the transition from life to death occurs automatically, in no lapse of time. Similarly, in the blessed island of Syrie where wealth abounds (the swineherd Eumaeus relates to the disguised Odysseus), there are no tyrannizing diseases, but, in the happiest possible way, when men and women reach the dreadful perplexities naturally accompanying old age, Artemis and Apollo redeem them from the life that henceforward becomes irksome:

Both the son and the daughter of Leto act from afar. In contradistinction to Athena who carries the spear and who is always close at hand ready to help the favoured heroes, Apollo and Artemis manifest themselves as powers of the far-away. The aloofness and remoteness of these deities, which are not devoid of a certain frigidity, find symbolic expression in the weapons with which they are provided. Mythologically speaking, the weapons which, upon becoming self-conscious soon after their birth, Apollo and Artemis themselves immediately chose, indicate their field of power. In contrast to swords, daggers and spears, arrows have power over distance. And the deities who pre-eminently carry them show their adherence to Detachedness and Independence. This is a distinctive trait of their celestial character as it is conceived and formulated by Homer.
this extent, and in the context of the naturalistic approach prevalent in the previous century, Ph. Buttmann, drawing on the interpretation of Creuzer, was right to see Apollo as the personification of the Sun and Artemis of the Moon, their heavenly association being mythologically expressed in the image of their fraternity. Both are offspring of the same mother (Leto) who, according to this view, was the anthropomorphic incarnation of the Night. But, as has been previously argued, the natural objects through which the gods make their epiphanies should not be confused with the deities themselves.

That Artemis kills in an unexpected and highly surprising way; that she is responsible for those sudden deaths that were occasionally regarded as a sign of divine benevolence deriving from love and resulting in a favour which heaven could blissfully grant to some chosen mortals, thus preventing their being implicated in tedious corruption; that the ancients saw a divine agent as being operative precisely where we would assume only a physical cause and label it a stroke or heart-attack; that the Artemisian potency shows a preference for, and is mainly manifested in, women; but also that the association of Artemis with killing shows that she is a horrific and cruel deity, her wrath inescapable and her revenge fatal; there are several Homeric passages to prove. But the wildness of Artemis is not a Homeric construction. It must almost certainly have antedated Homer and it certainly outlived his spell. The local cults of the Greek cities bear ample witness to this effect. But post-Homeric poetry too emphasized that aspect of the goddess. To quote only three examples from the numerous available would suffice for our purpose. The iambic sixth-century- B.C. poet Hipponax, being presumably outraged at somebody or other, furiously curses:

\[\text{άπό σ' θλέσειν "Αρτέμις" whereas his approximately contemporary Theognis invokes the goddess with a view to protect him from death:}\]

\["\text{Αρτέμι θηροφόνῃ, θύγατερ Δίως, ἤν 'Ἀγαμέμνων εἰσαθ', ὥς ἔς Τροῖην ἐπλευ ϛημοὶ θοῖς εὐχομένῳ μοι κλίθαι, κακὰς ἀπὸ κῆρας ἀλακε σοὶ μὲν τούτο, θεά, σμικρὸν, ἐμοὶ δὲ μέγα.}\]

In relating the sacred myth of the birth of Apollo’s eventually divinized son Asclepius, the most sublime lyric poet of antiquity had recourse to the traditional motif of Artemisian killing in its special, and most frequent, application to women in labour: 44

\[τὸν μὲν [sc. 'Ασκλαπίων] εὐίππου Φλεγύα θυγάτηρ πρὶν τελέσαι ματροπόλῳ σῶν 'Ελευθερία, δαμείσα χρυσέως\]

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41In addition to those quoted above cf. also Hom. Od. XI, 321-325; XV, 478-479.  
42Hippon. fr. 25 (West).  
43Theogn. 11-14 (West).  
44Pind. Pyth. III, 14-20 cum schol.
It is well known that a certain functional *coincidentia oppositorum* is usually discernible in ancient gods without generating a sense of logical contradiction in the mind of the worshippers. The god who sends the plague, for instance, is identical with the one who cures people of it. And indeed there is no contradiction in such a notion. For, what is implied, among other things, in, say, the divine person of Apollo is the science (in the ancient sense of *ἐπιστήμη*) of health: only he who knows exactly what health is can provide remedy and restore to health; but, by the same token, he alone, too, can destabilize a healthy constitution. This is an acute observation of utmost psychological import. The same holds true with the (Homeric) Artemis. She is an atrocious murderer of women. But despite, or rather because of, that she is also the deity who provides growth and, to a limited degree, maturation too. In the prayer of Penelope to Artemis mentioned above, the myth of the daughters of Pandareos is related as a reminder of the destructive power of the gods for which the despairing wife of Odysseus, with noble resignation, longs.

Prior to their extinction, the mythological maidens were endowed with divine gifts:

```
"Πη δ' αὐτήσων περί πασέων δώκε γυναικῶν
eῖδος καὶ πιστήν, μῆκος δ' ἐπορ' "Αρτεμίς ἀγνή,
ἐργα δ' Ἀθηναίη δέδας κλυτά ἐργάζεσθαι.
eὖτ' Ἀφροδίτη δία προσέστιχε μακρὸν Ὀλυμπον,
κούρης αἰτήσονσα τέλος θαλεροῦ γάμου,
ἐς Δία τερπικέραυνον ...
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High stature, it is true, was considered to be a sign of noble birth and a greatly respected (hall)mark of beauteous dignity in ancient Greece, as much as it is still so regarded in its modern counterpart. Although never augmented to gigantic disproportion, the ancient gods were taller than mortals (and so they were depicted in votive reliefs to differentiate them from humans whom they otherwise resembled), their stature being an indication of their excellence. But behind the Homeric attribute of Artemisian beauty, to which we shall presently return, we should perhaps discern a more elementary function of Artemis at work here, albeit obscured by the Homeric, in fact the Greek, obsession with (in our terms) physical and aesthetic excellence (ἀρετή). Hera adorned the girls with beauty and prudence, Athena instructed them in the handicrafts proper for the noble women that they would be, and Aphrodite asked Zeus to supply the consummation of their nature in the form of marriage. In view of the essential (and essentially feminine) qualities which the other deities procure, how can the divinity of Artemis be summoned to furnish simply tallness? In fact, the introduction of Artemis in this passage may be seen as the Homeric transformation and 'celestial' re-interpretation of that aspect of the goddess, the
prominence of which in actual cult made possible the veneration of Artemis as a Kourotrophos deity and which allowed for the rites of perfection, neutrally called *rites de passage* (such as those in Sparta for youths and in Attica for maidens) to be supervised by her. Artemis represents the power that operates in the organism while still immature and growing, that enhances and maximizes potency (physical and, primarily, sexual), and that brings generative potentiality *very close to, but not into*, fruition. If this interpretation be correct, then it would follow that the Homeric treatment of the goddess definitely modified, but also reflected, the commonly assumed divine attributes as we can perceive them in the local Artemisian cults. The same could be said for the Artemisian beauty in which the stamp of Olympianism is vivid and the spell of Homer rather binding for later artistic representations of the goddess.

The distinctive trait of the Homeric gods is that they are all young and beautiful. Old age never approaches them, and their complexion together with the eyes radiate that glamorous brilliance which is the salient feature of heathy corporeal youthfulness. Of all the beautiful goddesses Artemis is the most beautiful. Her physical excellence, as distinct from Aphrodite’s, is maidenly. The gorgeous Helen of Troy, for whose capturing physical exquisiteness so many men lost their lives and households were deserted, is compared to her:  

\[
\text{εκ ’Ελένη θαλάμων θυώδης ύψορόφου}
\]

\[
\text{ήλυθεν ’Αρτέμιδι χρυσηλακάτω έκκυσα.}
\]

but a similar simile is used twice to flatter the more mature, and presumably older, Penelope:

\[
\text{’Η δ’ εκεν εξ θαλάμου περίφρων Πιελόπεια,}
\]

\[
\text{’Αρτέμιδι ίκέλη ήε χρυσέτ ’Αφροδίτη.}
\]

When Odysseus finally decides that it is preferable to address from a distance the bright-eyed Nausikaa, rather than to touch her knees as a suppliant in the traditional manner, ravished as he is in front of a beauty that blurs the normal distinction between the mortals and the gods, the spontaneous divine image that occurs to him is Artemis’s:  

\[
\text{Γουνούμαι σε, ἄνασσα· θεός νῦ τις ἦ βροτός ἔσσει;}
\]

45 Cf. Hatzisteliou-Price *Kourotrophos* 189-190. Reflective intellectual awareness of the kourotrophic function of Artemis is expressed by Diodorus of Sicily when he says (V, 73, 5): ”Ἀρτέμιν φασιν εὔρειν τὴν των νηπίων παιδῶν θεραπείαν καὶ τροφάς τινας ἀρμοζούσας τῇ φύσει τῶν βρεφών, ἂν ἐς αὐτός καὶ κουροτρόφον αὐτὴν ὀψιμαζόμεθα. The age of the young to be protected by Artemis seems, in this account, to be limited within infancy, but the extensive (in all senses) use of the terms κόρος / κόρη, applicable in a wide spectrum of semantic fields ranging from the embryonic state up to late adolescence (cf. *LSJ* s.v.), shows that upper ages could also fall within the domain of power of Kourotrophos (cf. e.g. the more telling Artemis φιλομείρας in Paus. VI, 23, 8 and op.cit. p. 2: “Kourotrophos is a *multi-faced* deity, with the predominant element of nursing-upbringing” (emphasis mine)). The common denominator in all these instances is the *divine principle of growth* as it manifests itself in *human* life.


47 Hom. *Od*. XVII, 36-37 = XIX, 53-54.

48 Hom. *Od*. VI, 149-152.
The poet himself had previously described Nausikaa in similar terms. In the scene of the playing Phaeacian maidens that has captured (or should we say: unharnessed?) the imagination of many a reader since ancient times, the royal daughter is depicted as by far excelling all the surrounding girls: 49

It is in the middle of beauty that Artemis excels. But before we proceed to the particularly virginal-maidenly character of Artemisian beauty, let us first dwell upon the words of Odysseus which seem to be very instructive for an understanding of the peculiar kind of emotion which must have first given birth to the attribution of beauty to Artemis. Above and beyond the generic doctrine according to which divinities, at least Olympian divinities, are by definition beautiful, there may be specific reasons for each deity to be thus manifested, hence represented. Allowing for the conventional verbal exaggeration which the situation in which Odysseus finds himself may have prompted, and the flattering tone of his enunciation (οὐ γὰρ πῶς τοιοῦτων ἐγὼ ἵδον ὁφθαλμοῖσιν, οὔτε ἀνδρί' οὔτε γυναῖκα), it is worth stressing the word which he uses: 51

σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσοράωσιν.

At the sight of Nausikaa Odysseus is possessed by awe. Σέβας refers to the mixed feelings of fear and love, dreadful veneration and cheerful adoration that spontaneously spring to the heart when one is confronted with an object replete with power. When Metaneira suddenly catches sight of Demeter at the very threshold of her house, the expressions used by the poet to denote the fearful astonishment of the mortal woman are similar, but more explicit. 52 The beauty of the 'fair' Phaeacian royal maiden that results, not in eros, but in sebas is dark. The expressions which the hero employs to describe his

50Hom. Od. VI, 160-161.
51Hom. Od. VI, 161. The expression is, of course, formulaic (cf. e.g. Od. III, 123), but in this instance what follows suggests that its use here is intended and that we should, therefore, take it rather literally.
inner state are indeed very revealing. Immediately after the above quotation Odysseus carries on as follows: 53

Δήλω δή ποτε τοίου Ἀπόλλωνος παρά βωμῷ
φοίνικος νέον ἐρυσι ἀνερχόμενον ἐνόησα·

[...]

ῶς δ' αὐτῶς καὶ κεῖνο ἰδῶν ἐτεθήπεια θυμῷ
δήν, ἐπεὶ οὗ πω τοιον ἀνήλθεν ἐκ δόρῳ γαίης,

The awe-inspiring spectacle of the miraculously growing offshoot of the palm-tree which the hero saw on the sacred island of Delos (the 'manifest') near the altar of Apollo is compared to the impression that Nausikaa prompts. In both cases Odysseus is petrified. He is astounded to the point of losing his speech and his being dumbfounded leads to prolonged terror. The Artemis to whom Odysseus instinctively compared the daughter of Alcinoos is a deity that fosters awe; her beauty is that of the frightening night when shadows assume an existence of their own.

Of all the Olympian goddesses Artemis is the only one whom Homer calls ἄγνι. 54 This epithet denotes holiness and purity. It refers to that particular kind of the sacred in which the quality of untaintedness, of being uncontaminated, predominates. It describes a (divine) 'nature' which is not only clean and faultless, but also free of any contact that might endanger its divine integrity. J. Rudhardt pointedly concludes his investigation of the term with the following words: 55

ἀγνὸς signifie une qualité vénérable, sensible chez le dieu dans la mesure où il se maintient au-dessus de l'humanité, où il ne se confond pas avec l'événement, correlative pourrions-nous dire de sa transcendance; une qualité que l'homme possède ou qu'il peut momentanément retrouver dans la mesure où il évite de s'engager dans un acte de génération ou de mort: dans la mesure par conséquent, où il s'abstrait de la vie effective; une qualité qu'une protection attentive contre les souillures conserve aux sanctuaires et aux lieux sacrés; en bref, une pureté extratemporelle que doivent posséder les ἱερεῖς et les ἱερά, les êtres et les choses appelés à porter une charge élevée de puissance.

For a celestial deity the contamination par excellence is caused by involvement in the sphere of Becoming where nothing stands still, but all things flow as if they were in the middle of an impetuous stream. The pollution caused by intimacy with death is too

55 Rudhardt Notions 41 (italics mine).
well known to need any further comment. And it is in death that mortals prove their mortality, which is in fact their essential adherence to, or inescapable embeddedness in, the world of Becoming. It is because she is Ἀρμένη that Artemis is compelled to abandon her protégé and run away at the moment of his death, in the concluding scene of the famous Euripidean drama. In authors later than Homer, the word ἀγνὸς will come to mean sexual purity, hence also chastity and virginity. But its primal use stressed the holy property of untainted integrity. The Artemisian integrity is, as W. Otto perceptively observed, that of "the ever-distant wilderness". It is in this way that the attribution of virginity to Artemis is to be understood.

In the Homeric hymn to Aphrodite, which is one of the earliest hymns ascribed by antiquity to Homer, being, so the linguistic analysis seems to infer, composed in the early (?) seventh century B.C., the goddess of instinctive sexuality (hence by implication of love) who has power over animals and men, mortals and immortals alike, is unable to exercise her influence on three female deities alone who have been granted the privilege of remaining chaste for life—in their case, endlessly:


The conception of erotic impulse and of sexual stimulation as originating in a goddess-sent deceit is very important for an understanding of the self-sufficient integrity and independence which are the hallmark of virginity when applied to divinities, and which the three goddesses that manage to avoid Aphrodite’s spell concretize, each for different reasons, in well-defined, hence divine, forms. Athena, the daughter of her father par excellence, who spings in full armour from the head of Zeus, after he swallowed Metis or the Cunning (?) Intelligence, is the most masculine goddess of the Greeks. Her virginity (which could be mistaken for an absolute lack of sexuality, were it not for a cult in Elis in which she was worshipped as a mother) is the prerequisite of the intensity and rigour with which she rejoices in characteristically male activities like warfare and forethought. As a contemporary historian of religion emphatically described her, she represents "practical and organizational intelligence", or else, "the force of civilization" conceived as a masculine task to which femininity must succumb. (The practicality of her character—in Homer she manifests herself as always very proximate and ready to help in a concrete

Barrett (Hippolytos 414) seems to understand the passage as implying no more than the general rule that the gods should not come into contact with death. This is surely so, but the emphatic use of ἐμοὶ may be taken to mean that what is the case with the other gods a fortiori applies to Artemis.
57 Cf. e.g. Aesch. Agam. 244; Pind. Pyth IV, 183; Plat. Leg. 840d.
58 Otto Gods 82.
60 Hom Hymn. ad Aphr. 7 (cf. v. 33).
61 For the cases in which Athena and Artemis interpenetrate one another and are, therefore, to a certain extent, confused see Robert "Artémis".
62 Burkert Religion 150 and 141.
fashion—derives from, and is symbolized by, her femininity, whereas the organizational—leading, in late re-interpretations, to no less a virtue than Wisdom—is the result of her depreciation of the former. The chastity of Athena is sexuality devoted to a higher end; in psychoanalytic terminology, it is ideation grounded in libido and expressed in the vivid language of religious imagery.

Hestia, on the other hand, never attained a first-rank status in the Greek pantheon; she was never embellished with an elaborate mythological repertoire and she never entirely detached herself from the hearth which, from Mycenaean times already, was her specific cult-place. Her virginity represents the untainted holiness of the domestic fire which could, as time passed by and social conditions changed, be invested easily with a more wideranging (collectivistic and/or moralistic) message. She could, for instance, become the focus of the public space as it was religiously determined and secularly used. The religious austerity imposed upon the Vestal Virgins in Rome and the meaning attached to the cult which they ministered sufficiently testify to the centrality of virginity in Hestia and in late derivations of, or parallels to, her cult.

Halfway between these two goddesses who despise the Aphroditean joke stands, in the Homeric narrative, Artemis. The account which the poet gives for her virginity is the shortest among the three, perhaps because it is the best-known and most evident. It consists of five verses in which the hunting and dancing activities of Artemis are resumed in a way implying that their sole enumeration suffices to give the reasons of her virginity:

{oùδε ποτ' Ἄρτεμιδα χρυσηλάκατον κελαδευνήν
dámνατι εν φιλότητι φιλομμειδής 'Αφροδίτης
καὶ γὰρ τῇ ἁδε τόξα καὶ οὐρεῖ θήρας ἑναίρειν,
φόρμιγγὲς τε χοροὶ τε διαπρύσοι τ᾽ ὀλολυγαί
ἀλοσά τε σκιόδεντα δικαίων τε πόλις ἄνδρῶν.}

In the two hymns to Artemis (of uncertain date, like all the minor hymns gathered under, and legitimated by, the authority of Homer) the virginity of the goddess is spelled out most explicitly:

"Ἀρτέμιῳ ὤμει Μοῦσα κασιγνήτην Ἐκάτου,
παρθένων ἰοχέαραν, ὀμότροφον Ἀπόλλωνος"

"Ἀρτέμιῳ ἄείδιω χρυσηλάκατον κελαδευνήν"

63Cf. Deroy "foyer" who makes the very interesting suggestion that the word παρθένος may be etymologically connected with πύρπημι, to set fire.
64Cf. Hom. Hymn. ad Aphr. 30: καὶ τε μέσῳ ὠξινε κατ' ἵππον ἐξετο πίλαρ ἐλούσα.
65Cf. Vernant "Hestia-Hermes" in Pensée 155-201; Gernet Anthropologie 382-402.
66Cf. Altheim History 140-143 and 356-358; Beard "Virgins"; Scheid "Women" 381-384.
67Hom. Hymn. ad Aphr. 18-22.
The account that follows the naming of the deity to be honoured and the enumeration of her most noteworthy epithets focuses on her murderous bow, the resounding mountains which she frequents, the wild beasts which she kills:

Artemis is the goddess of Wild Nature. Her virginity is the anthropomorphic representation of her intrinsic wildness. By rejecting marriage Artemis avoids being harnessed and subordinated to the power of somebody other than herself and retains the integrity of her being expressed as sovereignty over all the domains of the world (including, it is worth emphasizing, the turbulent sea) where wildness is the distinctive feature. For an understanding of the anthropomorphism of ancient deities, the ending of the modern terminus technicus should be constantly brought to mind. -ism, deriving from the verbal ending -izo, denotes likeness and a certain similarity. Gods are represented in the likeness of human beings, but they are not humans. Their human-like attributes and functions are in their case symbolic representations of a higher order, expressed by means of similar, but in no way identical, qualities to be found in human beings (as the latter are perceived in the context of the entire culture). As a result, the divine and the human levels of analysis should be kept distinct. The indisputable relationship between the two levels was regarded by the ancients themselves as asymmetrical. The relation of the divine and the human is hierarchical; it is a relation between the greater (more powerful, more enduring, hence abiding) and the lesser (less powerful, less enduring, hence fleeting), and, as such, it presupposes, but also bestows a higher and denser degree of being to the former than to the latter. Once again, the channel of communication is conceived in terms of imitation. When [Plato], for instance, stresses the ontological priority of the fertility of the Earth as against the fertility of the woman and states that women become mothers by imitating the Mother par excellence (which is the earth) rather than the other way round, and when Diodorus Siculus tries to explain this commonly-accepted priority as it was exemplified in the divine personality of Ge-Meter (Demeter),

69[Plat.] Menex. 238a: οὐ γὰρ γῆ γυναῖκα μεμίμηται κυίσει καὶ γεινήσει, ἀλλὰ γυνὴ γῆν.
70Diod. Sic. I, 12, 4: τὴν δὲ γῆν ὀσπὸρ ἄγγελον τι τῶν φυσικῶν ὑπολαμβάνειν τὴν μητέρα προσαγορεύεται· καὶ τοὺς Ἐλληνας δὲ ταύτην παραπλησίον Δήμητραν καλεῖν, βραχὺ μετατητίσας διὰ τὸν χρόνον τῆς λέξεως· τὸ γὰρ πολλὰ ὀνομαζότα ἡ γῆ μητέρα, καθάπερ καὶ τὸν Ὀρφέα προσαμαρτυρεῖν λέγοντα: Γῆ μήτερ πάντων, Δήμητρη πλουτοδοτείμα.
the point which they wish to make is that the unchangeable permanence of the natural entity deserves, in mythico-religious thinking and philosophic speculation alike, to be conceived as antedating (hence also causing) the fleeting transitoriness of the human. Likewise, the virginity or chastity of Artemis, as an anthropomorphic trait of the goddess, could be traced back to its source in natural wilderness. Artemis is a virgin because she has been assigned to mountain-peaks and forests, untilled lands and virgin soil (the modern expression, in both its literal and metaphorical senses, retains to some extent the ancient symbolism) where and where alone she feels at home. In the hymn to Artemis composed by the erudite Alexandrine scholar Callimachus (which, as will be indirectly shown later, reproduces, in general outline, the Homeric image of the goddess but embellishes it, in a baroque manner, with details drawn from her major local cults), it is bluntly stated that only very rarely does Artemis visit a city:

σπαρνήν γὰρ ὅτ’ Ἀρτεμίς ἀστυ κατέστη.

However, although the virginity of Artemis should not be interpreted in terms of its human counterpart, but should, rather, be seen as an indication of the Independence of Nature and an attribute of the Wild Mistress of the Independent Nature, an elucidation of the conceptualization of virginity in ancient Greece may help us perceive more deeply this divine prerogative.

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71 Call, Hymn. III, 19 (Pfeiffer). With reference to the δικαίων πόλεις ἀνδρῶν (Hom. Hymn. ad Aphr. 22 cited above) which Artemis does like, the emphasis should be put to justice qua purity (in conjunction with the forests of the same verse), rather than to urban organization as such.
GREEK VIRGINITY

The interest shown in recent years in the exploration of the ancient notions related to gender and sexuality has enabled us to better understand the meaning attached to the corresponding Greek words. In so far as the Greek *parthenos* is concerned, two recent 'discoveries' seem to be of some relevance to our subject. The first shows the holistic, as opposed to the merely physical/biological, way in which virginity was understood. In all surviving medical literature down to the second century A.D., there is not the least mention of the virginal hymen.72 The earliest reference that shows awareness of the existence of that small tissue (which, of all mammals, for God knows what reason, human females share with female elephants, and which was to be invested with paramount moral importance in later Western history) is to be found in the physician Soranus (his *floruit* was in the reigns of Trajan and Hadrian), who mentions it only to refute the claim of those who believe in its existence.73 Virginity is a state of the psyche as much as it is a state of the body: it is that particular state which indicates that the psycho-biological unity of a woman is ready for impregnation.74 Thus virginity is not absent of 'experience', but the pre-requisite of such an experience seen in the 'natural', as opposed to hedonistic and pleasure-providing, light of procreation. Related to this is the 'discovery' of the social as opposed to the biological, meaning of the word *parthenos*.75 Originally, in Greek *parθένος* did not mean *virgo intacta*; it referred to an unmarried girl, to a maiden who had not yet suffered the yoke of wedlock. But the inferences to be drawn from this clarification would best not be pressed too far.

The term *parthenos* could be used, it is true, to refer to a woman with a child issued from an extramarital relation and the products of such illicit relations were called, from Homer onwards76, *parθέναι*.77 But in most of these cases the male progenitor was

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73 Soran. Gyn. I, 17 (Ilberg CMG IV): τὸ γὰρ ὁποθεταί διαπερφεκτὲς λεπτὸν ὑμέαν διαφράσσωτα τὸν κόλπον, τοῦτον δὲ βήγγυαθα κατὰ τὰς διακορήσεις καὶ ὄνωπαν ἐπιψέφευεν ἡ βάθτου καθάρσεως γενομένης, ἐμισείναινα δὲ καὶ σωματικοποιήται τὸ ἀτρήτου λεγόμενον πάθος ἀποτελεῖν, ψηφίσος ἐστὶ. πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ διὰ τῆς ἁνταμαθῆς οὐχ εὑρίσκεται· δεύτερον δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν παρθένων ἔχριν αντικόπτει πι τῇ μηλῷσαι (ὡς δὲ μὲν χρῆ βαθύς ἀταίειν ἢ μηλῇ-τρίτων δὲ εἰ κατὰ τὰς διακορήσεις μηρόμενος ὃ ὑμῖν ὄνωπαν γίνεται παράκολα, ἔχριν εἰς ἀνάγκης ἐπὶ τῶν παρθένων ἐμπροσθον τῆς διακορήσεως ἐπιφανείας καθάρσεως περιωδήτων παρακολοθεῖν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν διακορήσθην μηκέτι, καὶ ἄλλους εἰς σωματοποιήσεις ὃ ὑμῖν τῷ ἀτρήτῳ ποιεῖ πάθος, ἐδει κατὰ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων εὑρίσκοντα δηνεκάς αὐτόν, ἐν τρόπον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων μερῶν ἔκαστον ἐπὶ τοῦ ἴδιον πάντοτε τῶν θεοφρόουντον μόνον ἡν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀτρήτων ὑμῖν αὐτόν τοῦ πόρου ποτὲ μὲν κατὰ τὰ πρόχειρα μέρη τῶν πτερυγιατῶν εὑρίσκεται, τοτε δὲ κατὰ μέσου τοῦ αἰδοῖο, ἄλλοτε δὲ κατὰ μέσον τὸ στόμιον τῆς ὑστέρας.

74 Cf. the excellent remarks, etymological and otherwise, made by Klingenschmitt "παρθένος".
75 Cf. Calame Chêurs I, 65; Loraux Enfants 75-117; Devereux Femme 166.
77 Cf. Schol. A ad Hom. II, IV, 499: νῦν δ’ ὃν τὴν γυνήν ὑδόν, ἀλλ’ ἐκ παλαικός θάτα, αἱ γὰρ παιδοταία παρὰ τῷ πούτῳ λέγωνται τετάραξος ’ο μὲν γυνῆς, ὁ δὲ νῦθος καλείται πάλι, καὶ ἄλλος σκότος, καὶ ἄλλος παρθένος· γυνῆς μὲν οὖν καλείται ὁ ἐκ νοσίμων γάμων, νῦθος δὲ ὃ ἐκ παλαικής· καὶ ἤφαν "ἐκνεὶ διάρφο ἐότε νῦθον καὶ γνῆσιον ἀμφοτερον" [Hom. II. XI, 102]. σκότος δὲ ὃ ἐκ λαθραίας μέξεως, οὗν "οὐκοτοῦ δέ ἐ ε γείνατο μήτηρ" [Hom. II. VI,
generally thought to be a god, and one may, not without reason, suspect that, as a rule, the introduction of a god as the hidden father is a later addition to births originally conceived as parthenogenic, although, in established mythological terms, the divine father is a necessary factor to account for the glorious pedigree of such heroic or (semi-)divine children, as Telephus, Asclepius and the most telling Parthenopaeus. Kreousa, the mother of Ion by Apollo is persistently called parthenos in the Euripidean drama, and if, in the well-known story of the Spartan partheniai, mentioned by Aristotle and related in detail by Strabo (who draws on Ephorus), the children issued from copulation outside wedlock could bear the title of partheniai, it was, as Hesychius explains, because either they too were considered to have a divine ancestor, or because they were born to girls that were erroneously considered to be virgins.

The unmarried girl in ancient Greece was expected, and compelled, not to have experienced sex before marriage. A law of, or ascribed to, Solon, according to which a maiden who was discovered to have been seduced would lose her freedom and cease to belong to her family, must have been the judicial legitimation of a much older practice perpetuated in accordance with the πάτριοι νόμοι. Some recent accounts give the impression either that a liberal and emancipated outlook on sexual matters had once prevailed in ancient Greece, or that the restriction put on the maidens was simply a matter of social order, unrelated or of little relation to physical love. This does not seem to have been the case. Now and again, the symbolic meaning which the ancients saw in copulation was that of an act of taming, hence also of domestication (in the literal and the metaphorical senses). It is with copulation, rather than with the 'social contract' of marriage that a maiden is tamed. And if a childless married girl could be given the ambivalent

24] παρθένος δὲ ὁ ἐκ τῆς παρθενίας ἐτί νομίζομενες γεννώμενος, ὡς τὸ "παρθένος τῶν ἔτεκτε χορῷ καλὴ Πολυμηλὴ".
78] Cf. Leach "Births".
79] Cf. Loraux "Kreousa".
81] Strabo VI, 3, 3 (=279): 'Εφόρος δ’ οὕτω λέγει περὶ τῆς κτίσεως ἐπέλευσαν Λακεδαιμόνιοι Μεσσηνίας ἀποκτείνα τὸ βασίλεα Τηλέκλων εἰς Μεσσηνίαν ἀφυκμένοι ἐπὶ θυσίαν, ὡς ἰδίως μὴ πρῶτον ἐπατήσῃν οἶκας πρὶν ἡ Μεσσηνίαν ἀνελεῖν ἡ παῖται ἀποδυναθήναι φθακας δὲ τῆς πόλεως κατέλυσεν στρατεύστες τῶν τις νεώτατος καὶ πρεσβύτατος τῶν πολιτῶν, δεκατίῳ δ’ ῥατοὺ ἐτὶ τοῦ πολέμου τὰς γυναίκας τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων συνελύσασας εξ αὐτῶν πεῖμαι τιμᾶ παρά τους Μεσσηνίους (οὶ μὲν γὰρ μένων τεκνοποιοῦνταί οἱ δὲ χήραι ἀφίνεται τὰς γυναίκας ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ ἐστρατεύομενοι), καὶ κύδων ἡ πλανανθέρα τῆς πατρίδα. οἱ δὲ ἀμα καὶ τὸν ὄρκον φυλάττοντες καὶ τῶν γυναικῶν λόγον ἐν νῷ θέμενοι τίμησεν τῆς στρατίας τοὺς εὐφροσύνητας ἀμα καὶ νεώτατος, οὓς ἤδεισαν ὑπὸ μετασχητάς τῶν ὄρκων διὰ τὸ πάδος ἐτὶ ὅταν συνελḗκτος τῶν ἐν ἴλικείᾳ προσέπαθαν ἐκ συγγίνεσθαι ταῖς παρθένοις ἀπαίσις ἀπωθεῖας, ἡμοίους πολυκομηθέντας μᾶλλον γεννώμενοι δὲ τούτοις οἱ μὲν παῖδες ὦμοφακηνα παρθένοι.
appellation of νύμφη (meaning both maiden and bride), it is because 'social' marriage did not automatically turn her into a respected matron: she could not be regarded as a fully-fledged γυνή before she had given valid proof of sexual experience which was normally supposed to result in conception/pregnancy/delivery, i.e. in giving-birth and thereby to become legitimated.

The vexed problem presented by the Greek notion of virginity, once all the ancient testimonies have been gathered together and the (seemingly) divergent use of the term parthenos become apparent, is grasped by G. Sissa who pointedly writes that

the Greek concept seems strange to us because it encompassed two possibilities that we regard as contradictory: a child could be born to a parthenos, yet penetration of her body by a male member was incompatible with parthenia.84

This shows that virginity was regarded as the precondition of motherhood, indeed as motherhood in the making, but also that it was sexual intercourse qua subordination, not giving-birth, that was incompatible with such a state of being.85 But if copulation is incompatible with virginity, whereas motherhood is not, then parthenia primarily refers to the higher order of gods amongst whom what is impossible for human beings becomes a prerogative of divinity which once again highlights the gap that separates mortals from immortals. In Elis the Virgin Athena, Pausanias informs us, was worshipped as a Mother, and in Argos Hera annually regained her virginity after having a bath in the spring Kanathos.86 These two cases are very instructive and we should perhaps dwell on them a bit longer.

The report of the Periegete runs as follows:87

... καὶ πηγὴ Κάναθος καλουμένη· ἐνταῦθα τὴν Ἡραν φασίν Ἀργείωι κατὰ ἐτος λουμένην παρθένου γίνονται, ὁδὸς μὲν δὴ σφισθὲν ἐκ τελετῆς, ἢν ἀγωνία τῇ Ἡρᾷ, λόγος τῶν ἀπορρήτων ἐστίν.

Once again, the pious traveller refuses to reveal the mystical myth concerning the rite and to give details of the ritual itself, because both myth and cult are, he understands, of secret nature. Nilsson88 suggested that what was there at stake was a ritual bathing of the statue of the goddess which was invested with the symbolism of revirgination, and Fehrle89

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84Sissa Virginit y 76.
85Thus we are better equipped to understand the inclusion of Artemis among the deities of marriage in the very telling passage of Plutarch, Quaest.Rom. 264b: πέντε δεισδάκτες θεῶν τῶν γαμοῦντας οὖντα, Δίος τελείου καὶ Ἡρᾶς Τελείας καὶ Ἀφροδίτης καὶ Πειθοῦς, ἐπὶ πάντας ἑνὶ Ἀρτέμιδος. Beyond and above all other divinities, married people are in need of Artemis, i.e., in my interpretation, of the dynamism of chastity.
86It is more than a coincidence that the spring "stands today in the garden of a nunnery", as Dodds was astonished to notice ["The Religion of the Ordinary Man in Classical Greece" in Progress 140-155 (145)].
87Paus. II, 38, 2-3.
88Nilsson Feste 45ff.
89Fehrle Kunschheit 171-177.
found a parallel in the Athenian Plynteria where, he concluded, a sacred marriage of Athena was at the centre of the rite. In terms of 'historical theology', as distinct from descriptive analysis, we should be allowed perhaps to proceed a step farther. The renewable virginity of Hera could be seen as an annual restoration of her, in mythological thought, primeval independence and a reaffirmation of her sovereignty, as much as the necessary intensification of energy for the successful carrying out of her next pregnancy. The commonly-accepted figure of Hera places her, as a wife and mother, next to, or below, that of the husband Zeus and it is the restoration of her virginal wildness that a secret πελετή and the corresponding mythic narration wanted to stress. Contrariwise, the indisputable virginity of Athena was considered to be in need of a due emphasis, in a similar secret context, of her fertility, since the independence presupposed in her celibacy was widely and openly acknowledged. This brings us to the sanctuary of Mother Athena in Elis. The evidence is again to be found in Pausanias:

Τῶν δὲ Ἡλείων αἱ γυναῖκες, ἄτε τῶν ἐν ἥλικία σφίσιν ἱρημωμένης τῆς χώρας, εὑρεσθαί τῇ Ἀθηνᾶ λέγονται κυρίαι παρατίκαι, ἐπεὶ δὲν μιχθὼν τοῖς ἀνδράσι τῷ τε εὖχή σφίσιν ἑτελέσθη, καὶ Ἀθηνᾶς ἵπτεν ἑπίκλισιν Μητρός ἰδρύσαντο.

True, in the above passage it is not Athena that gives birth, but it is, indicatively enough, to her, rather than to any other goddess, that the women of Elis addressed their prayers when they felt desperate because all men of appropriate age had left the country. The virgin goddess turned an attentive ear to their appeal so that upon their being sexually united with their husbands they immediately conceived and without lapse of time carried children in their bellies. The procreative side of virginity is here once again pronounced and the celibate goddess becomes, or is adored as, a mother. That no physical issue (in the form of a divine child) testified, in the existing accounts, to the motherhood of Athena is a confirmation of the aforementioned purely spiritual character of the goddess. It is, however, plain that the virginity of Athena was not in any way incompatible with procreation. What seems to have been incompatible with virginity was the subordination implied in the 'taming' act of sexual intercourse. The motherhood of Athena, moreover, was not confined to Elis. In the city that, of all Greek cities, venerated the celibate goddess above all other divinities to whom, in mythology at least, she owed her very name, Athena, there too, was called a Mother. The chorus of the Euripidean Heraclidae addressed the goddess with the words:

ἀλλ’, ὦ πότισι, σὸν γὰρ ὀδος
γάς σών καὶ πόλις, ἀς σὺ μάτηρ
δέστουν τε φίλαξ ...

90 Cf. Devereux "La revirginisation d'Héra" in Femme 67-94.
91 Paus. V, 3, 2.
and, if we tend to interpret this invocation as a merely metaphorical expression, we, for one thing, ignore the blurring of the metaphorical and the literal which is omnipresent in ancient literature and, for another, fall victims to the modern categorization of concepts pointed out by Sissa in the quotation above.\(^93\)

In the order which the reign of Zeus establishes according to the Hesiodic theogonic account shared in content, if not in exact (mythological) wording, by all the Greeks, or else in the alarmingly shaky new kingdom of the arrogant, because young, male deity, as the bound Aeschylean Prometheus would put it, Artemis, like all other gods, is in fact subordinate to her father. It is not therefore surprising that the permanent, life-long chastity, which is the distinctive anthropomorphic feature of her wildness, becomes in early lyric poetry the gift which the father of gods presents to her daughter. The Lesbian poet Alcaeus has Artemis swear an oath of chastity before Zeus who is subsequently asked to grant her the favour of never allowing her to become subdued to the limb-dissolving power of Eros. Then Zeus consents. The restoration of the fragmentary second-century A.D. papyrus cannot, of course, be definitive,\(^94\) but the context makes it clear that the scene refers to Artemis and Zeus:\(^95\)

\[\text{"Αρτέμις δὲ θεών| μέγαν ὅρκον ἀπόμοισιν:
νὴ τὰν σὰν κεφάλαν ἄτρικλος ἔσομαι
ἀδῆμης, οἰότοι| λων ὅρεων κορύφασιν ἐπὶ
θηρεύοντος ταῖς καὶ τὰ| δε νεόσον ἐμαυ χάριν.
οὐ εἰτ̄ οὐτάρ ἐνει| σε θέων μικάριον πάθηρ̄
pαρθένοις δ̄ ἐλαθάβ] ὀλον ἀγροτέραν θεοὶ
ἀνθρωποι τε κάλεσι| συν ἐπιωσίμιοι μέγα.
κύρια λυσιμέλης] Ἔρος οὐδάμα πύνναται.}\]

In similar spirit, Callimachus at the beginning of the hymn to the goddess presents Artemis begging her father for eternal virginity:\(^96\)

\[\text{"Αρτέμιν [...]}
ὑπερομεῖν, [...]}
daρχιεῖν| ὅτε πατρὸς ἐφιζωμένη γυνάτεσσι
παῖς ἐτὶ κοιρίζουσα τάδε προσέειπε γούνα;
«δόσ μιλο παρθένην αἰώνιον, ἄπτῃ, φυλάσσειν...}\]

The scene is both moving and entertaining, because the goddess is as yet too little to be able to reach the beard of her father in the received gesture of supplication. Zeus, amused by the clumsiness of his daughter’s movement (which parallels his laughter after

\(^93\) The virginity of Athena was openly challenged in ancient (cf. also Lactan. \textit{Div.Inst.} I, 17) as much as in modern times. Cf. Kerényi \textit{Athene} (reviewed by Rose "Maiden") and Keary " \textit{Athena}".

\(^94\) Cf. Lobel and Page "Fragment".

\(^95\) Alcaeus fr. 304, col. i, 4-11 (Lobel-Page).

\(^96\) Call. \textit{Hymn. ad Artem.} 1-6.
Artemis’s humiliation by Hera in the Homeric battle of the gods, grants the favour at once and in the speech that immediately follows his gestural consent the father of gods glorifies the young Artemis with more honours than she asked or would expect. The virginity of Artemis is intimated again, later in the hymn, when Dictynna (originally an independent, perhaps Cretan, deity that shared so many common traits with Artemis that she was easily from a relatively early time assimilated to her) is said to hate a particular plant, the myrtle. Although she does accept wreaths made of other plants she repudiates myrtle-made ones. The explanation provided by Callimachus is apparently aetiological. If Dictynna, and by implication Artemis too, hate the myrtle, it must have been because the plant was connected with the female pudenda, the clitoris in particular. Aristophanes is clear about that and the explanation of Pollux could not be more explicit. If the Callimachean passage reflects a cultic prohibition, then we may assume that in this instance too the virginity of Artemis-Dictynna was not only mythological but of significance in ritual as well.

Zeus honours his daughter with unexpected prerogatives. Among the honours that the young Artemis did ask, however, apart from the mentioned eternal virginity and the bows and arrows that were to become her principal symbols, there is also another prerogative of power which is worth commenting upon: πολυωνυμία or a multitude of divine appellations. All deities receive in different cults different epitheta (and in some instances are also named differently at different stages of the same cult) and all gods and goddesses are praised by the mortal worshippers with a great variety of (functional, cultic or otherwise) epikleses. But none other than Artemis and Dionysus, from among the established Olympians at least, receive πολυωνυμία as a salient characteristic of their being, and it is Artemis in particular who actually asks for it. The multitude of Artemisian appellations must therefore, draw directly on what Artemis represented for the Greeks and it cannot be without significance if the goddess herself longs for such a distinction. But before we raise the question of the Artemisian πολυωνυμία, let us first recapitulate, in a way different from the one followed so far, what can be inferred from the traits of the goddess that have already been discussed. Let us focus for a while on Artemis the name.

97 op. cit. 26-40.
98 Call. Hymn ad Artem. 200-203: τὸ δὲ στέφος ἡμιαὶ κείμω
ἡ πίτυς ἡ σχὼς, μύρτου δὲ χεῖρες ἄκτιτων.
δὴ τὸ τέτε γαρ πέπλουσι ἐνέσχετο μύρανος ἄρος
τῆς κούρους. δὴ ὡς ἔγειρεν. ὡς μέγα χώσατο μύρνῳ.
100 Pollux II, 174: τὸ δὲ ἐν μέσῳ σκάφον σαρκόν νύμφη ἡ μύρτων ἡ ἐπιθερμίς ἡ κλειτορίς.
101 Cf. Montepaone "Divinità", where the πολυωνυμία is explored as a distinctive feature of the so-called Taurike Artemis.
ON THE NAME 'ARTEMIS'

The problem concerning the etymology of the names of the ancient Greek gods arises in the most acute fashion when we move away from the primal beings of a Hesiodic *Theogony* (such as Chaos, Night, Earth and the like) to the more concrete gods of Pan-Hellenic mythology. There are several names which we would classify under the category of 'abstract nouns' which in early epic and lyric poetry attain a purely divine status. Long before the Heracleitan Logos and the Empedoclean Love and Hatred, even before the Phercydean 'holy trinity' of Zeus, Cronus and Chthonie, did Homer and Hesiod speak of Sleep, Dreams, Victory and the Dawn as divinities. However, although the names of these lesser deities are transparent, fully-fledged gods are not. Why is this so? In all likelihood, because the major deities of Hellenic religion, before appearing in Mycenaean documents (those at least that do appear—but the argument can equally hold for those that do not appear there), had a long pre-history of their own. The case of Zeus is very instructive. Modern linguistic study has managed, with the aid of the comparative method, to dismantle the original form of the name and to account for the seemingly divergent grammatical forms in which it has been attested. Thus from the unattested *Dyeus pater*, can be derived the best explanatory model of linguistic relationships which alone, although hypothetical (yet rigorously supported by the evidence), can bring together the Latin *Juppiter*, the Greek *Zeus* and the Indian *Dyaus pitar*, to mention only the names of the same god in three ancient cultures. However, what the name of Zeus was unable to reveal to the ears of the Greeks of the Archaic age, and presumably of earlier periods too, obscure as it had been through its continual transformations and adaptations from one linguistic and social context to another, the mythic conscience kept alive: in the first piece of Greek literary evidence which we possess, to wit in Homer, Zeus is unambiguously the father *κατ᾽ ἐξ ὀξηνυ*. This may serve as an indication that the search for the etymon of a divine name need not necessarily be confined within the field of linguistics proper, but may be facilitated by the known verbal and mythical associations which the living religious conscience spontaneously made, or meditatively suggested, with respect to a divine name. If the obscurity of a divine name is a symptom of the long pre-history of the deity in question, on the other hand, we may perhaps assume that this very temporal longitude that has caused confusion on the linguistic plane may have found ways to express what the name no longer conveyed, on a level of reference different from the linguistic, for instance in mythology.

No agreement has been reached regarding the etymology of Artemis. Wilamowitz, faithful to himself in his conviction that historical truth can be found mainly by means of the most unexpected (and perhaps complicated) argument and only where no one before had suspected its presence, argued for a foreign origin, in accordance with a practice that
is no longer surprising, recurrent as it is in his writings. Lydian inscriptions attesting the form *Artimus* suggested to him that Lydia was the birth-place of the goddess where Artemis was subsequently baptized. Van Windekens, by contrast, proposed an etymology according to which the name of the goddess should derive from the lexical root *art-* which, in some Northern languages (in Thracian for instance) was used to signify water or any liquid substance. Artemis would then be a spirit of moisture. A different interpretation has been advanced by Pisani and corroborated by Ruiperez. The Arcadian legend of Callisto and the *arkteia* in Attica provided these two scholars with the idea that the name of the goddess might have been etymologically related to *arktos*. As a result, the name of Artemis is seen as originally signifying the bear.

The Wilamowitzian etymology seems to be the least convincing. There is a great variety of nouns and verbs in Greek which could account for the name of the deity in question. To disregard them altogether is to show an excessive amount of unjustifiable, perhaps totally unfounded, scepticism. The problem most acutely presents itself in the form of the choice which should be made from among these Greek words on the part of the proponent of an etymology. It seems to be a rather easy way out of the riddle of the ancient evidence to turn one’s back on it *en bloc*.

The Boeotian and Doric form of the name is *Artamis*. And a noun is now and again found in Greek which could be illuminating: ἄρταμος. Although in the surviving literary sources *artamos* is not attested before the fifth century, there is no reason to assume that it was a creation of Sophocles, in a fragment of a lost tragedy of whom the word appears for the first time. The verb from which the noun derives is attested in a composite form in Aeschylus (δι' ἄρταμειν), and the context allows no ambiguity as to its meaning. It seems more plausible that the Athenian playwrights used an obsolete word which from early on had fallen perhaps into desuetude. Euripides and Xenophon know the verb or the substantive and, later, lexicographers show a keen interest in explaining its meaning. Artamos means the butcher who cuts the sacrificial victim into

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102 Wilamowitz Glaube I, 324.
103 Van Windekens "Noms".
105 Ruiperez "Artemis".
106 Cf. also the very improbable etymology (from airo and themis) proposed by Graves Myths 86.
107 Soph. fr. 1025 (Radt) [=848 (Dindorf) = Anecd. Bekk. 447, 5].
109 Eur. Elect. 816; Alc. 494.
110 Xen Cyr. II, 2, 4.

"Ἄρταμος οὖν ὁ διαρτῶν τὰ κρέας καὶ ἄρταμησα κρεονομήσας.; Athen. 655ε: ἐπὶ τοῖς δ ἐγὼ μάγευρος: οὔτε Σικελία καταχρεταὶ τρέψεωι τοιούτων ἄρταμων κατ ἵχθων."
pieces at the victim's joints, and the word comes finally very close to meaning the cook. The function of cutting seems to be in the original semantic focus of the word, and cutting, when applied to living beings, always implies death and dissolution. The archaizing overlearned poet Lycophon, in his unintelligible *Alexandra*, restores the word in its horrific primal use: 

\[ \text{ὡ δὲ πιθήκος στυγνός ἀρταμος τέκιων.} \]

The phrase would lose most of its terrifying appeal, if *artamos*, understood by the poet to signify the cook, is meant to be a metaphor. It is, rather, a recovery of its original sense that seems to be at stake here.

Artemis, the wild goddess who brings death, is a divine power that manifests herself most clearly in disruption, destruction, demolition. Hence she is a butcher, or rather the divine prototype of worldly butchery in general. This relation has not escaped the attention of some modern scholars. In fact, Preller-Robert and Kretschmer claimed that in the noun *artamos* we could find the longed-for etymological content of the name of the goddess, and their arguments have not lost their pertinency by the occasional recent attempts to cast a doubt on the connection between the two.

Distinct, however, from the scientific inquiry into the origin of words, but no less essential for an understanding of their function in a given historical era is the investigation of the lexical semantic fields which a word creates and into which it readily (in the living conscience of the users) falls. Artemis from Homer onwards (albeit explicitly at a later stage only) is almost unanimously conceived of as *ἀρτεμής*. The word appears in the Homeric epics and means 'complete' and 'integrated'. It is not in fact difficult to see how the kourotrophic Artemis, the goddess who provides maidens (and youths) with μήκος, in the Homeric expression, would be thought of as highlighting the function of integration and completion, for which she was anyway held responsible, by her very name. The Platonic *Cratylus* may stand as the paradigm of ancient false etymologies which may nonetheless give valuable insights into religious truths.

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112 Lyc. Alex. 235 (ἀρταμος τέκιων = βρεφοκτόνος v. 229); cf. v. 797: κέλωρ δὲ πατρὸς ἀρταμος κληθήται.
113 Preller-Robert *Mythologie* 296, n. 2.
115 Cf. e.g. Miroux "Artémis". The objections raised by Miroux are not very persuasive. Based on the Vernantian theory of 'marginal' Artemis, Miroux argues that *ἀρταμος* refers to the 'civilized' sacrifice, whereas the goddess kills in a (marginally?) savage way. Hence, no connection, he concludes, is at work between the 'butcher' and Artemis. The classificatory scheme that sharply distinguishes, in structuralist terminology, 'nature' from 'culture' is employed in Miroux's analysis as an established datum, rather than as a model, the applicability of which must be demonstrated each time that the model is used. His interpretation exhibits a certain artificial stiffness, as a result. Especially his introductory remark that "le terme [sc. *artamos*] ne semble [...] ni très ancien, ni très répandu" (128), is, in so far as the first part goes, in my view, out of the question.
116 Hom. II. V, 515; Od. XIII, 43; Hesych. s.v. ἀρτεμέστα ἡγαίωντα, ἰσχύοντα.
117 The point is brilliantly made by Whallon "Artémis?". Cf. Freud *Totem* 56: "They [sc. our children] are never ready to accept a similarity between two words as having no meaning: they consistently assume that if two things are called by similar-sounding names this may imply the existence of some deep-lying point of agreement between them." That is perhaps one of the many aspects of the eternal youthfulness of
mindedness and no superficial frivolity in regarding Apollo as an ἀπολλύων, nor in connecting Hades with knowledge (eἰδέναι). With respect to Artemis the relevant passage of Cratylus runs as follows:118

"Ἀρτέμις" δὲ <διὰ> τὸ ἀρτέμις φαίνεται καὶ τὸ κόσμιον, διὰ τὴν τῆς παρθενίας ἐπιθυμίαν ἱσος δὲ ἀρετής ἱστορα τὴν θεοῦ ἐκάλεσεν ὁ καλέσας, τάχα δὲ ἄν καὶ ὃς τὸν ἄρτον μημούσας τὸν ἀνδρὸς ἐν γυναικί. ἦ διὰ τούτων τι ἦ διὰ πάντα ταύτα τὸ δυναμό τούτο ἑθετο τῇ θεῷ.

There is no dogmatic rigidity in the above etymological investigation. Several alternative solutions are proposed which, according to Socrates, may equally well account for the origin of the name of the goddess. Particular emphasis, however, is put on the integrating aspect of the goddess which seems to be what the later literary tradition insisted upon from among the possibilities of the Platonic passage. Strabo, for example, in a similar etymologizing attempt wrote:119

καὶ ᾧ "Ἀρτέμις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρτέμιεας ποιεῖν.

Although the Platonic passage seems to be permeated by a moralistic tone, focusing as it does on virginity qua virtue, it is interesting to note that the ploughing which the husband does to his wife—a recurring image of ‘normal’, i.e. prolific (hetero)sexual union in Greek literature—is also brought into the discussion. So far from being lack of sexuality, Artemisian virginity is the chastity of the sexual partners (and of the female partner in particular) which is required if their intercourse is to be procreative.120 Artemis knows what it is to be virtuous. She possesses knowledge of virtue, because she is virtuous herself. But if her virginity is nothing but the anthropomorphic representation of her intrinsic wildness, as claimed earlier, we could perhaps see the same essential characteristic of hers being present in her virtue. Ἀρετή originally signified physical strength and prowess. This meaning can still be found in the Homeric use of the noun. The excellence and perfection of ἀρετή are manifested in corporeal power. In the original meaning of the word there are no ethical connotations which might diminish the emphasis on the corporeality of virtue, but there is, by contrast, a due valuation of the necessarily superlative degree of the performance, if it is to be named virtuous. That is why the Homeric ἀρετή could be best translated as ‘physical bestness’. Such is the domain over which Artemis holds sway. She manifests herself as power, and her power is, and remains to the end, untainted by any kind of intellectuality. If an oxymoron is allowed, we would

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118 Plat. Crat. 406b.
119 Strabo XIV, 6 (=635).
120 Xenophon, a wholehearted devotee of Artemis (Anab. V, 3, 4-13), stresses in his Oeconomicus the use of chastity for eugenic purposes.
say that hers is the spirituality of the body. With the mind and with the ethical mode of being which the mind creates she has little or no connection. Once human life ceases to respond and react quasi-automatically to the stimuli of the external reality, her (in mythological terms) initial all-pervasiveness gradually loses ground. When the instinctive drives begin to give way to ethics and later to morality, the domain of her immediate influence shrinks. The Artemisian sovereignty remains then unchallenged only in those moments in which a tremendous outflow of force vitale fills with astonishment the most self-conscious and consciousness-oriented human eyes, (but which also affects, to an admittedly lesser extent, the most sceptical minds), namely in birth and puberty. She is also called on to account for deaths which are unexpected, caused as it were by an excessive affluence of vital power which mortal bodies seem not to be able to bear while remaining alive. Throughout the religious history of the Greeks, Artemis oscillates between the two extremes which meet at the point of Dynamism. Mixing etymology with para-etymology we would describe her as at once ἀρτεμίς and ἀρταμος.121 She is both, because she is Power, of creation and perfection, or of destruction and disintegration, as the case may be.

Let us now illustrate the Artemisian twofoldness with special reference to the certainly older of her two most important cults in Patras reported by Pausanias (the other being that of Laphria to be discussed below). Artemis Triklaria was a goddess intimately linked to the small river that flowed to the north of the acropolis of the city and to the north of the old κώμη of Messatis (which was one of the three towns that constituted the city of Patras after the Ionian synoecism). The river was known in antiquity as Meilichos, or the Mild One, but this was the name that, according to the report of the Periegete, was given to it after the appeasement of the furious goddess had been successfully effected by means of an appropriate ritual, its previous name being the very opposite of the later one, Ameilichos, or the Furious or Unappeasable One. Pausanias says that the sanctuary, including the temple, of Triklaria was a common property of all three originally separate towns that were later united into a confederation to form Patras, and this mention was, not without convincing reasons, taken up by Nilsson to indicate that Triklaria was the deity held responsible for the Ionian synoecism. The name of the goddess seems to be transparently Greek, and the divinity was accordingly interpreted by Nilsson to mean She of the Three Portions of Earth (τρις κληρονόμος). Herbillon, however, made a strong case in arguing that the name of the goddess should rather be thought of as deriving from the river to which the deity was attached from primordial times. The two interpretations are not by necessity mutually exclusive. We can imagine the goddess being as closely attached to the river as Herbillon wished her to be, and at the same time being held responsible for the Patraic confederation as Pausanias insinuated and Nilsson claimed.

At any rate, the assumed radical change of the name of the river at which human sacrifices were allegedly performed to appease the furious deity cannot be without significance for an understanding of how Artemis Triklaria manifested herself to the people of Patras.

If our mental eye tried to get a picture of the river in question, it would hardly be farther removed from the geographical reality of the region in case it even remotely approximated Meilichos to any of the major rivers of northern Europe. Our river (which

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122 Cf. Lafond "Artémis".
124 This runs parallel to the cult of Ortheia at Sparta (cf. "Artemis Ortheia" above) where on of the originally independent κώμες was Messos, the one in the middle, like the Patraic Messatis.
125 Paus. VII, 19, 1: Ἰώμοι τοῖς Ἀρδοίς καὶ Αἴθειαι καὶ Μεσαίαι οἰκοδομή ἦν ἐν κοινῷ τέμενος καὶ ναὸς Ἀρτέμιδος Τρικλαρίας ἐπικλήσων, καὶ ἐφορήν οἱ Ἰώμες καὶ πανηχίδα ἐποίουσα αὖ πάν ἐτος.
126 Nilsson Feste 216-217.
127 Herbillon Cultes 52-53.
128 It is worth repeating that Artemis is very seldom in mainland Greece (as opposed to Asia Minor) a ἄπολυχος deity: she rarely goes downtown, in the Kallimachian expression (although it is in the same hymn that Zeus offers to her thirty cities as an honorific gift vv. 33-38). Cf. Gruppe Mythologie 1282. The opposite conclusion is rather unpersuasively reached by Lafond "Artémis".
could be more accurately called a stream or current, than a river proper) is almost devoid of water during the high summer months and its water supply during the rest of the year largely depends upon the liquidated snow of Mount Panachaicon from which it springs. Sometimes it overflows its bed and inundates the adjacent cultivated land, thus proving itself destructive for the crops. At other times its water supply is just right for the irrigation of the fields. Since that is the case, it scarcely comes as a surprise that two polarly opposite appellations were appended to it: what in physical reality is a recurrent but utterly uncontrollable feature became in local legend a prototypical mythical act that was established once and for all.

The aetiological myth narrated by Pausanias, albeit replete with romantic reminiscences (drawing perhaps directly on the then widely read Hellenistic novels; for the influence, be it indirect, is unmistakable) expressively shows the indubitably wild-Artemisian character of the rite. Melanippos and Komaitho, the most handsome young man and the most beautiful maiden of the entire place, fell desperately in love with one another. Upon realizing, however, that their parents would not consent to the socially approved culmination of their love in marriage, they ended up, burning with intolerable desire as they were, having sex inside the sanctuary of the goddess. The chaste Artemis was greatly enraged. The well-known standard consequences ensued. The earth bore fruits no longer; epidemics haunted the place; death visited youths and maidens to an unprecedented degree. The goddess was indeed very angry and the (indispensable in these cases) Delphic Oracle divined that Artemis asked for human sacrifices which alone could appease her wrath. Humans had no choice other than obedience. The most handsome adolescent and the most beautiful maiden were annually sacrificed next to the river that was, because of the cruelty of the rite, henceforth named differently: it became the Cruel One. Several years lapsed before the Greek hero Eurypyllos on his way back to his motherland after the sack of Troy managed, with the aid of the Delphic Oracle again, to put an end to the horrific rite. No more human sacrifices meant that the river could now be called the Mild One: it had been appeased.

Artemis Triklaria was manifested in the now furiously dangerous, now gently beneficial current of the unpredictable river as the dynamic power of wilderness in its essentially twofold nature: as prolific fertility, and as horrific destructiveness. The

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129 Cf. Papachatzis Περάγγεια IV, 101, n.1. It is significant for our purpose to note that in modern times the river has no single name, but is differently designated at the different places by which it passes.

130 Paus. VII, 19, 2-10.

131 Cf. the apophthegmatic and romantic expressions (which are very rare in Pausanias) like (Paus. VII, 19, 2-3): ὡς δὲ ὁ Μελανίππος ἐς τὸ ἱοὺ τοῦ ἐρωτος ὑπήγαγε τὴν παρθένον, ἐμέτα αὐτήν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς. ἔπεται δὲ ποὺ τῷ γίγα τά τε ἄλλα ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ εἰς εὐαγχείον νέος, καὶ οὐχ ἡκτορα ἐς τοὺς ἐρωτάς τὸ ἀνάλγητον, ὅπου καὶ Μελανίππο τότε ἐθέλειν ἔθελον τοῦ Κοιμάκων οὕτε παρὰ τῶν ἔτων γορίεων οὕτε παρὰ τῶν Κοιμάκων ἱμερών ἁπνήηται διαν. Ἐπεδείξετο δὲ ἐπὶ πολλῶν τε ἄλλων καὶ ἐν τοῖς Μελανίππο παθήμασι ὡς μετέτιν ἐρωτικὸν καὶ ἀνθρώπων συγχέουσαν νόημα καὶ ανατρέπεται θεῶν τιμᾶς, ὅπου καὶ τότε ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος λείῳ Κοιμάῳ καὶ Μελανίππου ἐξεπλησσαν τοῦ ἐρωτος τῆς ὑμήρας, and later (VII, 19, 5): μόνῳ γὰρ δὴ ἀνθρώπῳ ψυχής ἐστὶν αὐτὰξιν κατορθώσαι τινα ἐρασθέντα.
opposites meet at the point of Dynamism. At Patras too, though the connotations would vary from one local cult to another, Artemis made her epiphanies as both ἀρτεμίς and ἀρταμος.

Artemis and Dionysus: Again

The case of Triklaria brings to the foreground again the vexed problem concerning the relationships between Artemis and Dionysus. An attempt at a theoretical articulation of one way in which their functional intimacy can be conceived has been advanced on the occasion of the discussion of the Spartan masks and the phallic apparatus which accompanied them, in the chapter on Ortheia. Another instance in which their proximity could be glimpsed was provided by the overt mentions of, or allusions to, Dionysiac festivals in the context of the Artemisian cults in Attica. But the case of the Patraic Triklaria offers one of the best opportunities to see the two deities operating together, in an explicit and acknowledged manner.

In the account of Pausanias, the end of the human sacrifices that finally relieved the people of Patras from the compulsory bloody debt to the goddess is presented in a somewhat complicated fashion. To be precise, it is not the hero Eurypylos in person who brings the desired solution to the predicament of the 'Achaeans', but the chest which he carries with him from Troy. This chest contains a statue of Dionysus executed by the divine craftsmanship of Hephaestus, which casts madness to whoever dares to look in the inside. That was indeed the fate of Eurypylos who, unaware of the consequences, innocently opened the chest. The spectacle drove him crazy:

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He then consulted the Delphic Oracle which prophesied that he would be cured at the place where people perform an unusual sacrifice (ἐξεναυθείαν); and so it happened. He arrived at the river-side altar of Triklaria at the precise moment when a youth and a virgin were about to be sacrificed, he realized the implications of the oracle—and the sacrificers realized the implications of yet another oracle; for they had been admonished by Apollo to await a foreign king (βασιλεύς τοῦ οίνου) who would liberate them from their bloody burden—and in the end, the saviour god of the urn, in an unspecified way, effected their redemption. The cult of Dionysus Aisymnetes was then instituted, and the Homeric hero133 who brought from afar him-who-comes134—the double entendre is not

132Paus. VII, 19, 7.
133Cf. Hom. II, V, 76; XI, 809-810.
134Cf. Detienne At Large 7.
unintentional — became a religious hero who was to be henceforth receiving a chthonic cult.\textsuperscript{135}

It is not only the interpenetration of Triklaria and Aisymnetes who are indissolubly intertwined in the narrative of Pausanias reporting the mythological legend of the Patraic folk that brings the two deities very close together.\textsuperscript{136} It is also the political function ascribed to both of them that shows the degree to which the two divinities were interwoven in the consciousness of the believers. The sanctuary of Triklaria was emphatically common to all three towns gathered together to form Patras. But so was Aisymnetes. His cultic name already, used as a noun from Homer\textsuperscript{137} onwards to mean the elected referee of public games and later\textsuperscript{138} the powerful elected political leader, would be taken to point in this direction. But Pausanias gives us additional details. The statues of the three homonymous gods of the originally independent κόμαι (Messatis, Aroe and Anthia) who were identified (presumably at a comparatively late date) as Dionysuses were, at the celebration of the festival of Aisymnetes, carried from the place near the Patraic theatre where they normally stood, to the sanctuary of Aisymnetes.\textsuperscript{139} No less perhaps than Artemis Triklaria, Dionysus Aisymnetes too was a deity held responsible for the political, unification of Patras. But this was certainly the political role assumed by a god who in actual cult had nothing to do with politics.\textsuperscript{140}

The report of the Periegete concerning the ritual performed in honour of Dionysus at Patras bears stark resemblances, in points of sacred space, time and ceremony, to that of Artemis Triklaria. As to sacred time, first, both cults were performed at night: the main festival of Triklaria was a παννυχίς, whereas the culmination of the cult of Aisymnetes consisted of a procession of the chest (or urn, coffin) of the god which was only once a year taken out of the temple and that happened at a precise night in the overall festival. Pausanias is piously emphatic at this juncture:\textsuperscript{141}

\begin{center}
\textit{μὴ δὲ ἐν τῇ ἐορτῇ νυκτὶ ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκτὸς φέρει τὴν λάμψακα ὁ ἱερεὺς.}
\textit{αὐτῇ μὲν δὴ ἢ νυὲ γέρας τούτο εἶλησε.}
\end{center}

The sacred time at which the priest of Dionysus brings the god to the open air (à ciel ouvert, but dark) is a privileged night that receives divine blessing: the chest of the god is a prize to that night, as the presence of Triklaria sanctified the παννυχίς held in her honour. The sacred space, secondly, where the ceremonies are performed is identical too: it is the river Meilichos where the human sacrifices were allegedly performed. And thirdly,\textsuperscript{135-141}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[135]Paus. VII, 19, 10: τὸν Ἐδώμιονος ἔχουσιν Ἑφύρηπον ἐν μνημή καὶ οἱ καὶ ἕναγίζουν ἀνα πάν ἄτος, ἐπείδη τὸν Διὸς φέρει τὴν ἐν οἴκῳ ἐγώσι.
\item[136]Cf. Messenzio "Festa".
\item[137]Hom. Od. VIII, 358.
\item[138]Arist. Pol. 1285a29-32.
\item[139]Paus. VII, 21, 6: Ἰὸς τοῦ Ἰὸς ἐφύρηπον ἐν οἴκῳ καὶ ἕναγίζουν καὶ ὠνύματα. Μεσαντίοις γὰρ καὶ Ἀρχαῖοι πολίσμαται καὶ ὀνύματα τὰ ἐν τῷ Ἰὸς ἐφύρηπον κωμίζουσιν ἐν τῇ ἑαυτῆς τῆς Αἰσημήτου.
\item[140]Cf. Hegyi "Kult" with Redfield "Sex".
\item[141]Paus. VII, 20, 1.
\end{footnotes}
the boys that partake of the rite have their foreheads crowned with ears of corn as was
crowned the couple of youth and maiden while they were being led to the sacrificial altar
of Triklaria:142

καταβαίνοντι δὲ καὶ ὁπόσῳ δὴ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων παιδεῖς ἐπὶ τῶν
Μελιχοῦ αὐστάξουν ἐστεφανωμένου τὰς κεφαλὰς· ἐκόσιον δὲ οὕτω
τὸ ἄρχαιον οὖς ἄγοιεν τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι θύσινες.

The rituals of Aisymnetes and Triklaria, it is true, were not performed
simultaneously. By the second century of our era the cult of Triklaria had become
obsolete. Pausanias mentions her sanctuary near the river, but he also says that no statue
is to be found inside it any longer.143 The long section of his book on Achaia devoted to
the aetia of her cult serves the explicit purpose of accounting for the chthonic cults of the
hero Eurypylos and the god Dionysus. But it seems quite safe to assume that if the devout
population of Patras substituted Dionysus for Artemis, the two deities must have been
regarded as exhibiting an extensive range of common features in both cult and divine
power.

The statue of Dionysus that drives those who look at it (without the precaution
offered by canonized-canalized ritual) out of their minds is the Dionysian equivalent to the
statue of Ortheia which in a similar manner instilled madness in the two men who first
encountered it.144 There are at least two levels of pursuing the analysis of the meaning of
these mythological claims. One is by investigating the distinct kinds of madness as they
were classified by the ancient authors. The second is by raising the question as to what
those who went mad saw; or, more accurately, what the anonymous mythologizers had in
mind as the objects of the sight of the mythical persons who were driven crazy, i.e. what
the people who narrated these myths wanted thereby to convey. The two levels of analysis
are complementary.

My hypothesis is that, in the eyes of those to whom the idea of madness suggested
itself for the first time, the statue which upon meeting the eye inflicts madness was
perceived as a phallic symbol denoting the dynamism of wild nature145. I would even go
as far as to believe that the original wooden xoanon that gave birth to these myths was
actually carved out as a phallus, perhaps with the addition of anthropomorphic traits such
as eyes, as can be seen in the enormous phalluses carried on shoulders in ceremonial
processions of Dionysian rites or else, to take the antithetical example of female fecundity,
in the representations of Baubo who is always depicted as a human-face-like belly with

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142 Προφ. Προφ. 11: καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Τρικλαρίας, ἄγαλμα οὐδὲν ἐπὶ ἔχον.
143 Paus. VII, 22, 11: καὶ τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Τρικλαρίας, ἄγαλμα οὐδὲν ἐπὶ ἔχον.
144 Paus. III, 16, 9, Cf. what has been said above.
145 This is grasped, if indirectly, by Papachatzi: Περ. Περ. IV 100, π. I, in a pointed poetic expression:
[...] ὁ πατὴρ φυλάσσεται οἱ ἐκπλημμένες δυνάμεις πῶς προκαλοῦσι τὴν ἀφώνησιν καὶ τὸ ἀναξιότατον θραυσματίμημα τῆς φύσεως. (my emphasis).
particular emphasis put on the genital area. A few of the ivory carvings found in the sanctuary of Artemis Ortheia may, without an unreasonable stretch of the imagination, suggest, in fact, a phallus. In the particular case of Dionysus Aisymnetes, on the other hand, a psychoanalytic interpretation would push the analogy a bit farther: it would claim that the chest, like all boxes or box-shaped objects, represented the female genital parts, whereas the oblong statue of the god contained therein was a symbolic depiction of the male reproductive organ. And this may not be an unsubstantiated claim. For we know that a ceremonial cradle or winnowing-fan (λίκνον) (and/or a chest) in other Greek rituals, in the Eleusinian mysteries for instance, did actually contain replicas of sexual parts.

Starting from a different perspective, we may perhaps gain some insights into the symbolism of the phallus as related to Dionysiac madness. Among the four kinds of mania distinguished by Socrates in the Platonic Phaedrus, one is ascribed to Dionysus. This is the ritual madness as distinct from the Apollonian prophetic possession, the poetic inspiration of the Muses and the erotic infatuation of Aphrodite. All four are forms of possession which destabilize the normal everyday functioning of the human mind. They thus create a rupture in profane existence whereby particular aspects of the divine are disclosed. Ritual madness is in fact how Dodds glosses the Greek \textit{τελεοτική μανία}. The term, not entirely precise, refers to the madness that is induced by participation in the orgiastic rites of the god. But if a particular kind of madness can be induced at will under particular circumstances, its cause must lie hidden for the most part in the human psyche. This is absolutely true for the erotic madness, but, although all men become poets while in love, it is not entirely certain that all kinds of madness are applicable to all human beings. Prophetic and poetic possession are less liable to be common properties of all members of humankind. Dionysiac madness, however, is universal. All human beings may be enraptured by Dionysus, if the god comes at the right time.

But let us for a while forget the ritual character of his madness, since it does not apply to the cases in which we are interested. Alopecos and Astrabakos at Sparta, and Eurypylos on his way back to Greece on a route which would lead him to Patras, got out of their minds without participating in a ritual and without performing a secret orgiastic rite. So far from being a blessing (as madness can often be), their craziness was a disease in ardent need of therapy. What was it that drove them crazy? Again I would suggest that it was (in the mythological language of concrete presence) a direct encounter

146Cf. Devereux Baubo; Olender "Baubō".
147Cf. \textit{LIMC} s.v. Άρτεμις, ill. 88 a-f and esp. 97.
148\textit{Plat. Phaedrus} 265b.
149Dodds \textit{Irrational} 64.
150\textit{Plat. Symp.} 196e.
152It was not, however, (in the Platonic classification) a νόσημα ἀνθρώπων, but was conversely effected ὑπὸ θείας ἐξάλλης (\textit{Plat. Phaedrus} 265a).
with Ortheia-Trikleria-Dionysus, as manifested in a recognizable phallic image, or (in the language of speculative, abstract thinking) an encounter with unharnessed natural dynamism. When natural dynamism appears in a non-ritualized form, i.e. as uncontrolled and brutal potency, its effects are destructive. The erect male organ, manifest as it is, as opposed to the hidden but no less dynamic feminine counterpart,\(^{153}\) may thus become the symbol of natural dynamism at large. After all, the human body is widely used in religious symbolism, not because it is human, but because of its great potentiality to symbolize forces of nature (and of society).\(^{154}\) If the mythical πρώτοι εὐρηται of the cults of the Spartan Artemis and the Patraic Artemis-Dionysus went mad because they had inappropriately faced a phallus,\(^{155}\) then their madness says quite a lot about the deities involved. The Dionysiac τελεστική μανία is not only the madness induced by orgiastic ceremonies, but also the destructive madness caused by natural dynamism which leads to the establishment of the Dionysiac rites. The Euripidean Bacchae shows that the god is there prior to the institution of his cult. Whether one accepts him or not may be a matter of personal choice. But if one does not accept him (like Pentheus), one will have to suffer from one’s own negligence.

To summarize our results so far, we should say that madness is a term that does not describe the objective reality, but, rather, the subjective (i.e. human) disintegration of the possessed. The cause of such a human inability to stand in front of potency whenever manifested, an inability which results in losing one’s mind, is to be found in natural dynamism. It is there that the ontological root of mania should be sought, and there Artemis of wilderness meets Dionysus. The Artemisian-Dionysiac madness is thus the madness caused by the uncontrollable natural dynamism. In this sense the erotic madness of the φιλομιθης Aphrodite is a subspecies of the generic Dionysian madness.

There is only one instance in the Homeric epics in which Artemis and Dionysus come together. A passing reference though it is, occurring in the Odyssey while Odysseus narrates the experiences of his journey to the Underworld, it still highlights the relationship of the two deities by somehow pointing out that it is a relationship based on destructiveness. Among the dead of Hades Odysseus mentions Ariadne whom Theseus intended to bring with him to Athens, but did not manage to fulfil his plans, because:\(^{156}\)

\[
\text{πάρος δὲ μιν Ἀρτέμις ἐκτά}
\]
\[
\text{Ḍιη ἐν ἁμφρύτῃ Διούσῳ μαρτυρήσι.}
\]

In this variation, which does not seem to have been the mainstream version of the myth of Ariadne and the god in ancient times,\(^{157}\) Artemis is the divine executive of the lethal plans

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\(^{153}\) Cf. Slater Hera 78.

\(^{154}\) The point is excellently made by Douglas Purity 123.

\(^{155}\) Cf. also the δικτυλός λίθων which was apparently a phallic cult-object where Orestes was cured from his madness (Paus. VIII, 34, 2; cf. Dietrich Tradition 113).

\(^{156}\) Hom. Od. XI, 324-325.

\(^{157}\) Cf. Grimal Dictionnaire s.v. Ariane, and Frazer, Apollodorus II, 136 n. 2 with collection of the main sources.
of Dionysus. Both divinities have a share in the killing of the daughter of Minos. Destructiveness brings them together.

It is the destructive aspect of Artemis that makes a goddess of hunting out of her. In describing the duel between Skamandrios and Menelaus in the fifth book of the *Iliad*, Homer, with real tragic sense, deplores the fate of the Trojan hero who, although instructed by Artemis herself in hunting, is bound to fall prey to the spear of Menelaus:158

νιόν δὲ Στροφίου Σκαμάνδριον, αἱμονα θήρης,
'Ατρείδης Μενέλαος ἔλ' ἐγχει ὄξυοντι,
ἐσθλοῦ θηρητήρα· δίδαξε γὰρ Ἡρτέμις αὐτή
βάλλειν ἀγρία πάντα, τὰ τε τρέφειν οὐρεσίν ὕλη
ἀλλ' οὗ οἱ τότε γε χραίσμι ' "Αρτέμις ισχειαρα,
οὐδὲ ἐκηβολίαι, ἤπιν τὸ πρὶν γ' ἐκέκαστο.

Xenophon shows himself to be very pious in the traditional manner when at the beginning of his *Cynegeticus* ascribes the invention of hunting to Artemis and Apollo.159 But to say that Artemis is the protectress of hunters pure and simple is to miss the point of religious symbolism. Hunting is an activity in which aggression is most conspicuously revealed. The Artemisian domain of wild life as well as the 'essential' destructiveness of the goddess find in hunting a pointed symbolic image. But again, it is natural dynamism that is manifested in the activity of hunting, an activity that subscribing by necessity to the law of the jungle is performed by definition within the animal kingdom where, according to Hesiod,160 there is no justice.

158Hom. II. V, 49-54.
160Hes. *O.D.* 277-278.
Let us repeat it. Artemis asks for and receives πολυνυμία. A survey of the cultic epitheta under which she was worshipped in different parts of the Greek world would provide us with a scheme in which six domains of her exerting influence could be distinguished. Sometimes an epiklesis refers to the specific locality of the cult. These epikleses have here been omitted, except when they transcend the confines of locality to characterize the goddess more generally (e.g. Alphείαία). The following table is not meant to be exhaustively comprehensive. But it is, I think, suggestive enough.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moisture</th>
<th>Flora</th>
<th>Fauna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rivers, Lakes etc.</td>
<td>Trees, Plants etc.</td>
<td>Wild Beast, Birds etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Λιμνάτις</td>
<td>Καρυάτις</td>
<td>Καπροφάγος</td>
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<tr>
<td>Λιμναία</td>
<td>Κεδρεάτις</td>
<td>Αυκεία</td>
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<tr>
<td>Στυμφαλία</td>
<td>Δαφναία</td>
<td>'Ελαφιά</td>
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<td>'Αλφεία</td>
<td>Λυγοδέσμη</td>
<td>'Ελαφιβόλος</td>
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<tr>
<td>'Ελεία</td>
<td>Φακελίτις</td>
<td>Ταυροπόλος</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Θερμία</td>
<td>(Νησσοσός)</td>
<td>Πόλυβοία</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

161Paus. III, 23, 10; IV, 4, 2; VII, 20, 7-8; VIII, 53, 11; Tac. Ann. IV, 43.
162Paus. III, 10, 7; Serv. Ecl. VIII, 29 (cf. Pollux IV, 104; Phot. s.v. καρυάτεια).
163Hesych. s.v. καπροφάγος.
165Hesych. s.v. καπροφάγος.
166Paus. II, 31, 4 (cf. VIII, 36, 7).
167Paus. VII, 12, 2.
168Paus. III, 24, 8; Strabo VIII, 3, 12 =343.
169Paus. VII, 12, 10.
170Paus. VI, 22, 8; VI, 22, 10 (cf. V, 14, 6); Strabo VIII, 3, 12 =343; Athen. 346b (cf. Pind. Nem. I, 1-6; Schol. ad Pind. Pyth. II, 12).
171Paus. III, 16, 11.
172Soph. Trach. 213; El. Magn. s.v. έλαφηβολοί (cf. Plut. Mor. 244e).
173Strabo VIII, 2, 53 = 350; Hesych. s.v. έλεία (cf. Motte Prairies 93ff.).
174Prob. ad Virg. Ecl. 3 (Keil).
175Soph. Ajax 172; Eur. Iph.Taur. 1457; Strabo IX, 1, 22 = 399; El. Magn. s.v. ταυροπόλος.
176Aristid. Or. 50, 4. Cf. Croon "Thermia".
177Hesych. s.v. πολύβοια.
179Paus. VIII, 14, 5.
The six domains over which Artemis holds sway are also the domains in which the
goddess is pre-eminently manifested. And if there is a binding notion common in all these
distinct fields of divine presence, it should, I think, be found in Dynamism. But if such is
the case, there seems to be no particularly compelling reason to privilege one of those six
categories at the expense of the remaining five. However, the fallacy of ungrounded
partiality has in fact been repeatedly committed, when now and again Artemis is assumed
to be most pertinently characterized as the Mistress of Animals. The domain of animal
life, to be sure, may be a sphere of natural existence where dynamism is most likely to
find appropriate symbolic expression. Yet, the attention to the symbolic content of the
Mistress-of-Animals function, once drawn, must be constantly kept in mind.

Let us look more closely at the problem raised by the afore-mentioned partiality.
One aspect of the Artemisian ‘many-nameness’ is the fact that she presided over wild
beasts. In Homer already, she was called Πότνια Θηρῶν. This admittedly important
aspect of the goddess, however, has been disproportionately emphasized in many a
modern account, to the point of giving the impression that Artemis was originally
concerned exclusively with animal life and that only to the extent to which her being a

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182Paus. IV, 31, 10; Clem Alex. Strom. 418 P; Dionys. Byv. Anapl. Fr. XXVII; Schol. ad Theocr. II, 12
183Paus. IV, 34, 6.
185Steph. Byz. s.v. αἰθότου; Hesych. s.v. αἰθόσια.
186Paus. VI, 23, 6.
189Athen. 139 a-b.
190Call. Hymn ad Art. 235; St. Byz s.v. Χελώνη; Athen. 629e.
191Hesych. s.v. σελαία.
192Call. Hymn ad Art. 234.
193Paus. II, 35, 1; Hesych. s.v. Ἰφιγένεια.
194Plut. Themist. VIII.
195Diod. Sic. V, 73.
198Aesch. Suppl. 676; Schol. ad Eur. Med. 396; Schol. ad Aristoph. Plut. 591; Suid. s.v. Ἐκάτη.
Mistress of Animals affected human hunting and cattle-breeding was she acknowledged as a power to be worshipped. The overvaluation of the Mistress-of-Animals function of a deity who in reality could be better described as Mistress of Wildness, has been primarily due to two reasons. One is the iconographical evidence (some of which goes back to pre-history thus providing an uninterrupted iconographical motif that is discernible in Minoan art and can presumably be traced further back in time) which depicts a goddess surrounded by animals, or more frequently in the middle of two wild beasts that form a heraldic pattern. Such visual representations have usually been taken for what they look and consequently interpreted at face value. The symbolic message of the animals has been unduly neglected, as a result. So far from conveying a symbolic confirmation of the wideranging application of the power of the goddess, as they should be, the wild beasts have been construed as the sole 'subjects' that populate the kingdom, and bow heads to the sovereignty, of the goddess. The second reason for the modern 'theriomania', intimately related to, or rather included in, the first, is the Homeric reference to Artemis as Mistress of Animals. While the battle of the gods is going on, Artemis reproaches her brother for not daring to face Poseidon in a duel, and the poet introduces her castigation with the following words that focus on the wild potency of the goddess:

Here the modern historians thought that they discovered the literary appellation that could serve as a recurring label for the illustrations of the numerous Mistresses of Animals in their books. Later, with the decipherment of the Linear-B script their initial intuition appeared to be supported by still earlier literary evidence. But it is noteworthy that the other Mistresses [po-ì-ni-ja of grain, of horses, of the labyrinth, or without qualification (=Athena?)] that appear in the Mycenaean documents have been unreasonably denied honours equal to the Mistress of Animals. They have been either completely disregarded or forced to keep an inappropriately low profile. A third reason can be evoked to account for the modern overvaluation under discussion, but it is not of the same importance as the other two. Sociological explanations have tried to relate the assumed omnipresent Mistress of Animals to the hunting activities of the prehistoric and historic communities. By so doing they have supported the view according to which the depicted goddess was primarily or exclusively venerated as a divinity of the animal kingdom.

199Hom. II, XXI, 470-471.
200Cf. Ventris and Chadwick Documents 289, 310, 311.
Artemis Laphria

The catastrophic, deleterious, destructive character of the Dynamism which is Artemis is very emphatically shown in the second of her cults in Patras, situated in the acropolis of the city, which was, in contrast to that of Triklaria, flourishing at the time when Pausanias visited Achaia: Artemis Laphria. The etymology of the name remains a subject of dispute. But equally debatable is the precise date at which the cult was introduced in Achaia, provided that it was not actually an indigenous cult (which I doubt). Pausanias, who is our sole informant on the particulars of the cult culminating in an enormous holocaust of all sorts of animals, connects in one etymological attempt the divine epithet with the myth of Oeneus related already in Homer, and in another complementary attempt he draws the name back to a Delphic hero who, according to a legend, established the cult of the goddess in the Aetolian Calydon lying opposite to Patras across the straits of Rhion. The ancient traveller also says that in the reign of Augustus the chryselephantine statue of the goddess (a statue created by the Naupaktian sculptors Menaichmos and Soidas in the middle or late fifth century B.C.) was brought to Patras from Calydon. Should this be taken to mean that the cult and the festival of the Laphria (as distinct from the statue) Artemis was a late addition to the official cults of the city of Patras (as Wilamowitz claimed)? I think not. The sombre character of the entire rite and the remark of the Periegete that the sacrifice was an  ἐπιχώριος τρόπος θυσίας point, rather, to remote antiquity. The aboriginal cult — Laphria must have been the name of an independent deity later assimilated to Artemis — was in all likelihood invigorated at some point during the forty years of the reign of Augustus and was to continue to be thriving in the ensuing two or three centuries.

What is of primary importance for our purpose is the peculiar and hugely abnormal sacrifice offered to the goddess. Pausanias, an eyewitness of the rite, describes it in meticulous detail, excessively astonished as he seems to have been by the spectacle:

" Άγουσι δὲ καὶ Λάφρια έσορταν τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι οἱ Πατρεῖς ἀνὰ πάν ἔτος, ἐν ἕ τρόπος ἐπιχώριος θυσίας ἐστίν αὐτοῖς. περὶ μὲν τὸν

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201 Cf. Nilsson Feste 218-225; Herbillon Cultes 55-74. Interest in the cult of Laphria has been rekindled in recent years. Most accounts are dominated by omnipresent structuralist notions: variations of the theme "nature/savagery—transition/passage—culture/civilization" feature prominently. Cf. Piccaluga "Olocausto" (followed by critical comments): transition from a hunting economy to an agricultural economy; Lepore "Epitei": passage from savagery to civilization.

202 Paus. VII, 18, 9-10: Λάφριον γὰρ τὸν Κασταλίου τοῦ Δελφοῦ Καλυδώνιος ἱδρύσασθαι τὸ δάμα τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τὸ ἄρχατον, οἱ δὲ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος τοῦ μήματο τὸ ἦς ὘ίνεα ἀνὰ χρόνον τοὺς Καλυδώνιος ἑλαφρότερον γενόσθαι λέγοντο, καὶ αἰτίας τῇ θέη τῆς ἐπικλέσεως ἔθελον κεκαί τατάριν.

203 Cf. Papachatzis Παραγέγραφα IV, 92, fig. 40 and 93, n. 5. Anti "Artemide", made the suggestion that there may have been two statues, the earlier one being the work of the artists mentioned by Pausanias and represented in coins of the period of Augustus, the later one being the work of Damophon.

204 Wilamowitz Glaube I, 378ff. As was to be expected Meuli "Opferbrüche" 209-210, took the other extreme and spoke of a "vorgriechische Göttin".

βομον ἐν κύκλῳ ζύλα ἴστασιν ἐτὶ χλωρά καὶ ἐς ἐκκαίδεκα ἐκαστον πίθευς· ἐντὸς δὲ ἐπὶ τοῦ βομοῦ τὰ αὐτάτα σφισ τῶν ζύλων κεῖται. μηχανόνται δὲ ὑπὸ καρπὸν τῆς ἐορτῆς καὶ άνοδον ἐπὶ τοῦ βομοῦ λειτέραν, ἐπιφέροντες γῆν ἐπὶ τοῦ βομοῦ τοὺς ἁναβασμοὺς, πρώτα μὲν δὴ πομηῖν μεγαλοπρεπεστάτην τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι πομπεύουσι, καὶ ἡ ἱερωμένη παρθένος ὀχεῖται τελευταία τῆς πομῆς ἐπὶ ἐλάφων ὑπὸ τὸ ἁμα ἐξευγμευνῶν· ἐς δὲ τὴν ἐπιοῦσαν τιμικύστα ἡδὴ δραν τὰ ἐς τὴν θυσίαν νομίζουσι, δημοσίᾳ τε ἡ πόλις καὶ οὐχ ἱερῶν ἐς τὴν ἐορτήν οἱ ἴδιοιται φιλοτήμον ἐχουσιν. ἐσβάλλουσι γὰρ ζῶντας ἐς τὸν βομὸν ὄρινθας τε τοὺς ἐδώδιμους καὶ ἱερεία ὑμῶν ἀπαντα, ἐτὶ δὲ ἦς ἀγρίους καὶ ἐλάφους τε καὶ δορκάδας, οἱ δὲ καὶ λύκων καὶ ἄρκτων σκύμνους, οἱ δὲ καὶ τὰ τέλεια τῶν θηρίων· κατατιθέασι ἐς ἐπὶ τοῦ βομοῦ καὶ δεύδρων καρπῶν τῶν ἡμέρων, τὸ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦτού πῦρ ἐνάσων ἐς τὰ ζύλα. ἐνταῦθα ποὺ καὶ ἄρκτον καὶ ἄλλο τι ἐθεασάμην τῶν ζώων, τὰ μὲν ὑπὸ τὴν πρῶτην ὅρμην τὸ πυρὸς βιαζόμενα ἐς τὸ ἐκτός, τὰ δὲ ἐκφεύγουτα ὑπὸ ἱοχύος· ταῦτα οἱ ἐμβάλλοντες ἐπαινάγουσιν αὐθες ἐς τὴν πυρᾶν. πρωθήματι δὲ οὐδένα ὑπὸ τῶν θηρίων μημονευόμουν.

Five points stand out in the above passage. The choice of the sacrificial victims is the first and most significant amongst them. There are three categories of sacrificial victims: the first comprises edible birds, the second consists of the conventional victims of common θυσίαι and the third is made up of wild animals. As a matter of fact the emphasis is put on the third category which gives to the sacrifice its peculiar character. Having realized that, Pausanias is very precise in sub-classifying the category of wild beasts. Boars, stags and hinds are pushed onto the altar by some; others bring ursine and lupine cubs; and others still guide to the sacrificial site perfected, i.e. mature, wild beasts. The boars and deer stand halfway between the domesticated edible animals and the undomesticated beasts of the forests which are represented in the sacrifice both in the imperfect, immature form of the young cubs and in the fully-fledged wildness of the mature members. The selection of the sacrificial victims is meant to indicate the extensive applicability of the power of the goddess to whom they are offered. But her potency is not restricted to the animal kingdom. First-fruit offerings are presented on the same altar to Laphria, of the kind which Oeneus ignored or forgot to offer to the goddess thereby causing her devastating wrath. This second interesting point in the description of Pausanias highlights the combination of wild cruelty and perfectioning power, of

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206 I omit the distinction between ζύλα χλωρά and άιότατα because it has been duly stressed (e.g. in Piccaluga "Olocausto").
207 For a structuralist analysis of the myth of Oeneus based on the scheme mentioned above see Ellinger "Artémis".
uninhibited destruction and benevolent creativity in the Artemisian character: the source of creativity is to be found in the dynamism which, when not properly acknowledged and appeased, is bound to result in dissolution. Two more points concur in the same direction. The victims are burnt alive, and the holocaust with which Artemis is honoured is an ἄγευτος θυσία in which mortals have no share in the meat. The chthonic character of the deity to whom such a sacrifice is offered could not have been more explicitly pronounced. Last, but not least, the efficacy of the extreme power of the goddess over natural wilderness is supplementarily manifested in the eyes of the participants by the fact that no one was ever wounded by the beasts while in the duty of performing the rite. There is a parallel in Strabo who relates that in Enetia that are two sacred groves, the one being dedicated to the Argive Hera—a goddess greatly resembling Artemis (Ortheia) in some respects—and the other to the Aitolian Artemis in which wild beasts like wolves live in peaceful co-existence with what would normally be their prey (deer for example). Artemis was held responsible for the yoking and taming of those beasts, since she alone could relax the dynamism inherent in their being.

General conclusions follow...

208 Strabo V, 1, 9 = 215: καὶ δύο ἁλεία τὸ μὲν Ἦρας Ἀργείας δείκνυται τὸ δ’ Ἀρτέμιδος Ἀιτωλίδος, προσμυθεύοντι δ’, ὡς εἰκός, τὸ ἐν ταῖς ἁλείαις τούτοις ἤμερούσθαι τὰ θηρία καὶ λύκοις ἐλάφων συναγελάζονται, προσούκτων ἐν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ καταψυκτων ἀνέχονται, τὰ δὲ διωκόμενα ὑπὸ τῶν κυνῶν, ἐπειδὰν καταβύγη δεότο, μηκέτι διώκεσθαι.
209 Cf. Lepore "Veneto".
*Epilegomena:*

*Nooumen, Ancient and Modern*
MARGINAL ARTEMIS: Towards an Explanation

I. The Vernantian Hypothesis and Piecemeal Objections

Elaborating upon the commonly accepted theory which sees Artemis as a goddess of wild nature, Vernant finally came to the conclusion that, even more than a deity of wildness, Artemis was a divinity of the margins. Now and again his interpretation departs from, and focuses on, the border zones and the marginal places where distinctions between opposites are blurred and the antithetical poles of assumed polarities become less conspicuous:

The world of Artemis is not a completely wild space, representing a radical otherness in relation to the cultivated land of the city territory. Rather, it is a place of margins, border zones where what is 'other' becomes manifest in the contacts made with it, where the wild and the civilized live side by side, coming into opposition certainly, but mutually infiltrating one another.

La fonction d’Artemis serait-elle, comme on l’a supposé, d’écarter du monde civilisé et agricole cela même qu’elle représente et qui appartient à son domaine: terre sauvage et chasse? Située là où les zones opposées se recoupent et interfèrent, où leurs limites nettes s’effacent, elle semble plutôt rappeler la fragilité des frontières et souligner, par l’incertitude même dont elles sont marquées, la nécessité de les respecter strictement.

Apart from the general remarks made earlier about the predominant role played by irony in modern literary discussions and the emphasis put on marginality, there appear to be three factors which must have opened the path for, and guided, the above theory. There are consequently three points that stand out in Vernant’s analysis (which was originally restricted to the confines of Laconia). The first is the location of the Artemisian precinct. Situated in a place which could be adequately described as marshy, the sanctuary of Artemis could well represent the border zones mentioned above.

1Vernant cum suis ' would be a more fair description of the situation in the so-called Paris School: cf.e.g. Ellinger "Gypse", Recherches and "Artemis"; Frontisi-Ducroux "Artémis ".
2I deliberately draw references from several articles and books by Vernant in order to show the recurrence and diffusion of these views.
3Vernant and Frontisi-Ducroux in Vernant and Vidal-Naquet Tragedy 196-197.
4Vernant Figures 143.
[Artemis] is *agrotera* (rustic), but she is also *limnatis*, associated with swamps and lagoons. She has her place on the shores of the sea, in the coastal zone where the lines between earth and water are not clearly defined. She can also be found in the interior regions where an overflowing river or stagnant waters create a space that is neither entirely dry nor yet altogether aquatic and where all culture seems precarious and perilous.²

The second point refers to the flagellation of the youth, the most important feature which the ancient literary sources attribute to the cult of Ortheia. According to Vernant’s opinion, the ritual whipping should be seen as a rite which temporarily brings the Spartan adolescents in contact with slavery (i.e. the state where flagellation is the canonical form of punishment) in order to imprint on them a repulsion to servitude.

Ce qui est chez l’Hilote un état permanent, la forme normale de son existence, le jeune y participe comme une période probatoire, une phase préliminaire qu’il faut avoir traversée pour s’en détacher entièrement.⁶

The third and final point concerns the masks. Their function conforms to the marginality ascribed to the rite as a whole. They are supposed to operate as a means which, through a polarity of virtue and ugliness, glorious manhood and grotesque animality, ideal serenity and terrific hilarity, establishes and secures the identity of the young *ephebos*.

[...] les masques incarnent tantôt le modèle avec lequel le jeune doit s’identifier; tantôt, sous les formes du sauvage et du grotesque, de l’horrible et du ridicule, ces zones extrêmes de l’altérité qu’il faut avoir explorées pour s’en détacher tout à fait.⁷

In fact, all three points may be subject to different interpretations. The marshy place where the sanctuary is settled may indicate the fertility manifested in moisture⁸. Thales who believed that water is the primal substance out of which all beings had been generated was merely the first thinker who gave a philosophical articulation of a

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¹Vernant *Mortals* 197.
²Vernant "Orthia" 23.
³Vernant *Individu* 189-190; also in *Mortals* 220-243. Vernant seems to have been influenced by Lévi-Strauss *Masques*, where the programmatic methodological viewpoint stresses the hypothetical systematic (i.e. structuralist) function of the Amerindian masks under investigation (*Masques* 51), and the final result of the study is that (*Masques* 78) "quand, d’un groupe à l’autre, la forme plastique se maintient, la fonction sémantique s’inverse. En revanche, quand la fonction sémantique se maintient, c’est la forme plastique qui s’inverse".
⁴For the association of Artemis with marshy places, rivers and lakes see Table in "Artemis in Homer and Beyond".
commonly held belief. According to a Stoic interpretation, even the primordial Hesiodic Chaos was meant to signify an aboriginal liquid substance or water⁹, and the Homeric Tēthys and Oceanos were the progenitors of all beings¹⁰. To restrict ourselves to religious cults, a sanctuary of Dionysus in Laconia was established ἐν Λίμνας¹¹ and similar instances of Dionysian shrines were scattered all over Greece¹². What is more, various mythological legends indicate the intrinsic relationship of Dionysus with the watery element and with moisture¹³, and all were taken to refer to the generative power immanent in water. Are we to infer therefrom that Dionysus too is a "divinité des marges"? The margins are by definition the borderline, or border-space between two distinct entities. If both Dionysus and Artemis are 'marginal' divinities, which then are the divinities of Alterity, the divine Other to which they are juxtaposed? For only the one extreme of the polarity is given in the Vernantian and in any similar structuralist scheme, and that is the public, civic space with its cults and gods. What is the other end of the opposition, the 'wild', halfway between which and the truly 'political' deities the gods Artemis and Dionysus stand?

The ritual flagellation may be compared to similar purely religious practices in the ancient world, where an association with slavery cannot be maintained. For example, could the ceremonious beating of women in the Dionysian festival called Skiereia¹⁴ be an indication that the women should first become slaves in order to attain pure femininity?¹⁵ Or could the religious scourging of the underworld powers (ὑποχθόνιοι)¹⁶ in Arcadia have anything to do with human social structuring? The transgression of what was generally considered to be wrong (slavish comportment, effeminate manners and drunken indecent behaviour, for instance) was not effected in Sparta through a personal experiencing of the ignominious state to be overcome. Plutarch¹⁷ informs us that a drunken helot was exhibited to the youth in their banquets so that by means of his repulsive demeanour, the epheboi develop a powerful instinctive reaction against drunkenness and appreciate the decency of soberness all the more. In matters of civil morality it was not their πάθει μάθος that instructed them, but on the contrary the pathos of others led them to the denial of its consequences and instilled moderation in their souls. Even if we consider Plutarch to be considerably posterior to Sparta’s floruit and therefore an untrustworthy authority, could we imagine the seventh-century poet Tyrtaeus to have

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adopted such a method for the overcoming of cowardice and faint-heartedness? For in accordance with his structuralistic methodology Vernant does not take any pains to argue that the notorious flagellation was already in practice in the sixth century and presumably earlier (which in my opinion is right), yet he interprets it as occurring simultaneously with the rituals involving masks (the abundance of which comes from that very century), thus assuming that the archaic Sparta of Tyrtaeus resorted to educational practices which mostly contradict the (be it ideal) image of Sparta provided by the contemporary sources.

Last but not least, the masks can be seen as manifestations of the power of the goddess, especially of her uncontrolled, almost teratogenetic, intrinsic potency for procreation. In the final analysis, the unlimited wildness of Nature is the particular field over which Artemis holds sway, and ultimately this domain exemplifies not an uncivilized mode of being as has been suggested, but the chaotic fecundity of Night, the primordial all-engendering Earth which according to the Hesiodic cosmogony (and contrary to later philosophical theories which claimed the opposite) precedes the form-imposing principle of order. Such an ontological precedence is not restricted in primordial time, *in illo tempore* of mythology. The power which acted then persists all along the duration of the world’s existence, for, had it not been so, the world as we know it would collapse.

But if ambiguity was regarded as polluted, as I argued earlier, then no divine power can preside thereover. For what else mostly characterizes marginality, whatever particular content one ascribes to it, than its internal capacity of being ambiguous? Not that liminal territories (geographical or conceptual) were ignored by the ancients, but they were considered to be the battlefields of opposite divine powers which were in and for themselves perfectly well circumscribed. Ambiguous marginality *per se* was denied the prerogative of divine protection. And it was precisely this denial that produced human abhorrence *vis-à-vis* marginality whenever it happened to appear.

But if it be granted that the above are reasonable objections to the Marginal Artemis that was recently created in contemporary Paris, we may still be in need of some explanation as to what it was that misled Vernant & Co. A, no doubt partial, attempt at providing such an explanation is made below.

**II. The Reign of Ambiguity and Ambivalence.**

Ambiguity and Ambivalence owe much to psychoanalysis for their ascendancy to the throne of the conceptual apparatus employed by the scientific study of religion. It was the Freudian version of the new twentieth-century science — let us accede to Freud’s wish that his spiritual offspring be regarded as a (positive?) science — that enabled these two notions to become methodological tools of great heuristic value — real conceptual
missiles. By focusing on a central notion of psychoanalytic terminology borrowed from pubescent anthropology we may get a glimpse about the importance ascribed to ambiguity/valence:

i) Taboo

In anthropological and psychoanalytic discourse taboo can be defined as a thing, any thing, that is invested by society with special power to the effect (such) that contact with it is considered to be highly dangerous, leading to its prohibition. The danger that supposedly resides in a taboo may or may not be made explicit (materialized) with the addition of legal punishments. The point, however, is that, in the ideological construction of a society, and irrespective of how the taboo is protected, the taboo is always seen as an ambivalent thing. Its ambivalence, so the psychoanalytic argument would go, is caused by the fact that it inspires both horror and reverence at once. A kind of projection characteristic of the psychoanalytic approach is here implicated: the taboo is supposed to be neutral if seen in itself; there is no particular reason other than a socially constructed fear that is held responsible for its becoming an object of fear, and of reverence as a result: a change in social conditions, including the way a child is reared, would result in an alteration of the acknowledged taboos and, according to the most optimistic psychoanalytic preaching, would eliminate them altogether. But taboos are not in themselves ambivalent things, nor is their elimination possible (nor should it be even desirable, if it were).

Taboo is a thing that prompts awe. There is power to be found in any thing that is regarded as a taboo. This power is exuded and radiated in the atmosphere around the taboo. Power as such calls for veneration. Whoever encounters it senses what is at stake there and upon becoming thus aware spontaneously bows his head in order to protect himself. Expiation and propitiation are later-stage developments. Initially one must simply protect oneself. This is not a moral attitude. Morality cannot intervene in the realm of power. For power as such lies beyond good and evil. When power manifests itself, it is indiscriminately benevolent and malicious. Physical things may illustrate things hidden: the sun shines irrespective of whether it is to procure us a nice tan or to cause us a serious scald. That in different circumstances there may be different outcomes owing their origin to sunshine is irrelevant to the sun (though it may be extremely relevant to us). The sun shines because it is power. The sun’s power is to shine. But precisely because the sun is

\[\text{The influence of Turner "Betwixt" in broadening the zone in which 'marginality' is supposedly applicable has been paramount, but on the dangers arising from an uncontrolled application of this notion (which not infrequently leads to nothing more than banality and nothing less than nonsense) see Versnel Transition 60-74.}\]
what it is (i.e. power), the sun is not, nor could it ever be, ambivalent. What may be ambivalent is our own response to its power, that indeed varies according to the effects that the determinacy of the sun’s power has upon us.

Awe is a human feeling and veneration the immediate outcome of such a feeling. Because what produces awe is itself awesome and awe-inspiring, the concomitant veneration is stressful or even depressing. But because what produces awe, in order to do so, needs to be powerful and power-radiating, the concomitant veneration is also an admiration. Veneration, like the Platonic Eros, is the offspring of antithetical parents, of Might and Impotency. But Might characterizes the thing in itself, the taboo as such, whereas a sense of Impotence is what arises in the soul of the venerating human being. In this sense, taboo can be said to be ambivalent. But then it is veneration that is ambivalent, not the cause and object thereof. For something to be a taboo it must be unequivocally, hence unambiguously, powerful. Ambivalence is a psychological (subjective) feeling dwelling in the human being when he encounters power.

The fallacy of Freudian psychoanalysis consists in ascribing the subjective ambivalence to the objective taboo. In so doing it proves itself to be loyal enough to its own fundamental law, according to which projection is an ubiquitous inescapable process.

ii) Impressionism

In the context of a critique of the Vernantian theory of Artemis it is worth drawing attention to a picture of the sea intended to illustrate the chapter on Greek landscape in R. Buxton’s Imaginary Greece.¹⁹ The illustration in question, a black-and-white photograph taken in the southwestern part of the Peloponnese, is very indicatively labelled "the sea and its margins", although one can only see how the extended marine element is clearly (i.e. unambiguously) delineated and separated from the land. One feels tempted to bypass the incongruity between the illustration and the caption, to (dis)regard it as an error of the pen and to substitute, in one’s mind, the correct "the sea and its clear-cut edges" for it. But the point which is meant to be made consists precisely in pointing out the supposed marginality of even the Greek landscape, mostly adored for its clarity.²⁰ This forces us to present our viewpoint most clearly.

The margins are not entities because they are not defined in themselves, but only with reference to the two (or more) crystal-clear entities that merge with each other in order to form a (limited) region where marginality prevails (maybe the white coastal stripe in Buxton’s illustration). To focus on these limited regions as if they constituted entities

¹⁹Cf. Buxton Greece 97-104 (102).
²⁰Cf. e.g. Zimmern Commonwealth 14.
in themselves, and, moreover, to reach the ultimate conclusion that all (more or less) beings are marginal and/or ambiguous was a salient feature of late nineteenth-century Paris, not of the ancient outlook. It is in impressionism that contours are made to faint, that outlines are confused, that sharp edges and clear delimitations are faced as repellent abominations. The particular aesthetic pleasure that a masterfully executed impressionist painting conveys consists precisely in the created illusion by means of which beings seem to have stripped themselves of their limits, demarcation lines have been dropped, clarity of vision has been resisted, and as a consequence vagueness, uncertainty and indeterminateness predominate to the point of letting objects interpenetrate with one another in an alluringly erotic but pseudo-mystically chaotic embrace. Impressionism hates visual unequivocality, which is in itself the result of how the impressionist artist sees the world. By contrast, ancient art, and especially painting and drawing (to keep the parallel as a pertinent one-to-one analogy so as to bring the contrast into higher relief), from Archaic depictions on vases to Roman (Pompeian, for instance) elaborate (even when serving a merely decorative function) frescoes show a spectacular adherence and attention to clear-cut demarcation and exhibit a rare sensitivity to the distinctiveness of each object depicted (which can be achieved only when the outlines are sharpened to the point of leaving no room for ambiguity as to the unity of each object). The ancient artist, it seems to me, saw and consequently represented the world very differently from his Parisian counterpart: to use structuralist terminology in a case where it seems to be most effectively applicable, I would be tempted to say that the ancient artist’s vision is the polar opposite of the impressionist’s mode of seeing.

To return to the visual example with which I started, the ancient eye would see in the photograph of the sea yet another confirmation of its deep conviction regarding the clarity of physical contours. An artist would intuitively understand, and a philosopher would theorizingly say, that there is only a one-dimensional width-less noetic line that separates the sea from the land, as a similar ἀπλατής line distinguishes the shadow, i.e. the (however distorted) outline of an object as it is projected on a surface, from what is not shadow. When two separate elements meet (the sea and the land, say), their coming-into-contact helps them clarify their appropriate territories better than when and if they existed on their own, as the ties among members of minority groups are better strengthened when the group finds itself in an alien, foreign or (even more so) hostile environment. The absence of void in the physical world that surrounds us, the indisputable (in terms of our daily experience, as opposed to scientific truth) fact that nature is filled with various entities which tend to expand themselves in space, the observation that objects clash with

21 For the different ways in which different cultures look at things (the natural environment, man-made objects, the interplay between light and shadow etc.) see the interesting Beard "Approach". When people from different cultures look at the same item, they do not necessarily see the same thing; and this ultimately affects the way in which looking-at-things functions among different people.
one another and are in a state of as it were constant war, all these facts far from indicating an essentially amorphous continuity of what supposedly appears only to be distinct and only seemingly possesses an identity of its own, point, in fact, to the distinctness of different natural beings and entities that are interrelated only to the extent that they are sufficiently circumscribed. To be sure, there may be a limited space where the actual border of the two elements that meet (again, say, the borders of the sea and the land) moves to and fro at different points in the temporal succession. But *in any particular moment* there is only one line, not an extended space, that separates and distinguishes the two.

**iii) The Sorites-Argument**

The philosophical riddle best known as the sorites-argument may better highlight the two different perspectives from which margins are perceived and subsequently conceptualized in the ancient and the modern intellectual contexts respectively, and it may thus prove to be very illuminating at this juncture. So far from corroborating the assumed relativity of limits, as it always does in the modern philosophical and sociological discussions, the sorites-argument when used by the ancients themselves in the context of their thought (several variations on the theme were prefigured by Zeno and elaborated by Euboulides of Miletus in the fourth century\(^\text{22}\)) may be understood to give intellectual articulation of, and support to, the obsessive ancient belief that there must be only one pebble that distinguishes the heap of pebbles from what is not a heap but only a few scattered pebbles, however difficult, or even impossible, it may be to find out which one is the precise pebble (in a continuous scale of rising numbers) that would make all the difference. More than that, the ancient use of the sorites-argument may be seen to lead to the conclusion that the difference between the two poles (i.e. between, on the one hand, the heap and on the other its negation/opposite/absence) is so sharp as to defy any attempt that tries to capture and solidify it (viz. to pin it down and deprive it of its 'vitality' in actuality) with reference to one single pebble: less than a pebble, the ancients seem to imply, is what makes the transition from non-heap to heap. But what is less than the elementary component of the heap, less than the heap-atoms, as we might say, (namely the pebbles) can only be a noetic attribute which is by definition devoid of actual mass (of spatial extension and weight) but which the ancients wanted to ascribe to, or rather to see it operating in (i.e. to find it being inherent in) the thing in itself (in the heap of pebbles, in our case), in order to prevent any misunderstanding deriving from, and resulting in, idealistic subjectivism.

\(^{22}\text{Cf. Burnyeat} "\text{Gods}"\)
It goes without saying that any heap of pebbles is not an entity in its own right. But neither are such 'ideo-typical' geographical configurations as the 'mountain' and the 'cultivated field'. Nor is (if we wish to push the analogy farther) the trinity of beasts, men and gods, in the eyes of those who employ it analytically. Permeated by the modern evolutionist myth (in the sense given in the "Prolegomena") which stresses the quantitative continuity among worldly beings and neglects their defining lines, the contemporary discourse on liminality and marginality is desperately puzzled by the conundrum posed by the 'more or less' as if the 'more or less' were not the 'more or less' of something.

There are two ways in which Nature can be said to be continuous. According to the first, Nature is continuous because it is hierarchical: it proceeds with leaps and ruptures, and thus provides different genera of things with their distinct generic principium individuationis. The Aristotelian biology, for instance, subscribes to that view. In the second conception of a continuous Nature, by contrast, Nature is continuous precisely because there are no real, but only apparent, leaps and ruptures to be found there: moving from one genus to another it is the degree of complexity that matters, not any qualitative difference, and within one given genus some aberrant individuals are taken to prove that the definition of the genus in question is, scientifically speaking, problematic. The divergence between these two different conceptions of Nature may epitomize the divide between the Ancients and the Moderns. For the contrast between the ancient insistence on the existence of absolute defining lines and of extremely clear contours and the modern problématique that focuses precisely on the defining lines but sees them as border-zones where ambiguity prevails could not be more striking.
Most festivals in honour of Artemis were held at the beginning of spring. One of the symbols of the goddess was the quail (δρτυξ), a migratory bird, which comes back to Greece from Africa at precisely the same period each year. The goddess supervised the adolescent rites of perfection for both young men and maidens, as well as guaranteed delivery for women in labour. She was also indispensable as a deity that would help the consummation of marriage and presided over wild life at large. On the other hand, she asked for human sacrifices and indulged in cruel rituals including bloodthirsty flagellations and holocausts of several animal (and floral) species. Her sanctuaries were situated close to lakes, rivers, marshes and rarely only (except in Asia Minor) was Artemis a poliouchos deity. The attributes which mythology pre-eminently ascribed to her are chastity and wildness: her power vacillates between ἀρταμίς and ἀρταμος.

To say that Artemis represents Wild Nature is, it may reasonably be objected, reducing the Artemisian divinity to an alien entity, the understanding of which has nowadays turned ambiguous and vague. Such a reduction is, however, legitimate because it relates Artemis (the divinity of whom is posed for us as a problem) to the overarching notion of the entire environment seen in its most cruel aspects. However, it can be still better qualified. If we for once fix our glance on the ancient mythico-poetic conception of nature, and of the Earth in particular, repeatedly expressed in various mythological forms or (if you prefer) guises, as not only life-generating, but as itself being alive and divine we may find it easier to digest what would otherwise be more likely to look like a nineteenth-century obsession.

Wilamowitz came to the conclusion that Artemis is the "Göttin des Draussen", but we could press his conclusion a little farther, as we have already suggested. More than a deity of the outdoors existence, more even than a divinity of wild nature pure and simple (which are, to be sure, precise descriptions of her mythological and cultic apparatus, but, as far as the symbolic-theological understanding of the Artemisian presence goes, leave still something to be desired), she is the divinity of Extreme, Natural Dynamism. The
addition of the qualification 'natural' to the dynamism which Artemis represents is, I believe, necessitated by an overview of her manifestations and would, moreover, have the advantage of distinguishing the Artemisian dynamism from any kind of mechanical dynamism, as for instance can be found in the productive power of a windmill.

An Extremity of Natural Dynamism then: such a notion may help us understand the duality of the Artemisian nature, a nature that could be termed as Plenipotency, or Dynamic Formlessness resulting in either Creativity or Dissolution. That is why Artemis is manifested in the particular moments of giving-birth and puberty when a rekindling of the spark of life, an enhancement of the force vitale, is needed for a being to be able, regenerated as it were, to resume its normal functioning and proceed along its normal course in unabated tonality. Moreover, this duality accounts for her manifestations in abrupt, instant deaths which too were instances of excessive vital power. The power of Artemis is dark, because it resides in chaotic night (in the ancient sense of Chaos=boundless gap, as opposed to its modern equivalent that denotes confusion), in abysmal formlessness. But the darkness, featurelessness and indefiniteness of the chthonic principle is the root, source and fountainspring of celestial finitude. As such it is ontologically antecedent. Hiddenness precedes manifestation because what is manifested is dynamically presupposed and enclosed in what is hidden. It is the dynamism of hiddenness, the might of boundlessness, the potency of infiniteness that provides Artemis with all her cruel and so-called primitive features. However, if her 'primitiveness' was maintained in the conscience of her worshippers and in actual cult not only until a comparatively late date but up to the very total extinction of paganism, until, that is to say, the time when the ancient rituals were for the most part overcome by a new religion of different (i.e. otherworldly) orientation, then the cruelty and wildness of Artemis, far from being a relic of the primitive past, must have pertained to the core of what Artemis stood for in the context of Greek religion. Hiddenness and Manifestedness, Formlessness and Beauty were the two poles that distinguished the Homeric figure from that worshipped in local cults throughout the mainland of Greece.

The final flowering of pagan antiquity and the intellectualist prominence which the beliefs of paganism received by means of a doctrinal elaboration of the previously unreflectively accepted views regarding the gods are to be found in the various philosophical schools that have come to be recognized under the rubric of Neoplatonism. A tendency to rigorously defend the constituent religious experiences of Hellenism was coupled with a willingness, felt as an ardent intellectual need, to present the mythological traditions of old as a coherent theological system. To the accusations going back at least to the classical era that the gods of Homer behaved inconsistently and in an all too human-like fashion, displayed distinctive features of immorality and were, as a result, hardly worthy of the title
of godhead, the Neoplatonic philosophers replied with an allegorical reading of traditional
gods, interpreting the divine mythological adventures (especially those related to violent,
incestuous and other sexual and 'immoral' acts) as the outward cover of the functioning of
profound cosmic principles. The pagan gods could no longer foster an unmeditated
response in the hearts of the most sensitive people of the time, but they could nonetheless
deeply move their minds if and only if an efficient, however complicated and perhaps
intellectualist, theory could be erected to account for even the tiniest details of the
traditional gods’ words and deeds.

The Neoplatonists’ admittedly highly sophisticated vocabulary and their
conceptual armour together with their ποικίλη δράσι τῶν στοχαστικῶν
προσαρμογῶν, as a celebrated modern poet put it, came up with philosophical solutions
to the problem of divine behaviour as recorded in myth, which can not only serve as
pointers for drawing sketches for a history of ideas in late antiquity, but may also
retrospectively throw light on the divine natures in question. For, although Neoplatonic
theology relates more to the intellectual milieu of the era of its formation than to previous
historical periods, it nonetheless highlights the precise directions along which a traditional
god could evolve when a reflective account of his nature was called for, as a matter of, so
to speak, historical necessity.

Poets employ vivid images to describe realities whereas philosophers have a
predilection for concepts. Late antiquity transferred the burden of theology from the
tongues of poets to the pens of philosophers. One of them was Proclus. He lived in
Athens where he became the head of the Platonic Academy and was one of the few
leading intellectuals of whom the dwindling paganism of the fifth century could boast. In
the eleventh chapter of his sixth book on the Platonic Theology Proclus speaks of
Artemis. By means of the place to which the goddess is assigned in Proclus’s primarily
triadic classificatory system something could be illustrated about Artemis herself.

Proclus’s theology is preoccupied with the relationship between Being and
Existence which is always understood as a relationship between the Monad and the
Trinity conceived as the existential emanation from the depth of the monad’s being. By

25 The translation of myth into logic goes, it is well known, as far back as Theagenes of Rhegium (6th c.
B.C.) and, in a more 'serious' form, epitomizes the gap (if gap it be) that separates the mythologizing
Plato — "divine" is the title with which tradition adorned him— from the rational Aristotle (this is the
sound, I think, starting-point in Gadamer Platonic-Aristotelian).

26 The ancients were conscious of the difference between the two types of theology mentioned here, and
they added a third, the political (see Lieberg "Theologia").

27 For a general account of Proclus’s life and philosophy see Dodds Proclus ix-xxxiii; Lowry Principles;
Saffrey and Westerink Théologie l, ix-lxxxix; Lamberton Homer 162-232.

28 Since the sixth, and last, volume of the Budé-edition of this work (by H.D. Saffrey and L.G.
Westerink, Paris 1968-) has not appeared yet, I refer to pages of the editio princeps: Aemilius Portus
Πρὸκλου Διαδόχου Πλατωνικοῦ εἰς τὴν Πλατωνος Θεολογίαν βιβλία εξ, Hamburgi 1618. The chapter that concerns us here is found in pp. 369-375.

29 For the synthetic and integrating properties of the number 3 in magico-religious, alchemistic
speculative and ordinary, everyday thinking see Schimmel Numbers 58-85. The triad or trinity is an
expanded version of unity, because, since the number 3 is the only one to have beginning, middle and
end, all three in monadic clarity (in contrast to its multiples), it is regarded as a totality in its own right.
way of example we could mention that in his ontology the paternal monad gives birth to
three distinct divine beings (ontologically inferior to their progenitor) who are called
Sovereign Creators (ἡγεμονικοὶ δημιουργοί) and who are held responsible for the
creation and preservation of the world; a task that would fall short of the dignity of the
fatherly monad which is essentially unchangeable and cannot therefore interfere with
the world of becoming. Moving from any single level of suprasensual existence to the
immediately higher one we find out that the gods who were distinct entities there are here
condensed in a single being; they are enclosed, as it were, in the divinity of a different god
who together with the other two that form the trinity of this higher level will subsequently
acquire unity farther up in the hierarchical scale. An unerring pattern is, therefore,
distinguishable according to which a monad begets a trinity (or else a trinity emanates
from a monad), each member of which will further beget another trinity, in an adamantine
structure. In the tightly-knit web of interconnected divine principles proposed by Proclus
there is one monad-trinity diptych that is called Life-Generating. With respect to this
particular monad Proclus says that

The divine cause of individual\textsuperscript{30} life has united itself from all eternity with the
entire life-generating source which is called Mother by the theologians of the
sovereign goddess.\textsuperscript{31}

Here Proclus refers to the relation of the Mother with the Daughter-Maiden as it was told
by 'Homer' and crystallized in the central myth of Eleusis. The entire life-generating
source is Demeter and the divine cause of individual life is the Kore. As is always the
case, the generic (monadic and unique) principle is hypostatically triple. In the present
case, tripartition must take place for the additional reason that the Kore must fragment
herself existentially in order to be able to provide individual beings with individual
existence and life. The first member of this trinity is Artemis, the second Persephone and
the third Athena. The whole trinity is called Maidenly (Κορική), and it is in fact the trinity
through which individual living beings are animated and perfected. The sequence of the
three divinities in the life-generating trinity is not without significance. Their order is
indicative of their degree of participation in what we could call 'substantiality' in so far as
their divine prerogatives (as opposed to their essences) go. Artemis is first because it is
she who, above all else, provides living beings with existence. She is the divine priniple of

For the trinity operating in all spheres of (Platonic) love see the inspiring meditations of Vernant
"One...

\textsuperscript{30}It is indeed an irony that the μεριστής of the text should be rendered 'in-dividual' in English. Every
single language is a particular articulation of reality (or should we rather say: a reflection thereof with
varying degrees of participation?).

\textsuperscript{31}op.cit. 370: 'Ἡ δὲ θεία τῆς μεριστῆς [correx.: μεριστής Portus errore typographico? ζωῆς αὐτία
συνήψασεν αὐτήν [ego; αὐτήν Portus] ἐξ ἁδίου πρὸς τὴν ὅλην ζωογόνον πηγήν, ἣν καὶ
μητέρα καλοῦσα ὁ θεολόγοι τῆς ἁγιομοικῆς θεοῦ.'
the most elementary in individual life. Persephone bestows the precise form of life and Athena imparts intellect. In a different nomenclature which, albeit barbarian, may better clarify the corresponding concepts, Artemis is equalled with She-of-the-Distance (Εκάτη), Persephone with Soul (Ψυχή) and Athena with Virtue (Ἀρετή).32

It is not entirely clear in Proclus’s exposition whether the emanation of the trinity from the primal life-generating principle, from the Maiden par excellence, proceeds gradually through Artemis, Persephone and Athena in that order, or whether the ontologically anterior and superior monad of the Maiden is in a more intimate relationship with Persephone than with the other two goddesses. It is true that the intermediate member of each triad summarizes as it were the entire trinity by being the central and focal point of reference at which the two extreme members meet.33 But it is equally true that the first member of a trinity is the starting- (and, so to speak, stand- and vantage-) point from which the other two depart in accordance with the well-known Neoplatonic tripartite model of metaphysical motion of μορφή, πρόδοσ and ἐπιστροφή.34 Artemis is the μορφή of the Maidenly Trinity and as such she is explicitly endowed with the prerogative of providing beings with existential extremity (ἀκροτάτη ὑπάρξεως), or, as we would say, with the most fundamental of their being. The ethical and intellectual perfection procured by Athena at the other end of the trinity is, to be sure, not an Artemisian operation. Yet, it represents the final coming-back of accomplished perfection to the immovable bosom of Artemisian fundamental of their being. The ethical and intellectual perfection procured by Athena at the other end of the trinity is, to be sure, not an Artemisian operation. Yet, it represents the final coming-back of accomplished perfection to the immovable bosom of Artemisian activity, or else the nostos of a consummately fulfilled being back to the womb which brought it forth.35 If we now recall that the trinity as a whole derives from the life-generating Monadic Source called the Maiden, we can see that the extremity of existence that is Artemis’s gift is the extremity of existence of living beings, or of beings magico-religiously conceived as alive.36 This I have so far denoted as Dynamism, and I shall presently make an attempt to analyse the notion in a way that would connect our

32Op. cit. 371-372: τριών γὰρ οὐσιῶν ἐν αὐτῇ μονάδως καὶ τῆς μὲν κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρξίαν τεταγμένης ἀκροτάτης, τῆς δὲ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν ὁριστικὴν τῆς ζωῆς, τῆς δὲ κατὰ τὸν νόον τῶν ζωογόνων, καὶ τῶν θεολόγων τὴν μὲν "Ἀρτέμις Κορικήν εὐδοτῶν καλεῖ, τὴν δὲ Περσεφόνην, τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν Κορικὴν, λέγω δὲ τὴν τῆς Ἑλληνικής θεολογίας ἀρχηγῆν· ἔστει παρὰ γε τοῖς βαρβάροις τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ ἐτέρων ὁρισέων δεδήλωσε. την μὲν γὰρ πρωτότυπην ἐκείνην μονάδα καλοῦσα Ἐκάτη, τὴν δὲ μέσην Ψυχήν, τὴν δὲ τρίτην Ἀρετήν. 33 Cf. op. cit. 369: Ὡσπερ οὖν ἀπὸ τῆς πατρικῆς μονάδος ἡ τριάς ὑπέστη τῶν ἤγεμονικῶν δημιουργῶν, οὕτω καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ζωογόνου πυγῆς, τοῦ μέσου κέντρου ἐν ἑκείνους κληροσιμένην, ὁ ζωογόνιος διάκοσμος προβέβληται τῶν ἀφομοιοματικῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἐστὶ ταῦτα τριάς ὑπὸ μιᾶς συνεχομένης μονάδος. 34 Cf. op. cit. 372: Ἅλων γὰρ ὅτι τῆς ζωῆς τριάδος πρὸς ἑαυτήν ἴμμενης ἦττε πρωτόστη μοιᾶς [correx; τριᾶς Ροτσ] ἐνεώδης περιέχει τὴν τρίτην καὶ τὴν τρίτην πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ἐπέστραπται καὶ ἡ μέση διατείνουσα ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν ἐπ᾽ ἄμφω, τρεῖς γὰρ αὐτὰ ζωογοναὶ μοιᾶδες ἦττε "Ἀρτέμις καὶ ἡ Περσεφόνη καὶ ἡ Δέσποινα ἡμῶν Ἀθηνᾶ. Καὶ ἡ μὲν ὑπόστη τῆς τριάδος ἀκρότητος καὶ ἡ εἰς αὐτὴν [eos; αὐτῆς Ροτσ] ἐπιστρέφει τὴν τρίτην, ἢ ἡ δύναμις ζωογονοῦς τῶν ὄλων. ἡ δὲ νοῦς θεῖος καὶ ἀρχαῖος. 35 Cf. op. cit. 373: καὶ ὡσπερ ἡ ζωογόνως ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιέχει τὰ πυγάς τῆς τῶν ἀρτησίων καὶ τῆς ψυχής, ὡς δὲ καὶ ὁ δημιουργός μεταβίβασε τὸ κόσμον, τελέως αὐτῶν ὑποστήσιμας, οὕτω δὲ καὶ τῶν μεριτῶν πάντων εἰδῶν τῆς ζωῆς ἐξουσιά την πρωτοφυργόν αἴτησα ἔχει καὶ τὴν τῶν ψυχῶν ἁρχήν καὶ τῶν ἀρτησίων, καὶ διὰ τούτου ἤθη καὶ ταῖς μερικαῖς ψυχαῖς ἢ ἀνοδός ἐστὶ δὴ ὀμοιότητος καὶ ἡ ἀρετή πρὸς θεῶς ὑπὸ ὀμοιότητι. 36 The animating or life-providing role of Artemis is stated also by Sallustius (de deor. et mundo VI, 3 where a by far less sophisticated system is at work).
understanding of the goddess with her Archaic manifestations, sidestepping the intermediary stages of Greek tradition as has been the scholarly custom since Creuzer’s historical defeat.

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A distinctive feature that distinguishes (pre-scientific) religious thought from speculative thinking is the fact that the former conceives of Power in concreto, whereas the latter, especially in its most developed form, tends to understand Power as an abstraction of reality. The primordial religious tendency is to identify power and object and can most expressly be found in the concept of Taboo and its variegated but consistent and widespread, almost universal, appearance in different cultures. The concreteness of the taboo may be the original, or at any rate an age-old, expression of the immanence of divinity in this world. But as the notions accompanying the strict observance of rituals associated with taboo develop and become more and more refined with the passage of time, they lead, in some cultures, to a complete anthropomorphism. This process does not necessarily alter the primal situation in which the deity qua power was identified with the object from which power was felt to emanate. But now the deities have been enveloped in a form that by far surpasses in potential expressibility its previous forms: this form is the human body. Plato in the Symposium can be said to have understood the entire human body as a face, a conception that invests the body in its integrity with the expressibility most commonly found in facial expressions. It seems that the ancient Greeks reached a stage where all emotions (deriving from psychological states, social conditions or cosmic realities) could be expressed by means of the body. The remarkable absence of natural scenery in their art may be taken sufficiently to testify to that.

But if the power of a deity is expressed by means of the human body (together with all the sartorial paraphernalia and equipment going therewith), and if the primordial identity of power and object is not shattered, then the divinity in his or her human form is still being conceived in concreto. This state of affairs I would like to term parousia, or hypostatic unity. Parousia is the concrete presence of a god as evidenced and experienced in an epiphany, whereas hypostatic unity is the sum total of the various levels in which a deity is manifested, conceived not adjointedly as the sum total of separate things and levels of manifestation, but as one concrete being. Thus, the hypostatic unity of the various levels of natural dynamism is Artemis, whereas the Artemisian parousia is the goddess’s full-blooded presence in any single delivery or any rite of perfection. An analysis of the hypostatic unity of Artemis would give us the following tripartite scheme:
That the levels are generally three seems to be implied by the overall Greek culture but a more sophisticated scheme with more levels of analysis may be needed at particular cultic and mythological contexts. The essentiality of the interrelationships among all three levels of the present analysis (indicated by the arrows) designates the hypostatic unity of Artemis, or Artemis the concrete goddess. Wildness is placed in the middle of the scheme, because the natural level makes more sense for us, than the other two. But all possible articulations are equally valid, unless they subscribe to the premisses of humanism-subjectivism. The microcosmic conception of man may reasonably place the human level in the middle without altering the overall situation. Xenophanes and, differently, Protagoras may be seen to have done precisely this.

Dynamism is not ambiguous, not ambivalent, not marginal: it is merely potent. But it may also be unpredictable. To give just one example from a literary-theological text. The reason for Artemis’s wrath in Aeschylus’s *Agamemnon* is not given. Many explanations have been offered for the poet’s silence. Some of them try to detect hints in the parados of the drama which may account for the divine rage, and to find reasons for its never being spelled out. Others take it for granted that Artemis is, for one reason or another, enraged and make an effort to see the dramatic effects thereof. But Aeschylus’s silence cannot be without significance. Artemis is perhaps angry because she is the eerie patron deity of Wild Nature where unpredictability reigns supreme. Artemis, more than any other Greek divinity with the possible exception of Dionysus, was not expected to behave in a predictable way, nor was she supposed to have to account for her actions (mainly of a cruel, irrational nature) which were seen by mortal eyes as vengeful retributions. In the *Agamemnon* an intimation of the possible cause of the Artemisian wrath is provided by the reference to the pregnancy of the she-hare which the Atreidae, symbolized by the eagles, in Calchas’s interpretation, shot dead along with her young. But the reader, and presumably the ancient spectator too, is left to wonder: the Artemisian will may seem to be capricious, and unpredictability may be considered to pertain to the core of her divine
nature, i.e. to natural dynamism. In fact, the Artemisian unpredictability is an expression of her cruelty and may help us explain the cunning and devious ways in which she intervened in order to provide aid for her favorite side in warfare.

Wildness is uninhibited and uncontrolled dynamism; as such it is not creative because it is direction-less; once placed in the rail of a specific direction it becomes extremely useful and very productive. But the putting-in-direction is what is described as the 'yoke' in the imaginative vocabulary of the Greek mind. Any yoking is a subjugation and hence a diminution of power. The cost of ordained productivity is to be paid in the currency of the material under exploitation, that is to say in power: in such process there must by necessity be, in a physicist's terminology, a loss of energy. To this loss Artemis is opposed and that power she wants to preserve intact and undiminished. For Artemis understands that this power, like any existing power, has its own right.

But again: even after we have analysed the applicability of dynamism and after we have pointed to the hypostatic unity of Power and Person in a Concrete Deity, our understanding still partially leans to the side of Power. This is indeed the limitation felt by Aristotle in the passage quoted as the motto of the first chapter. It seems that it was towards the end of transcending the limitation imposed by the understanding of divinity as mere power that Aristotle was striving, as the years were passing by. That is what I take him to have meant when he said that the older he becomes the more he enjoys myths for what they are. Maybe we should follow him in our quest for wisdom—if we are intellectually youthful enough to take him seriously, of course.
Addendum: The fourth century of our Christian era saw a remarkable floruit in treatises on the significance of virginity for a saintly life. Sexual abstinence was, according to the best argument, considered to be more than a sheer intimation of immortality: it was the precondition for establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. In the image of the tyrannizing natural opposition that ruined the Euripidean Hippolytus, Artemis had eventually won the war against Aphrodite. But the ideal of the early Christian period was otherworldly, and this means that the natural opposition could not be conceived and accepted as such. An unprecedented need for the inherently opposite forces to be reconciled came to the foreground. Since no reconciliation can be effected in this world, recourse to another (intimated and to come) was regarded as the only solution to the problem of worldly contradictions which are part and parcel of the germinal tragicness of human life. Artemis won the war because her opponent was considered to be demonic (in the new sense of the term) and sinful, i.e. unreal in her ontological foundation, a mere illusion of salvation, but no redemption proper.

The occasional feeling of extreme impotence followed by deep sadness after sexual intercourse is the experience of death which always lurks in the background at seed-time (cf. the French expression "la petite mort" to characterize this feeling); it is the mourning for the vital loss, for the great expenditure of energy which must necessarily precede the awakening of life. The intensification of power symbolized in the erect male organ must be released to the point of annihilation for life to begin anew.

If this natural power is prevented from being spent (through purposeful abstinence and intentional celibacy, or even through incidental, hence supposedly divinely arranged, lack of coition) it is presumed that the energy which thus remains within oneself effects immortality, because one thus becomes exempted from the natural course of life and death. For it must be well realized that immortality, far from being an unlimited prolongation of temporal existence, consists primarily in escaping time and its in principle circular procession. Thus immortality can reside only in the atemporal moment, in the immediate present which is not conceived as the point where past and future (or the earlier and the later) meet, but as the sole intimation of eternity known to temporal beings.

37Vasilieou 'Aygouras Peri téz en parréntia allhóus adhórias PG XXX, 669-809. BEHT XXIX, 219-285; Grigorou Theologou Paráştis epainos PG XXXVII, 522-573; 'Upotheka parréntia PG XXXVIII, 573-632; Grigorou Ópou Péri parréntia PG XLVI, 317-416, SC CXIX; W. Jaeger VII, 1; Ioánnon Xrhoostómys Péri parréntia PG XLVIII, 533-596; SC CXXV; Methódiou Symposión Í peri ángéias PG XII, 9-408; GCS XXVII, SC XCV; BEHT XVIII, 15-92; Megálo 'Athanasiou Péri parréntia Í to Í peri áskhés PG XXVIII, 252-281; TU XXIX, 2a (Leipzig 1905) [cf. Máziou 'Omológyntou Kefaláia Theologika. Logos 3 Peri ángéias kai saphrótnh PG CXI, 736-740; Ioánnon Dímokokron érpa parállwlía // Peri parréntia kai saphrótnh kai gýmou stómu PG CXVI, 242-248]. The most seminal (sic) recent studies and the standard works of reference are Foucault Care and Brown Body. But see also Camelot "Treatés"; Van Eijk "Marriage"; Hastrup "Virginity"; Brown "Virginity"; Brown "Bodies". In a recent publication (Goldhill Virginity) an attempt is made to refute Foucault's thesis with special reference to the Greek novels. But the argumentation is not entirely convincing. In late antiquity, both pagan and Christian, chastity was a virtue and its status was strengthened by its being conceived in terms of bodily and spiritual incorruptibility.
If there is any point in finding reasons for the ascription of immortality to each particular ancient deity (which is far from certain because gods are immortal on principle), then we could say that the Artemisian immortality consists in the miraculous preservation of vital energy by virtue of which decay and corruption are shunned.
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Heracl. fr. 40 (Diels-Kranz)
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