



Kernos

Revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de religion
grecque antique

13 | 2000
Varia

Proclus and Artemis: On the Relevance of Neoplatonism to the Modern Study of Ancient Religion

Spyridon Rangos



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/kernos/1293>

DOI: 10.4000/kernos.1293

ISSN: 2034-7871

Publisher

Centre international d'étude de la religion grecque antique

Printed version

Date of publication: 1 January 2000

ISSN: 0776-3824

Electronic reference

Spyridon Rangos, « Proclus and Artemis: On the Relevance of Neoplatonism to the Modern Study of Ancient Religion », *Kernos* [Online], 13 | 2000, Online since 21 April 2011, connection on 01 May 2019.

URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/kernos/1293> ; DOI : 10.4000/kernos.1293

Proclus and Artemis: On the Relevance of Neoplatonism to the Modern Study of Ancient Religion*

Imagine the situation in which contemporary philosophers would find themselves if Wittgenstein introduced, in his *Philosophical Investigations*, the religious figure of Jesus as Logos and Son of God in order to illuminate the puzzlement of the private-language paradox, or if in the second division of *Being and Time* Heidegger mentioned the archangel Michael to support the argument of 'being toward death'. Similar is the perplexity that a modern reader is bound to encounter when, after a highly sophisticated analysis of demanding metaphysical questions about the relationship of the one and the many, finitude and infinity, mind and body, Proclus,¹ in all seriousness and without the slightest touch of irony, assigns to some traditional gods of Greek polytheism a definitive place in the structure of being.

The final flowering of pagan antiquity is to be found in the various philosophical schools that have come to be recognized under the rubric of Neoplatonism. The beliefs of paganism received intellectualist prominence by

* Taking the opportunity of this publication I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. P. Cartledge for his moral encouragement, practical assistance and intellectual support over several years. His insightful views, always playfully suggested, have been invaluable. My warmest thanks should also go to Profs. P. Easterling and R. Martin who have read early drafts of this paper and made precious comments. Last but not least, I wish to thank the Department of Classics and the Program in Hellenic Studies of Princeton University for welcoming me as a lecturer on this subject on 1 May 1996. The feedback of such an erudite audience cannot be overestimated. It goes without saying that the views expressed in the following pages are not necessarily shared by those who have been willing to discuss them.

¹ The works of Proclus are cited from the following editions:

In Crat.: *Procli Diadochi in Platonis Cratylum Commentaria*, ed. G. Pasquali, Leipzig, 1908.

In Remp.: *Procli in Platonis Rem Publicam Commentarii*, ed. W. Kroll, 2 vols, Leipzig, 1899-1901.

In Tim.: *Procli in Platonis Timaeum Commentaria*, ed. E. Diehl, 3 vols, Leipzig, 1903-1906.

E.T.: *Proclus: The Elements of Theology*, ed. E.R. Dodds, 2nd ed., Oxford, 1963.

P.T.: *Proclus: Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. H.D. Saffrey and L.G. Westerink, 6 vols. Paris, 1968-1997.

means of a doctrinal elaboration of the previously unreflectively accepted views regarding the gods. 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 dating before to the classical era that the gods of Homer behaved inconsistently and anthropomorphically, displayed distinctive features of immorality and were, as a result, hardly worthy of the title of godhead, the Neoplatonic philosophers replied with allegorical readings, i.e. interpretations, of traditional gods, conceiving of 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.² The pagan gods could no longer foster an immediate 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 most minute details of the traditional gods' words and deeds.

Poets employ vivid images to describe realities, whereas philosophers have a predilection for concepts. Late antiquity transferred the burden of theology (in the most general sense of the term) from the tongues of poets to the pens of philosophers.³ One of them was Proclus. He lived for the most

² Explicit 'translation' of myth into logic goes, it is well known, as far back as Theagenes of Rhegium (6th c. B.C.)

³ The ancients were conscious of the difference between the two types of theology mentioned here, and they added a third, the political; cf. G. LIEBERG, *The Theologia Tripartita as an Intellectual Model in Antiquity*, in E.C. POLOMÉ (ed.), *Essays in Memory of Karl Kerényi*, Washington, 1984, p. 91-115. Proclus accepted a different, and more sophisticated, classification which only roughly corresponds to that which distinguishes poetic myth from philosophical speculation. The details of Proclus' arrangement of modes of theology are to be found in *P.T.*, I, 4. The *locus classicus* is in p. 20, 1-5: οἱ μὲν γὰρ δι' ἐνδειξέως περὶ τῶν θεῶν λέγοντες ἢ συμβολικῶς καὶ μυθικῶς ἢ δι' εἰκόνων λέγουσιν, οἱ δὲ ἀπαρακαλύπτως τὰς ἑαυτῶν διανοήσεις ἀπαγγέλλοντες οἱ μὲν κατ' ἐπιστήμην οἱ δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἐκ θεῶν ἐπίπνοιαν ποιοῦνται τοὺς λόγους. The fundamental bipartition is between indirect allusion (δι' ἐνδειξέως) and overt manifestation (ἀπαρακαλύπτως). Allusive knowledge of things divine can be achieved by symbols, myths or images; overt understanding is attained either by scientific, i.e. philosophical, meditation or by direct inspiration, i.e. immediate revelation on the part of gods. Proclus's classification cannot readily fit into the modern polarity between mythical and rational thought [cf. S. RANGOS, *Proclus on Poetic Mimesis, Symbolism and Truth*, in *OSAP*, 17 [1999], p. 249-277]. His ἐκ θεῶν ἐπίπνοια, divine inspiration, for instance, is a theological mode which we would classify, if at all, under the rubric of mythology and poetic symbolism. Proclus, by contrast, thinks that the *Chaldaean Oracles* of the theurgists are such non-mythological, non-symbolic and non-representational unqualified unveilments (p. 20, 13-19): ὁ δὲ ἐνθεαστικός μὲν αὐτὴν καθ' ἑαυτὴν ἐκφαίνων τὴν περὶ θεῶν ἀλήθειαν παρὰ τοῖς ἀκροτάτοις τῶν τελεστῶν μάλιστα καταφανής· οὐ γὰρ ἀξιούσιν οὗτοι διὰ δὴ τινῶν παραπετασμάτων τὰς θεῶν τάξεις ἢ τὰς ιδιότητας ἀποδιδόναι, ἀλλὰ τὰς τε δυνάμεις καὶ τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν

part in Athens (AD 412-485) where he became the head of the Platonic Academy, and he was one of the leading intellectuals of whom the dwindling paganism of the fifth century could boast.

The Neoplatonists' admittedly highly sophisticated vocabulary and their conceptual armour together with their 'varied action of thoughtful adaptations', as a celebrated modern poet put it,⁴ came up with philosophical solutions to the problem of divine behaviour as recorded in myth, which serves not only 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 demanded as a matter of, so to speak, historical necessity.

The relevance of Neoplatonism to the modern study of ancient religion: the phrase can easily be misconstrued as an innocuous and meaningless truism as if one, after many sleepless nights of painstaking efforts, came up with an emphatic assertion about the relevance of the *Iliad* to an understanding of Achilles' wrath – as described by Homer. The relevance of which the title speaks is *not* to the Neoplatonic religion but to the *traditional* religion of Archaic and Classical Greece. I do not want to deny that the philosophical religion of the Neoplatonists was a novelty of late antique thought based on the well-studied religious syncretism and eclecticism of that era, nor that it can be accounted for by the conditions, circumstances and causes (intellectual, historical, sociological) that led to the generation of Neoplatonism at large. What I want to deny is that Neoplatonism is relevant *only* to the historian of late antiquity or to the historian of philosophy. It is my belief that Neoplatonism is also relevant to the intellectual historian of pre-Roman and pre-Hellenistic Greece. If carefully and attentively studied, Neoplatonism may provide insights into the nature and functions of ancient gods. To my knowledge this has never been attempted. The shared assumption has been that, in this respect, Neoplatonism is irrelevant. As emblematic of the mainstream attitude that modern scholarship has assumed *vis-à-vis* the treatment of traditional gods by Proclus one should listen to Dodds' comments in his edition of the *Elements of Theology* which, be it noted, has decisively propelled recent academic interest in the topic (p. 260):

κινούμενοι τῶν θεῶν ἐξαγγέλλουσιν. The 'very best ritualists', the people who perform the most efficient mysteries, are the theurgists (*cf. In Tim.*, III, p. 6, 8-16).

⁴ Ποικίλη δρᾶσι τῶν στοχαστικῶν προσαρμογῶν (C.P. CΑΒΑΦΥ, *Στὰ 200 π.Χ.*). I have adapted the standard translation ("flexible policy of judicious integration" in C.P. CΑΒΑΦΥ, *Collected Poems*, tr. E. Keeley and P. Sherrard, ed. G. ΣΑΒΙΔΙΣ, rev. ed. Princeton, 1992, p. 176) to render the far-reaching dynamism of the original.

That Homer's Olympians, the most vividly conceived anthropomorphic beings in all literature, should have ended their career on the dusty shelves of this museum of metaphysical abstractions is one of time's strangest ironies.

Introductory Remarks

Understanding the theology of Greek culture is by no means an easy enterprise. Among the obstacles are the modern preconceptions about the nature of the divine as reflected, among other things, in language. In contrast to the Judaeo-Christian tradition, *theos* to the Greeks was a predicative notion.⁵ The Greeks did not first posit the existence of a divine being and then predicated of that being wisdom, beauty, foreknowledge and the like. They, rather, predicated, or could potentially predicate, divinity of all entities that, through their recurring manifestations, appeared to be independent of particular events or situations and thus superior to them. To say that *eros* is god meant that love is a power of reality that is not restricted to this or that particular occurrence but transcends them all. The Greek 'divine' (*theos*, *theon*) is a title of ontological nobility bestowable upon whichever entity, material substance, or force, appears to be foundational of reality. The Greeks could predicate divinity of abstract notions in a way that cannot be done in Christianity and the secularized Occident without recourse to metaphoric language and homonymous usage. Already in Homer and Hesiod, the creators of Greek mythology, the tendency to hypostatize abstractions is well established and seems to have a long tradition behind it. Moreover, entities like Laughter, Victory and Night also received worship in cult-sites carefully chosen for this purpose.

In opposition to the prevailing scholarly view which ascribes a subordinate role to these deities, one can claim that *the ease with which the ancient mind could divinize and thus glorify powers of the world must be taken as one of the salient features of Greek religion*. With the emergence of philosophy the tendency was further enhanced. The pre-Socratics, in search of the common substance of which all existing reality is made, declared the result of their enquiries, be it water, air or an indeterminate substratum, the truly divine and godlike. In more philosophically sophisticated ways Plato and Aristotle followed up. The gods are the ultimate causes of the things that are as the things that they are; or, to say the same thing differently, the gods are the universal causes of the particulars as the particulars that they are. But what acts as a cause and brings something to be is superior to the effect. The causes are therefore gods because they are more valuable than their effects. *The ascription of divinity to a power is in fact the recognition of its causal efficiency. The more operative and wide-ranging a force appears to be and the greater the field of its causal power, the more divine is the cause.*

⁵ Cf. G.M.A. GRUBE, *Plato's Thought*, London, 1935, p. 150 quoting Wilamowitz.

In a clear-cut definition, at the beginning of his *Platonic Theology*, regarding the universal nature of gods and the meaning of theology Proclus says (*P.T.*, I, 3, p. 13, 6-8):

Ἄπαντες μὲν οὖν, ὅπερ ἔφην, τὰς πρωτίστους ἀρχὰς τῶν ὄντων καὶ αὐταρκεστάτας θεοὺς ἀποκαλοῦσι καὶ θεολογίαν τὴν τούτων ἐπιστήμην.

All people agree, as I said, 'in calling the very first and most self-sufficient principles of things 'gods' and 'theology' the science that deals with them.'⁶

Theology as the discourse on, and science of, the divine is for Proclus henadology. All gods are self-complete units.⁷ All of them are also creative. As the 27th proposition of the *Elements of Theology* puts it:

Πᾶν τὸ παράγον διὰ τελειότητα καὶ δυνάμειος περιουσίαν παρακτικὸν ἐστὶ τῶν δευτέρων.

Every producing cause is productive of secondary existences because of its perfection and superabundance of power.

The 131st proposition of the same work explains further:⁸

Πᾶς θεὸς ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τῆς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας ἄρχεται.

τὴν γὰρ ἰδιότητα τῆς εἰς τὰ δεύτερα παρουσίας ἐν ἑαυτῷ πρῶτον ἐπιδείκνυσι· διότι δὴ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἑαυτοῦ μεταδίδωσι, κατὰ τὸ ὑπερπλήρες ἑαυτοῦ. οὔτε γὰρ τὸ ἐλλείπον οἰκεῖον τοῖς θεοῖς οὔτε τὸ πλήρες μόνον. τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐλλείπον πᾶν ἀτελὲς ὑπάρχει, καὶ ἄλλο τέλειον ποιεῖν, αὐτὸ μὴ τέλειον ὑπάρχον, ἀμήχανον. τὸ δὲ πλήρες αὐταρκες μόνον, οὕτω δὲ εἰς μετάδοσιν ἕτοιμον. ὑπερπλήρες ἄρα εἶναι δεῖ τὸ πληρωτικὸν ἄλλων καὶ εἰς ἄλλα διατεῖνον τὰς ἑαυτοῦ χορηγίας. εἰ οὖν τὸ θεῖον ἅπαντα ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ πληροῖ τῶν ἀγαθῶν τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἕκαστον ὑπερπλήρες ἐστίν· εἰ δὲ τοῦτο, ἐν αὐτῷ πρῶτῳ τὴν ἰδιότητα ἰδρυσάμενον ὧν δίδωσι τοῖς ἄλλοις, οὕτω δὴ κάκεινους ἐπορέγει τὰς μεταδόσεις τῆς ὑπερπλήρους ἀγαθότητος.

Every god begins his characteristic activity with himself.

For the quality which marks his presence in secondary beings is displayed first in himself, and it is indeed for this reason that he communicates himself to others, in virtue of the superabundance of his own nature. Neither deficiency nor a mere fullness is proper to the gods. Whatever is deficient is imperfect; and being itself incomplete, it is impossible that it should bestow completion on another. And that which is full is sufficient merely to itself, and still unripe for communication. Hence that which fulfils others and extends to others its free bestowals must itself be more than full. If, then, the divine from its own substance fulfils all things with the good which it contains, each divinity is filled to overflowing; and if so, it has established first

⁶ All translations, except one (n. 8), are mine.

⁷ *E.T.*, 114: Πᾶς θεὸς ἐνὰς ἐστὶ αὐτοτελής καὶ πᾶσα αὐτοτελής ἐνὰς θεός.

⁸ *E.T.*, p. 116, 15-27. The translation is Dodds'.

in its own nature the character distinctive of its bestowals, and in virtue of this extends to others also communications of its superabundant goodness.

Thus, although the *attribute* of creativity (the same *form*) permeates all gods and accounts for their being productive rather than sterile the *content* of that form varies from case to case. Each god or goddess produces the effect that is appropriate to his or her nature and becomes illuminated to mortal eyes by virtue of that very effect. Because immediate access to a divine nature is an impossibility⁹ in the natural order of things, men understand the natures of gods and the divine prerogatives of power by means of the divine activities as these activities operate in the physical and psychical worlds.¹⁰ The total territory of the operation of a divine activity is the field of a god's manifestation. By highlighting the operation of a divine activity we grasp the kind of divine nature that is involved.

Artemis will serve as a case-study. Similar results may emerge if one looks from a close-reading perspective at the other gods that appear in Proclan philosophy. The treatment of Artemis by Proclus – like the treatment of all major (and some minor) deities of the Greek pantheon – falls into two parts: there is on the one hand the systematic arrangement of all the references (intentional or occasional) to the traditional gods that occur in the Platonic corpus and which Proclus incorporates in his *Platonic Theology*; there are, on the other hand, the passages in which he mentions and explains the nature and functions of those gods while commenting on a specific Platonic dialogue.

For purposes of methodological clarity three distinct issues must be kept separate and dealt with independently from one another: (i) the gods of Homer and of cult, (ii) the function of these gods in the Platonic corpus, and (iii) the meaning which these gods receive in Neoplatonic thought. The gods of the poets and of cult may subsequently present two distinct fields of inquiry for the literary critic and the historian of religion respectively. Usually these two fields interpenetrate and complement each other and in actual scholarly practice their handling is seldom kept separate – with good reason. With the second of those questions, viz. the problem of Platonic literary

⁹ Proclus would not readily agree with the idea that it is impossible for mortals to get access to a divine nature. For he believes that the task of theology *sensu stricto* is precisely to discern the being of gods and the unknown and unified light of them from the properties of the things that participate in divine activities (*P.T.*, I, 4, p. 17, 10-15): καὶ ἡ θεολογία τοιαύδε τις ἔξις, αὐτὴν τὴν τῶν θεῶν ὑπαρξιν ἐκφαίνουσα, καὶ τὸ ἀγνωστον αὐτῶν καὶ ἐνιαῖον φῶς ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν μετεχόντων ιδιότητος διακρίνουσα καὶ θεωμένη καὶ ἀπαγγέλλουσα τοῖς ἀξίοις τῆς μακαρίας ταύτης καὶ πάντων ὁμοῦ τῶν ἀγαθῶν παρεκτικῆς ἐνεργείας.

¹⁰ Cf. L.H. GRONDIJS, *L'âme, le nous et les bēnades dans la théologie de Proclus*, in *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, Amsterdam, 1960, p. 29-42.

criticism, I shall not deal at all. The heated controversy about the function (dramatic, ironic, philosophical or otherwise) of traditional divinities in Plato falls outside the scope of the present study. As to the 'religion' of Proclus, one can discern two originally unrelated currents of thought¹¹ which were fused into one vehement intellectual stream through the laborious efforts of Iamblichus.¹² The first of these currents, philosophical and reflective, is the thought of Plato as mediated and meditated by Plotinus. The other, of vague origin dating from the middle of the second century AD, consists of the *Chaldaean Oracles*, a collection of poems in archaizing dialect and Homeric hexametre composed, or put together, by a certain Chaldaean Julian or his son Julian the Theurgist.¹³ These poems written in an unusually unintelligible manner and strenuously criticized by Michael Psellus (who has preserved many of them and has also provided us with a general account of the theology contained therein) and by others are philosophical in the ancient, as opposed to the modern, sense.

The (re)main(ing) part of the paper falls into three sections. I shall first explore Proclus' view on Artemis and the role she is made to play in his theological system. This is the section entitled "Proclus on Artemis". Then I shall give an overview of the goddess in Archaic and Classical Greece emphasizing what I take to be her permanent features and the intrinsic contrariety of her manifestations. The Artemisian epiphanies, like all theophanies, emanate from the very nature of the reality for which the deity stands. On

¹¹ Proclus seems to have been conscious of the sources of his philosophy because he is reported to have said that if he had the power he would hide from the face of the earth all ancient books except the *Chaldaean Oracles* and the Platonic *Timaeus* (MARINUS, *Vita Procli*, 38, 916-919 Masullo). The reasons he gave for such a severe censorship have to do with the easily approachable content of most books and their phenomenally understandable nature which lead some people to think that they can grasp their meaning without much effort, thus ruining their souls by means of facile misinterpretations.

¹² Cf. J. BIDEZ, *Proclus: Περὶ τῆς λερατικῆς τέχνης*, in *AIPhO*, 4 (1936), p. 85-97 (= *Mélanges Franz Cumont*); A.J. FESTUGIÈRE, *Proclus et la religion traditionnelle*, in *Mélanges d'archéologie et d'histoire offerts à André Piganiol*, III, Paris, 1966, p. 1581-1590; ID., *Contemplation philosophique et art théurgique chez Proclus*, in *Studi di storia religiosa della tarda antichità*, Messina, 1968, p. 7-18; J. TROUILLARD, *L'un et l'âme selon Proclus*, Paris, 1972, p. 171-189; H. DÖRRIE, *Die Religiosität des Platonismus im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert nach Christus*, followed by discussion in O. REVERDIN (ed.), *De Jamblique à Proclus*, Vandœuvres-Geneva, Fondation Hardt, 1975 (*Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*, 21), p. 257-286; A. SHEPPARD, *Proclus' Attitude to Theurgy*, in *CQ*, 32 (1982), p. 212-224. Cf. E.R. DODDS, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley, 1951 (*Sather Lectures*, 25), esp. p. 283-311; P. BOYANCÉ, *Théurgie et téléstique néoplatonicienne*, in *RHR*, 147 (1955), p. 189-209; E. DES PLACES, *La religion de Jamblique*, followed by discussion in O. REVERDIN (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 69-101.

¹³ The most comprehensive modern study on the subject still remains that of H. LEWY, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy*, new ed. Paris, 1978 [Cairo, 1956]. But now see also C. VAN LIEFFERINGE, *La Théurgie. Des Oracles Chaldaïques à Proclus*, Liège, 1999 (*Kernos*, suppl. 9).

that account, the antithesis that characterizes Artemis is a Heraclitean tension of opposites that sustains her being. This section bears the title "Artemis on Artemis". The conceptual link that brings the two accounts together, and explains the polarity that essentially belongs to Artemis is what, by anticipation, I would like to call 'natural dynamism'. The third section should be a section devoted to "Artemis on Proclus". However, in order to bring my remarks into higher relief I shall explore the most influential modern theory on Artemis, instead. This section is entitled "The Paris School on Artemis". Some conclusions will follow.

I. Proclus on Artemis

Artemis is a goddess because she is a cause. The ontological priority of the cause over the effect cannot be overemphasized. It permeates Greek thought from Homer to Damascius and finds in Proclus a most explicit formulation when he points out that:¹⁴

Πάν τὸ παρακτικὸν ἄλλου κρείττον ἐστὶ τῆς τοῦ παραγομένου φύσεως.

Every productive cause is superior to the nature of the produced effect.

Combining that fundamental law of reality with the view (quoted above) according to which the power of the cause is exhibited first in the cause itself and then in its effects we can gain a glimpse of the nature of Artemis by looking to the effects which she as a cause produces.

The longest passage in which Proclus deals with Artemis comes from his commentary on the *Cratylus* (p. 105, 18 - 107, 11). But this passage, without being the least informative, is in fact the least clear about what Proclus thinks of the goddess. He tries there to deal simultaneously with all the traits that Plato attributes to the goddess in Socrates' etymological attempts,¹⁵ and as a result his account becomes rather blurred. Orphic and theurgic notions merge with moralistic considerations on virginity as purity and the presented picture cannot easily become clarified without recourse to the other treatises in which Proclus inquires into the Artemisian functions more systematically. The one thing that remains unambiguous in this passage, however, is that the Artemisian virginity is *renunciation* of sexuality, not absence of sexual drive. The chastity of Artemis presupposes fertility because it is the cause of procreative power. In that sense Artemis is herself a virgin because she produces things fertile. In the triple manifestations of the maidenly monad which we are going to explore presently, Artemis and Athena, the two virgin goddesses, are intimately linked with Persephone who is both a virgin (Kore)

¹⁴ *E.T.*, 7; cf. *P.T.*, III, 2, p. 6, 24-7, 3.

¹⁵ PLATO, *Crat.* 406b.

and the mother of "nine blue-eyed flower-weaving daughters' as Orpheus says".¹⁶

The fundamental assumption of Proclan metaphysics is that the universe is full. There are no gaps, no breaks and no leaps in the world. Lovejoy's acclaimed principle of plenitude, together with the principles of continuity and gradation,¹⁷ find in Proclus a wholehearted supporter.¹⁸ Continuity, however, does not preclude determinateness and distinctiveness. Continuity is not a mathematical continuum endlessly divisible. On the contrary it is a stepwise process that allows the emergence of distinct and discrete beings. The balance between continuity, on the one hand, and determinateness, on the other, can be guaranteed by means of the (multitudinous) trinity and its relation to the (singular) monad. The whole divine hierarchy is, accordingly, tripartite. On the top stands the ineffable One which is beyond all predication and the 'object' only of negative theology. After the One come the transcendent gods, and following them are the cosmic deities.¹⁹ The transcendent and cosmic orders of divinities fall into three categories each. In the case of the former, the so-called 'intelligible' gods are distinguished from the 'intellectual' and are brought together by means of a third distinct class, that of the 'intelligible-and-intellectual' gods. The same pattern applies to the cosmic deities which are classified into the so-called 'hypercosmic' and the 'encosmic' with the intermediary class that acts as the link between the two, the 'hypercosmic-and-encosmic'. Now, each of the mentioned subcategories comprises three trinities (or triads)²⁰ of individual gods. The symmetry breaks down at the level of intellectual gods who have two (instead of three) trinities, plus a monad which Proclus calls a 'hebdomad'. The hypercosmic and the hypercosmic-and-encosmic gods have four (instead of three) trinities each. The precise details about the possible irregularities at the lower level of encosmic deities are missing because the *Platonic Theology*, on which the above classification draws, either has come down to us mutilated or else was never completed. (The defect is redressed with recourse to the commentaries *In Parmenidem* and *In Timaeum*.) The whole arrangement is very systematic indeed, but does not lack precious insights, nor philosophical acumen.

¹⁶ *In Crat.*, p. 106, 8-9.

¹⁷ A. LOVEJOY, *The Great Chain of Being*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1936, p. 24-66.

¹⁸ *Cf. P.T.*, III, 2, p. 6, 21-24.

¹⁹ *Cf.* Table I. Clarification of Proclus's baroque theology has been decisively promoted by H.D. SAFFREY and L.G. WESTERINK, *Proclus: Théologie platonicienne* I, Paris, 1968, p. LX-LXXV and L. BRISSON, *Proclus et l'Orphisme*, in J. PÉPIN and H.D. SAFFREY (eds.), *Proclus, lecteur et interprète des anciens*, Paris, 1987, p. 43-104.

²⁰ I shall use the two terms indiscriminately; yet I shall reserve the term 'henad' for cases when Proclus applies it as a technical term, while using the word 'monad' freely to designate *one* deity.

Proclus' theology can be seen as preoccupied, for the most part, with the relationship between the monad and the trinity, which is an attempt at solving the philosophical problem of the relationship between being and existence.²¹ The trinity is conceived as the existential emanation from the depth of the monad's being. Refuting the fallacious views of those who think that there are three creators, not a single one, Proclus stresses the point of the proper understanding of the relationship between the monad and the triad as a matter of principle of the utmost importance (*P.T.*, V, 14, p. 44, 24 - 45, 11):

Εἶναι μὲν γὰρ καὶ τριάδα δημιουργικὴν καὶ πλῆθος ἄλλο θεῶν κατὰ τὴν ποιητικὴν αἰτίαν χαρακτηριζόμενον, καὶ αὐτὸς τίθεμαι καὶ τὸν Πλάτωνα συγχωρήσειν οἶμαι· δεῖ δὲ αὐτὸ καὶ πρὸ τῆς τριάδος καὶ παντὸς πλῆθους ἐν ἐκάστῳ διακόσμῳ τὴν μονάδα προϋπάρχειν. πᾶσαι γὰρ τάξεις θεῶν ἀπὸ μονάδος ἄρχονται, διότι δὴ καὶ τῶν ὅλων διακόσμων ἕκαστος πρὸς τὴν σύμπασαν ἀφομοιοῦται πρόοδον τῶν θεῶν. ὡσπερ οὖν ἡ τῶν θεῶν ὑπόστασις ἀφ' ἐνὸς ἀμεθέκτου τὴν αἰτίαν ἔχει τῆς ἀπογεννήσεως, οὕτω δὴ καὶ τοὺς τελείους διακόσμους ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀνάγκη μονάδα προϋπάρχουσαν ἔχειν καὶ πρωτουργὸν ἀρχήν.

That there is both a creative triad and another multitude of deities who get characterized by their being producing causes I accept and I think that Plato too would agree; however, prior to the triad and prior to every and any multitude there must be the monad of each order. For all classes of gods originate in a monad, and it is for this reason indeed that each one of the entire orders becomes assimilated to the total procession of the gods. As the existence of gods has the cause of their birth in an unparticipated one, [i.e. any and every divine existence derives from one unparticipated cause] likewise it is necessary that the perfect orders have within themselves a pre-existing monad and [i.e. as] primordial principle.

Moving from any single level of suprasensual existence to the immediately higher one we find out that the gods who are distinct entities here are condensed there 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 acquire unity farther up in the hierarchical scale. An

²¹ For the synthetic and integrating properties of the number 3 in magico-religious, alchemistic speculative and ordinary, every-day thinking see A.M. SCHIMMEL, *The Mystery of Numbers*, Oxford, 1990, p. 58-85. The triad or trinity is an expanded version of unity, because the number 3 is the only one to have beginning, middle and end, all three in monadic clarity (in contrast to its multiples). Thus it is regarded as a totality in its own right. Cf. J. ATHERTON, *The Neoplatonic 'One' and the Trinitarian 'APXH'*, in R. BAINE HARRIS (ed.), *The Significance of Neoplatonism*, Norfolk (VA), 1976, p. 173-185. For the trinity operating in all spheres of (Platonic) love, see the inspiring meditations of J.-P. VERNANT, *One... Two... Three: Eros*, in D.M. HALPERIN, J.J. WINKLER and F.I. ZETTLIN (eds.), *Before Sexuality*, Princeton, 1990, p. 465-478.

unerring pattern is distinguishable according to which a monad begets a trinity, or else a trinity emanates from a monad.

In the tightly-knit web of interconnected divine principles proposed by Proclus there is one monad-trinity diptych that is called 'life-generating'. The monad is identified with Rhea who is the second member of the first trinity of intellectual deities. Rhea is the life-generating monad *par excellence*. The universally vivifying, as distinguished from the specifically life-procuring, aspect of godhead is first revealed with her. Rhea is the *generic* animating principle. On the hypercosmic level this principle becomes triple without losing its unity. In Proclus' eyes, life cannot be fully understood by virtue of a vivifying principle that applies indiscriminately and equally to every and any thing alive. Since there is a life-generating cause on the intellectual level there must be a more explicated such cause, namely a multitude of causes, on the lower levels of reality. The unity of these causes (i.e. the oneness of the secondary principles of life) is again a monad. But this monad bestows no longer indivisible (i.e. universal) but *divisible* life. Proclus explains (*P.T.*, VI, 11, p. 49, 20-30)²²:

Ἄπασα γὰρ ἡ παρ' Ἑλληνισι θεολογία τὴν δευτέραν ζωογονίαν Κορικὴν ἐπονομάζει καὶ συνάπτει τῇ ὄλῃ πηγῇ τῇ ζωογόνῳ καὶ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ἀπ' ἐκείνης ἔχειν φησι καὶ μετ' ἐκείνης ἐνεργεῖν. οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ τὰ αἰτιατὰ τῆς τῶν αἰτίων ἀπέσπασται προνοίας, ἀλλ' αἱ μὲν πλάναι καὶ αἱ ζητήσεις καὶ αἱ κατὰ περιόδους μεθέξεις τῶν προνοουμένων εἰσὶν. Ἡ δὲ θεία τῆς μεριστῆς ζωῆς αἰτία συνήνωσεν αὐτὴν ἐξ αἰδίου πρὸς τὴν ὄλην ζωογόνον πηγὴν, ἣν καὶ μητέρα καλοῦσι οἱ θεολόγοι τῆς ἡγεμονικῆς θεοῦ καὶ ὁ Πλάτων αὐτὸς πανταχοῦ συνάπτων τῇ Δήμητρὶ τὴν Κόρην.

The entire Greek theology calls the second life-generating principle 'maidenly', links it with the whole life-generating source and maintains that it derives its existence therefrom and acts in common therewith. Nowhere are the effects separated from the providence of the causes, but the wanderings and the searches and the periodic retrievals are among the things that happen according to the caring providence of the causes. The divine cause of divisible life has been united from all eternity with the entire life-generating source which the theologians call also 'mother of the sovereign goddess' and to which Plato alludes since he always links Kore with Demeter.

Here Proclus refers to the relation of the Mother with the Daughter-Maiden as it was told in the Homeric hymn to Demeter and crystallized in the

²² Excerpts from the sixth book of *Platonic Theology* were originally quoted from Portus' edition when the first draft of this paper was communicated as a lecture in the Department of Classics, Princeton University on 1 May 1996. The philological corrections which were then suggested in order to render the text intelligible have all (p. 49, 27 S-W αὐτὴν: αὐτὴν Portus; p. 52, 16 S-W μονάς: τριάς Portus; p. 52, 21 S-W αὐτὴν: αὐτὴν Portus) been confirmed by the recent appearance of the sixth volume of *P.T.* in the Budé series. The sixth book is now quoted from this new Paris edition.

central myth of the Eleusinian mysteries. The entire life-generating source is Demeter, identified with Rhea,²³ and the divine cause of divisible life is the Kore. The generic (monadic and unique) principle is hypostatically triple. Proclus is explicit about his contention that “all life-generating processions depend upon one life-generating principle”.²⁴ Quite apart from the general theoretical considerations mentioned earlier, tripartition must take place here for the specific reason that the Kore is to provide beings with *individual*²⁵ existence and life. The first member of this trinity is Artemis, the second Persephone and the third Athena. The whole trinity is called Maidenly (Κορικὴ), 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’. Artemis is first because it is she who, above all else, provides living beings with *existence*. She is the divine principle of the most elementary in individual life. Persephone bestows the precise *form of life* and Athena imparts *intellect*. In a different nomenclature which may better clarify the corresponding concepts, Artemis is equaled with She-of-the-Distance (Ἐκάτη), Persephone with Soul (Ψυχὴ) and Athena with Virtue (Ἀρετὴ) (*P.T.*, VI, 11, p. 51, 19-28):

Τριῶν γὰρ οὐσῶν ἐν αὐτῇ μονάδων καὶ τῆς μὲν κατὰ τὴν ὑπαρξίν τεταγμένης ἀκροτάτης, τῆς δὲ κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν τὴν οἰστικὴν [ὀριστικὴν Portus] τῆς ζωῆς, τῆς δὲ κατὰ τὸν νοῦν τὸν ζωογονικόν, καὶ τῶν θεολόγων τὴν μὲν Ἀρτεμιν Κορικὴν εἰσοθῶτων καλεῖν, τὴν δὲ Περσεφόνην, τὴν δὲ Ἀθηνᾶν Κορικὴν, λέγω δὲ τὴν τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς θεολογίας ἀρχηγῶν· ἐπεὶ παρά γε τοῖς βαρβάροις τὰ αὐτὰ δι’ ἑτέρων ὀνομάτων δεδῆλωται. τὴν μὲν γὰρ πρωτίστην ἐκεῖνοι μονάδα καλοῦσιν Ἐκάτην, τὴν δὲ μέσσην Ψυχὴν, τὴν δὲ τρίτην Ἀρετὴν.

The first of the three monads that this [i.e. the maidenly monad] contains is assigned to [the bestowing of] existence, the second to the power that brings [or determines] life and the third to the vivifying intellect; and the theologians call the first ‘Maidenly Artemis’, the second ‘Persephone’ and the third ‘Maidenly Athena’ – I am referring to the leaders of Greek theology; for amidst the barbarians the same deities are denoted by different names: they call the first monad ‘Hecate’, the second ‘Soul’ and the third ‘Virtue’.

It sounds strange that Proclus gives the Greek names for ‘soul’ and ‘virtue’ after he has explicitly said that these are precisely the terms used by the barbarians, i.e. the non-Greeks. His primary point is that ‘Artemis’ and ‘Athena’ are Greek because these are the names under which the goddesses are mentioned in the Orphic theologies. The presence of Hecate, she-of-the-

²³ *P.T.*, V, 11, p. 39, 1-24.

²⁴ *P.T.*, V, 14, p. 45, 11-12.

²⁵ It is indeed an irony that the *μεριστῆς* of the text can be rendered both ‘divisible’ and ‘in-dividual’ in English.

distance, should not surprise us. As early as the fifth century B.C., and presumably earlier, 'Hecate' was already an epithet of Artemis²⁶ and in the Hellenistic era the assimilation between the two originally independent goddesses was complete. The foreign people to whom Proclus refers are the theurgists.²⁷ 'Barbarians' is a technical term referring to the people who received the divine revelation of the *Chaldaean Oracles*. Proclus was forced to include Hecate in his divine hierarchy because of the predominant role she played in the *Chaldaean Oracles*²⁸ where she was – *nota bene* – the dispenser of *souls* and *virtues*.²⁹ Remember that Marinus relates that Proclus would be happy to extinguish all books except for the Platonic *Timaeus* and the said oracles.³⁰

At first glance, it is not entirely clear in Proclus' exposition whether the emanation of the trinity from the second life-generating monad, from the Maiden *par excellence*, proceeds gradually through Artemis, Persephone and Athena precisely in this successive order, or whether the ontologically anterior and superior monad of the Maiden stands in more intimate relationship with Persephone than with the other two goddesses. The question does not emerge in Proclus' understanding of things. Both alternatives are, in a way, correct. It is true that the intermediate member of each triad summarizes the entire trinity by being the central and focal point of reference at which the two extreme members meet. 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: μονή, πρόοδος and ἐπιστροφή. Artemis is the μονή of the Maidenly Trinity and as such she is explicitly endowed with the prerogative of providing beings with existential extremity (the ἀκροτάτη μονάς supplies ὑπαρξίς), 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 activity, or else the *nostos* of a consummately fulfilled being back to the womb which brought it forth.³¹ If we now recall that the trinity as a whole derives from the life-generating monadic

²⁶ Cf. Aesch., *Suppl.*, 676.

²⁷ Cf. *In Crat.*, p. 105, 26-27.

²⁸ Cf. fr. 30, 35, 50, 52, 221 des Places.

²⁹ PSELLUS, in *Chald. Or.* p. 171 des Places.

³⁰ Cf. n. 11.

³¹ Cf. *P.T.*, VI, 11, p. 54, 8-15: καὶ ὡς περ ἡ ὅλη ζωογόνος ἐν ἑαυτῇ περιείχε τὰς πηγὰς τῆς τε ἀρετῆς καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς, ὧν δὴ καὶ ὁ δημιουργὸς μεταδίδωσι τῷ κόσμῳ, τελέως αὐτὸν ὑποστήσας, οὕτω δὴ καὶ ἡ τῶν μεριστῶν πάντων εἰδῶν τῆς ζωῆς ἔχουσα τὴν πρωτουργὸν αἰτίαν ἔχει καὶ τὴν τῶν ψυχῶν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὴν τῶν ἀρετῶν, καὶ διὰ τούτου δῆπου καὶ ταῖς μερικαῖς ψυχαῖς ἡ ἀνοδὸς ἐστὶ δι' ὁμοιότητος καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ πρὸς θεοῦς ἐστὶ ὁμοιότητος.

source called the Maiden, we can see that the extremity of existence that is Artemis' gift is the extremity of existence of *living* beings³² (*P.T.*, VI, 11, p. 52, 14-23):

Δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι τῆς ὅλης τριάδος πρὸς ἑαυτὴν ἠνωμένης ἢ τε πρωτίστη μονὰς ἐνιαίως περιέχει τὴν τρίτην καὶ ἡ τρίτη πρὸς τὴν πρώτην ἐπέστραπται καὶ ἡ μέση διατείνουσα ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν ἐπ' ἄμφω. τρεῖς γὰρ αὗται ζωογονικαὶ μονάδες ἢ τε Ἄρτεμις καὶ ἡ Περσεφόνη καὶ ἡ δέσποινα ἡμῶν Ἀθηναῖα. Καὶ ἡ μὲν ἀπάσης τῆς τριάδος ἀκρότης ἢ καὶ εἰς αὐτὴν ἐπιστρέφει τὴν τρίτην, ἡ δὲ δύναμις ζωοποιὸς τῶν ὄλων, ἡ δὲ νοῦς θεῖος καὶ ἄχραντος.

Since the whole triad is unified with itself [i.e. fully integrated], it is clear that the first monad includes the third in a unified way and the third reverts to the first and the middle extends its power to both. For these are the three life-generating monads: Artemis, Persephone and Athena, our patron deity. Artemis, who makes the third monad come back to her, is the extremity of the entire trinity, Persephone is the vivifying power of units and Athena is the divine and uncontaminated intellect.

The triad as the unfolded version of the monad represents the three timeless moments of the principle of life. Along with the usual triple scheme of manence, procession and reversion, the triple pattern of being, life and intellect is operative here. Being, life and intellect first appear on the level of intelligible gods. The order of their appearance is of great significance. Proclus supports the hierarchical emergence of these three metaphysical principles by means of two arguments, the one trivial, the other philosophical. The trivial argument³³ consists in the observation that all existing things partake of being, whereas only some partake of life and still less of intellect. Being precedes life, in other words, because there are things that do not live (minerals, for instance); and life precedes intellect because there are living beings that do not think (e.g. plants). The philosophical argument³⁴ under-

³² The animating or life-providing role of Artemis is stated also by SALLUSTIUS, *De Diis et Mundo*, 6, 3 where a much less sophisticated system is at work.

³³ *P.T.*, III, 6, p. 22, 12 - 23, 10: ἀλλ' εἰ νοῦ μὲν τὰ γνωστικά μόνον μετέχει τῶν ὄντων, ζωῆς δὲ καὶ ὄσα γνώσεως ἀμοιρα (καὶ γὰρ τὰ φυτὰ λέγομεν ζῆν), ἀνάγκη δὴπου τὴν ζωὴν ἐπέκεινα τοῦ νοῦ τετάχθαι, πλείονων αἰτίαν οὖσαν καὶ πλείουσιν ἐλλάμπουσιν τὰς ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς δόσεις τοῦ νοῦ. [...] εἰ γὰρ ζωὴ τὸ πρῶτως ὄν, καὶ ταῦτόν τὸ ζωῆ εἶναι καὶ τὸ ὄντι εἶναι, καὶ εἰς λόγος ἀμφοῖν, ἅπαν ἄν τὸ ζωῆς μετέχον καὶ τοῦ ὄντος μετεिल्φός, καὶ πᾶν τὸ τοῦ εἶναι μεταλαβόν, καὶ τῆς ζωῆς. εἰ γὰρ ταῦτόν ἐκάτερον, πάντα ἄν ὁμοίως τοῦ τε εἶναι μετέχοι καὶ τοῦ ζῆν· ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ζῶντα πάντα καὶ οὐσίαν ἔχει καὶ τὸ ὄν, τὰ δὲ ὄντα πολλαχού καὶ ζωῆς ἐστιν ἀμοιρα.

³⁴ The philosophical argument is not stated by Proclus in the explicit form in which it is presented here (which is in fact an interpretation). However, it permeates his entire philosophy preoccupied as it is with the interrelationships of being, life and intellect. Chapters 6-28 of the third book of the *Platonic Theology* (III, p. 28-102) and the whole

stands the triple order of being, life and intellect not with reference to inanimate, living and thinking things, but metaphysically somewhat as follows. Being is the intrinsic constitution of a thing, what a thing is in itself, its nature. Life is the power of a thing's nature, its potency to act, the might of its existence. And intellect is the activity of a thing's power, the application of its strength and the activation of its potential. Intellect is the power of a nature when this power is in actual operation.³⁵ For Proclus being is always determinate being. The *that* of existence unavoidably involves the *what* of being. Existence involves quiddity. The existential 'is' always implies a certain determinateness of being, or the copulative 'is'. To be is to be such-and-such. To be is not to be something or other indiscriminately. To be is to have the definite form of being so-and-so. Therefore, being is always determinate being. The determination of determinate being is life. And the manifestation of the determination of determinate being is intellect. Thus being, life and intellect are present on all levels of reality besides the One, because everything has a certain nature emanating the appropriate power and manifesting itself in a particular activity. Life and intellect are already encapsulated in being. But in being as such, life and intellect do not yet show themselves. Hence, it is the dynamic, as opposed to the manifest, content of life and intellect that is enclosed in being.³⁶ Being is the unmanifested dynamism of life and intellect. Being is the opaque dynamism of existence which enables things to operate, i.e. to live and act out their activities. In that light, the trivial argument turns out to be not so trivial.

Artemis belongs to the worldly deities. She has a place, we saw it, in the hypercosmic divine order together with Persephone and Athena. But this is not the only place in the great chain of Being where Artemis can be found. Proclus assigns a second, and secondary, position, to Artemis on the hypercosmic-and-encosmic plane in a trinity that includes Demeter and Hera too. In this triad Artemis occupies the third position. Having explored the most dignified of the two Artemisian positions first, as is congenial to Proclus' way of thinking, we should now proceed to investigate the second. The details of this assignment are again to be found in the *Platonic Theology* (VI, 22, p. 98, 3-13):

fourth book deal precisely with this problem. The basic triadic law of reality is revealed in the very first triad of intelligible gods. But the three moments are so unified there that they are not yet called 'being', 'life' and 'intellect', but 'limit', 'unlimited' and 'being'.

³⁵ Cf. the similar analysis by L.J. Rosán, *The Philosophy of Proclus: The Final Phase of Ancient Thought*, New York, 1949, p. 109 sq.

³⁶ *P.T.*, III, 9, p. 35, 11-17: καὶ εἶναι πανταχοῦ μὲν τὰ τρία ταῦτα, τὸ ὄν, τὴν ζωὴν, τὸν νοῦν, πρῶτως δὲ καὶ οὐσιωδῶς ἐν τῷ ὄντι προϋπάρχειν. ἐκεῖ γὰρ καὶ ἡ οὐσία καὶ ἡ ζωὴ καὶ ὁ νοῦς· καὶ ἡ <μὲν> [addidi; lacunan signavit S-W] ἀκρότης τῶν ὄντων, ἡ δὲ ζωὴ τὸ μέσον κέντρον τοῦ ὄντος, νοητὴ ζωὴ λεγομένη καὶ οὐσα, ὁ δὲ νοῦς τὸ πέρασ τοῦ ὄντος καὶ [ὁ] [seclusint S-W] νοητὸς νοῦς.

Τῆς γε μὴν ζωογονικῆς [sc. τριάδος] ἐξάρχει μὲν ἡ Δημήτηρ ὅλην [ὅλως Portus] ἀπογεννώσα τὴν [πάσαν Portus] ἐγκόσμιον ζῶην, τὴν τε νοερὰν καὶ τὴν ψυχικὴν καὶ τὴν ἀχώριστον τοῦ σώματος, ἡ δὲ Ἥρα τὴν μεσότητα συνέχει τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπογέννησιν προϊμένη (καὶ γὰρ ἡ νοερά θεὸς τῶν ἄλλων ψυχικῶν γενῶν ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς προυβάλλετο πάσας τὰς προόδους), ἡ δὲ Ἄρτεμις τὸ πέρας ἐκλήρωσατο πάντας κινούσα τοὺς φυσικοὺς λόγους εἰς ἐνέργειαν καὶ τὸ αὐτοτελὲς τῆς ὕλης τελειούσα: διὸ καὶ Λοχίαν αὐτὴν οἱ τε θεολόγοι καὶ ὁ ἐν Θεαιτήτῳ Σωκράτης καλοῦσιν ὡς φυσικῆς προόδου καὶ γεννήσεως ἔφορον.

The life-generating triad begins with Demeter who engenders the entire encosmic life, namely intellectual life, psychic life and the life that is inseparable from body; Hera who brings forth the birth of soul occupies the cohering middle position (for the intellectual goddess outpours from herself all the processions of the psychic kinds); finally, Artemis has been assigned to the end of the trinity because she activates all the natural formative principles and perfects the self-completeness of matter; it is for this reason, namely because she supervises natural development and natural birth, that the theologians and Socrates in the *Theaetetus* call her Lochia.

Notice that here it is the formative principles of Φύσις (*Nature*) that Artemis mobilizes and the self-completeness of ὕλη (*matter*) that she perfects. The goddess takes care of *natural physique*. Take also note that she presides over natural coming-to-be. The birth (γέννησις) and the procession (πρόοδος) of this passage are each, at once, both natural generation, bringing-into-being, and natural maturation, bringing-into-perfection.

To this second and secondary Artemis of the hypercosmic-and-encosmic gods refers also the following passage: Commenting on the well-known battle of the gods of the twenty-first book of the *Iliad* Proclus says (*In Remp.*, I, p. 95, 2-7):

Ἡ δὲ τῆς Ἥρας καὶ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος [sc. ἀντιθεσις] τὴν τῶν ἐνταῦθα ψυχῶν λογικῶν ἢ ἀλόγων, χωριστῶν ἢ ἀχωρίστων, ὑπερφυῶν ἢ φυσικῶν παρίστησιν ἀντιδιαίρεσιν, τῆς μὲν αἰτίας οὐσης τῶν ἀμεινόνων, τῆς δὲ τὰ χεῖρω λοχεούσης καὶ εἰς φῶς προαγούσης.

The opposition of Hera and Artemis represents the bipartition of the earthly souls, of which some are rational and some irrational, some separable and some inseparable, some supranatural and some natural; Hera is the cause of the better souls whereas Artemis delivers and brings to light the less worthy souls.

Instead of the omnipresent polarity between nature and culture that a committed structuralist would find in the divine conflict, Proclus sees in the Homeric duel the symbolic presentation of two complementary principles of generation. Notice the careful use of the word ἀντιδιαίρεσις: the term refers to a division (διαίρεσις) which is the opposite (ἀντί) of a proper division in that each divided part contains the undivided whole but displays the power

of the whole in a partial, i.e. divided, way. The whole in question is most clearly provided by the next passage from Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus*, I, p. 78, 27-79, 6:

Ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν θεῶν ὁ θεῖος Ὅμηρος ἀντιθέσεις ποιεῖ τῷ μὲν Ποσειδῶνι τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα [...] τῇ δὲ Ἀρτέμιδι τὴν Ἥραν ἀντιτάττων· δεῖ γὰρ τὴν γένεσιν ὁρᾶν καὶ ἐν ἀσωμάτοις καὶ ἐν σώμασι καὶ ἐν τοῖς συναμφοτέροις, καὶ τὸν μὲν Ποσειδῶ καὶ τὸν Ἀπόλλω δημιουργοὺς τίθεσθαι τῆς ὅλης γενέσεως, τὸν μὲν ὀλικῶς, τὸν δὲ μερικῶς, τὴν δὲ Ἥραν καὶ Ἀρτεμιν ζωογονίας χορηγούς, τὴν μὲν λογικῆς, τὴν δὲ φυσικῆς.

For the divine Homer produces in his poetry conflicts even among the gods themselves by setting Apollo against Poseidon [...] and Hera against Artemis – for we must discern bringing-into-being both in incorporeal things and in corporeal things as well as in mixed things; we should understand that Poseidon and Apollo are the creators of the whole realm of genesis, the former creating the world of becoming in an all-inclusive manner, the latter dealing with parts; and we must see both Hera and Artemis as providers of life-generation, the former on the rational level, the latter on the physical level.

The aspect of reality which Artemis and Hera share, and because of which they engage in a symbolic conflict, is the engendering of life. But whereas Hera vivifies rational beings *qua* rational, Artemis animates natural beings in general. The natural beings that Artemis brings to life succumb to her power only insofar as they are physical bodies with a potential for life. Artemis pertains to human nature to the extent that human nature is a physical thing. What human nature is above and beyond its being a physical thing is, of course, for Proclus, not the cultural or historical dimension of humankind but their rationality and intellectuality. In Aristotelian terminology we could say that Artemis provides “the first entelechy of a natural organic body”.³⁷

In the same direction points a passage from the commentary on the *Republic*. But this passage deals with the first, not the second, Artemis. Referring to the very beginning of this Platonic dialogue where Socrates describes how the previous day he and Glaucon went down to Piraeus in order to fill their curiosity about, as well as pay homage to, the newly-imported cult of the Thracian goddess Bendis, Proclus, in his usual allegorical style, writes (*In Remp.*, I, p. 18, 9-19, 2):

Ἡ οὐκ ἴσμεν ὡς τὰ μὲν Βενδίδια τὴν Ἀρτεμιν θεραπεύειν κατὰ τὸν Θρακῶν νόμον ἐθέλει, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦτο Θράκιον ἢ Βένδις; [...] τὰ δὲ Παναθήναια καὶ ταῦτα μικρὰ λέγων τοῖς Βενδιδίοις ἐπόμενα τὴν Ἀθηναίαν εἶχεν τῆς ἑορτῆς πρόφασιν. οὐκοῦν ἀμφω μὲν παῖδες Διὸς, ἀμφω παρθένου, προσκεῖσθω δὲ ὅτι καὶ ἀμφω φωσφόροι, εἰ καὶ ἡ μὲν ὡς εἰς

³⁷ Cf. ARIST., *De Anima*, II, 1, 412b 4-6.

φῶς ἄγουσα τοὺς ἀφανεῖς λόγους τῆς φύσεώς ἐστι φωσφόρος, ἡ δὲ ὡς τὸ νοερὸν ἀνάπτουσα φῶς ταῖς ψυχαῖς·

δαῖέ οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάματον πῦρ· [Hom., *Il.*, V, 4]

καὶ ὡς ἀφαιροῦσα τὴν ἀχλύν, ἧς παρούσης οὐχ ὄρα ἡ ψυχὴ, τί μὲν τὸ θεῖον, τί δὲ τὸ ἀνθρώπειον. ἀμφότεν δὲ τοιαύτας ιδιότητας ἔχουσῶν δῆλον ὡς ἡ μὲν γενέσεώς ἐστὶν προστάτις καὶ λοχευτικὴ τῶν γενεσιουργῶν λόγων, ἡ δὲ ἀναγωγὸς ψυχῶν καὶ νοῦ χορηγὸς καὶ φρονήσεως ἀληθοῦς καὶ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανίοις δυναστεύουσα μειζρόνως, ἄνωθεν δὲ τελειοῦσα πᾶσαν τὴν σεληναίαν διακόσμησιν.

Or do we not know that the Bendidia is a festival in honour of Artemis in which the goddess is worshipped according to the custom of the people of Thrace, and that 'Bendis' is a Thracian name? [...] The Panathenaic festival, on the other hand, and especially the little Panathenaic to which Plato refers, was a celebration in honour of Athena which followed the Bendidia in the calendar. Both Artemis and Athena are daughters of Zeus, both are virgins, and, let it be added, both are light-bearing deities, though there is a difference between them in that the one is called *phosphoros* because she brings to light the hidden formative principles of nature whereas the other because she kindles the intellectual light of the souls:

"inextinguishable fire was burning from her helmet and shield"

and because she does away with the fog by virtue which, when present, the soul does not distinguish what is divine and what is human. As both of them, then, have these properties it is evident that the one protects birth and delivers the formative principles of generation, whereas the other elevates the souls and bestows intellect and true wisdom on them and, while she is in fact sovereign of the celestial plane, she perfects from above the whole of the lunar order.

Artemis is compared and contrasted with both Athena and Hera. Her comparison with Hera functions on the plane of hypercosmic-and-encosmic deities and shows that Artemis deals with the most elementary forms of life or the most elementary part of all life, whereas Hera operates in the most elevated forms of life or the most elevated part of all life. Artemis' comparison with Athena, on the other hand, functions on the higher plane of hypercosmic gods and shows that Artemis brings to light the forms of life that lie *hidden* in her (an allusion to the *specific kind of virginity* that pertains to her), whereas Athena embellishes the living things with the ornament of intelligence: in her case, virginity is the dynamism of thinking. What characterizes Artemis and distinguishes her from the other goddesses to whom she is related is her *natural* and *physical*, as opposed to intellectual and spiritual, prerogatives of power.

In view of the preceding analysis we can make some sense of a rather long passage from the *In Cratylum* which summarizes, in a blurred way, Proclus' position on Artemis. Proclus appears to be led astray by the etymological considerations of the *Cratylus* so that the picture that he presents

here, as in the other passage from the same commentary, is at first sight confused (*In Crat.*, p. 94, 16 - 95, 23):

Τρεῖς ταύτας ζωογονικὰς μονάδας ἐφεξῆς νῦν ὁ Σωκράτης παραδίδωσι, τὴν Δήμητρα τὴν Ἥραν τὴν Περσεφόνην, τὴν μὲν μητέρα τοῦ δημιουργοῦ λεγομένην, τὴν δὲ ἀδελφὴν, τὴν δὲ θυγατέρα· πάσας δὲ κοινωνοὺς τῆς ὅλης δημιουργίας, τὴν μὲν ἐξηρημένως καὶ νοερώς, τὴν δὲ ἀρχικῶς καὶ ἡγεμονικῶς, τὴν δὲ πηγαίως ἅμα καὶ ἀρχικῶς. τούτων δὲ τῶν θεαινῶν ἡ τελευταία τριπλᾶς ἔλαχεν δυνάμεις καὶ θεῶν περιεῖληφε μονάδας τρεῖς ἀμερίστως καὶ ἐνοειδῶς· προσαγορεύεται δὲ Κόρη διὰ τὴν καθαρότητα τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τὴν ἀχραντον ἐν ταῖς ἀπογεννήσεσιν ὑπεροχὴν. ἔχει δὲ πρώτην τε καὶ μέσσην καὶ τελευταίαν ἡγεμονίαν, καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὴν ἀκρότητα ἑαυτῆς Ἄρτεμις καλεῖται παρ' Ὀρφεί, κατὰ δὲ τὸ μέσον κέντρον Περσεφόνη, κατὰ δὲ τὸ πέρασ τῆς διακοσμῆσεως Ἀθηνᾶ. καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὴν ὑπαρξίν τὴν ὑπερανέχουσαν τῶν ἄλλων δυνάμεων τοῦ ζωογονικοῦ τούτου τριπλοῦ διακόσμου ἴδρυται ἢ τῆς Ἑκάτης ἀρχή, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μέσσην δύναμιν καὶ γεννητικὴν τῶν ὄλων ἢ Ψυχική, κατὰ δὲ τὴν νοερὴν ἐπιστροφὴν ἢ τῆς Ἀρετῆς. ἄνω μὲν οὖν καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑπερκοσμοῖς ἡ Κόρη τὴν τριπλῆν ταύτην ἐνοειδῶς προτείνει τὴν τῶν θεῶν διακόσμησιν, καὶ μετὰ τοῦ Διὸς ἀπογεννᾷ τὸν τῆς μεριστῆς οὐσίας ἀμερίστως προεστηκότα Διόνυσον, κάτω δὲ μετὰ τοῦ Πλούτωνος κατὰ τὸ μέσον διαφερόντως ἰδίωμα θεωρεῖται· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ προϊὸν πανταχοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἐσχάτοις χορηγὸν τῆς ζωοποιίας. διὸ καὶ Περσεφόνη καλεῖται μάλιστα τῷ Πλούτῳ συνοῦσα καὶ μετ' αὐτοῦ διακομοῦσα τὰ τελευταία τοῦ παντός, καὶ κατὰ μὲν τὰ ἄκρα παρθένος εἶναι λέγεται καὶ ἀχραντος μένειν, κατὰ δὲ τὸ μέσον ζεύγνυσθαι τῷ Ἄϊδι καὶ συναπογεννᾶν τὰς ἐν τοῖς ὑποχθονίοις Εὐμενίδας. καλεῖται μὲν οὖν αὕτη καὶ Κόρη, τρόπον δ' ἄλλον τῆς ὑπερκοσμίου καὶ ἡγεμονικῆς· ἡ μὲν γὰρ ἐνός ἐστὶν συνεκτικὴ τῶν τριῶν ζωογονικῶν ἀρχῶν, ἡ δὲ μεσότης ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὰς ιδιότητας ἔχουσα τῶν ἄκρων· διὸ καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑκάτης, εἴτ' οὖν Ἀθηνᾶς, εὐροῖς ἂν ἐν τῇ Περσεφόνῃ τῇ μετὰ τοῦ Πλούτωνος, ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἄκρα κρυφίως ἐν αὐτῇ, τὸ δὲ τῆς μεσότητος ἴδιον προφαίνεται καὶ τὸ τῆς ἀρχικῆς ψυχῆς ἀφοριστικόν, ὅπερ ἐκεῖ μὲν ἡγεμονικῶς ἦν, ἐνταῦθα δὲ ἐγκοσμίως.

Then Socrates mentions these three life-generating monads, Demeter, Hera and Persephone of whom the first is said to be the mother of the demiurge, the second his sister and the third his daughter; all three share in the entire creation, the first in a transcendental and intellectual way, the second as origin and overseer and the third as source and origin at once. The last of these goddesses possesses triple powers and contains three divine monads in an undivided and unitary way; she is also called 'Maiden' ('Kore') because of the impeccableness of her being and her immaculate excellence in giving birth. She has first and middle and last authorities and with respect to her extremity she is called 'Artemis' by Orpheus, with respect to the middle and central part she is called 'Persephone', and, finally, with respect to the end of the order she is called 'Athena'; over the existence that precedes the other powers of this triple life-giving order stands the rule of Hecate, over the middle power which is procreative of all things stands the Psychic power and over the intellectual reversion stands the power of Virtue. Up in the hyper-

cosmic gods the Maiden unifyingly brings forward this triple order of deities, and to Zeus she begets Dionysus who indivisibly presides over divisible creation; down with Pluto she is pre-eminently characterized by the middle property: for this is what comes out everywhere and what provides life to the very ultimate things. For this reason she is particularly called 'Persephone' when she is Pluto's wife and puts in order, together with him, the last things of the universe. With respect to her extremes she is said to be virgin and to remain uncontaminated, but with respect to her middle part she is said to have intercourse with Hades and to give birth to the subterranean Eumenides. She too is called 'Maiden', but in a different sense from that of the hypercosmic and sovereign deity. For the hypercosmic deity is a henad that binds together the three life-generating principles, whereas the encosmic 'maiden' refers specifically to the middle part that has in itself the properties of the ends. That is why you could find the name and properties of Hecate, or of Athena, in the Persephone of Pluto, while the ends are hidden within herself, but she shows, as her specific property, the middle part which also determines the principal soul. This middle part is present there sovereignly, but here encosmically.

It would seem at first glance that the three life-generating monads constitute the trinity of the hypercosmic-and-encosmic life-generating triad. But this is not the case. The Demeter of this passage is not the Demeter of the hypercosmic-and-encosmic plane. She is the Rhea of the intellectual gods because her intervention in the vivifying process is not immediate but operates in a transcendental and intellectual way. Hera, by contrast, does function on the hypercosmic-and-encosmic level, since this is the only place in which she can be found. Persephone, finally, (and, by implication, the Artemis that she contains within herself) operates on two planes: the hypercosmic and the encosmic. Proclus does not mention here the second Artemis of the hypercosmic-and-encosmic gods. But he makes an allusion to the presence of Artemis on the level of encosmic deities. To make sense of the passage we have to assume that Proclus postulated the existence of a third Artemis on the last plane of worldly divinities. Thus we can redress the loss of the last book of his *Platonic Theology* where he would have elaborated that view. It is certain that Proclus postulated on the encosmic level another life-generating divine triad³⁸ consisting of the same goddesses as those of which the life-generating triad of the hypercosmic level consists. The basic difference between the two triads is the role that Persephone plays in them. On the hypercosmic level, the Maiden (Kore and, by implication, Persephone) is a henad that binds together the three life-generating principles. She

³⁸ Cf. *P.T.*, VI, 11, p. 50, 4-12: διττῆς δὲ οὐσης τῆς Κορικῆς τάξεως καὶ τῆς μὲν ὑπὲρ τὸν κόσμον προφαινομένης ὅτι δὴ συντάττεται τῷ Διὶ καὶ μετ' ἐκέλευεν τὸν ἕνα δημιουργὸν ὑφίστησι τῶν μεριστῶν, τῆς δὲ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ δευτέρας οὐ δὴ καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ Πλάτωνος ἀρπάζεσθαι λέγεται καὶ ψυχοῦν τὰ ἔσχατα τοῦ παντός ὧν ὁ Πλούτων ἐπιτρόπευεν, ἀμφοτέρας ὁ Πλάτων τελέως ἐξέφηνε, τοτὲ μὲν τῇ Δήμητρι τὴν Κόρην συνάπτων, τοτὲ δὲ τῷ Πλούτωνι, καὶ σύζυγον ἀποφαίνων τοῦδε τοῦ θεοῦ.

is more of a virgin than a woman. On the encosmic level, by contrast, Persephone contains within herself the properties of the other two goddesses. Thus she is more of a prolific woman than a virgin, the maidenly aspect being included in, and subordinated to, her matrimonial nature. Fertility is condensed in dynamic virginity on the hypercosmic deities, but expanded into actual motherhood on the encosmic level. As far as Artemis is concerned, it seems that her two elements, the Artemisian and the Hecateic, are differently distributed on the two levels. On the hypercosmic plane it is the Artemisian element that is more pronounced in the first member of the life-generating triad, whereas on the encosmic plane it is as Hecate that Artemis is contained in Persephone. The difference between Greek (i.e. Orphic) and barbaric (i.e. Chaldaean) terminology does not suffice to account for the particularity of this distribution. The encosmic Hecate is the lowest member of Artemisian maidenly fertility and was presumably identified with the moon, the most eminent fertility symbol of dark (crude and virginal) femininity to be found in the sensible world.

The account of Proclus needs an interpretative effort if it is to become somewhat meaningful. We need to weave together the various threads that the diverse references to a specific deity provide us with. The fragmentation of a traditional divinity into distinct entities at different levels of the hierarchy of being leaves us with a feeling of irrelevance and scholasticism. Sometimes, as in the case of Zeus, the fragmentation leads to no less than five distinct deities.³⁹ I trust that the more one tries to see the reasons of this fragmentation the more one becomes convinced of the profundity of the enterprise. It is worthwhile pointing out, however, that what is for Proclus a fragmentation is for the modern historian of religion the independent development of local deities that fuse into each other and lead, over the years, to the formation of the major Homeric-Panhellenic gods. That myths and cults devoted to one deity have nothing but the name in common with myths and cults devoted to the 'same' deity in another place of Greece and that originally independent deities were affected by religious syncretism is the modern way of expressing a historical situation of early Greece. Unity, however, is lost. Proclus accounted for divine divergence without sacrificing a deity's unity on the altar of his or her diverse mythical and cultic aspects. The Proclan fragmentation of the traditional deities is his answer to the Platonic problem of unity-in-diversity as applied to the popular religion of Greece.

Although Proclus' understanding of Artemis evolved over the years and reached its complicated maturity in the *Platonic Theology* it is evident that the philosopher had grasped the nature of the goddess at an early stage of his intellectual development. The basic thought is already present in the *Timaeus* commentary, Proclus' first major work. This treatise which was

³⁹ *In Tim.*, III, p. 190, 19-26.

completed at the age of twenty eight, according to his biographer,⁴⁰ displays all the fundamental traits of Artemis which Proclus will later explore in more sophisticated ways. To the modern mind, which is usually taken aback by the labyrinthine, baroque structure of the most *recherché* thought of Proclus' mature years, the following passage is pleasantly refreshing (*In Tim.*, II, p. 146, 3-9):

Τὸν μὲν νοῦν ἀμέριστον οὐσίαν τοῦ Διονύσου καλεῖ [sc. Πλάτων], τὸ δὲ γόνιμον αὐτοῦ τὴν μεριστὴν αὐτὴν περὶ τὸ σῶμα ζῶην φυσικὴν οὖσαν καὶ σπερμάτων οἰστικὴν, ἣν καὶ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν φησι τὴν πάσης προεστῶσαν τῆς ἐν τῇ φύσει γεννήσεως καὶ μαιευομένην τοὺς φυσικοὺς λόγους ἀνωθεν διατείνειν ἄχρι τῶν ὑποχθονίων, δυναμοῦσαν αὐτῆς τὴν γόνιμον δύναμιν.

Plato calls the intellect, when indivisible, the essence of Dionysus, whereas the prolific aspect of intellect he calls the divisible life itself which is corporeal and physical and which brings forth seeds; this life he identifies with Artemis who presides over natural generation, delivers the natural formative principles and whose power extends from the high region down to the underworld forces thus enhancing her generative potency.

The three Artemises, in Proclus' classificatory theology, are all life-generating principles. The primary Artemis is the principle that provides the *prime existence of life in less than purely noetic simplicity*. She occupies the first position of the Maidenly trinity which is the position of manence and being. Her prolific power is hidden in her virginity. The secondary Artemis is the principle that provides the *fulfilment of natural-physical life, as natural-physical life is seen from the perspective of intelligence*. By mobilizing the formative principles of natural life she activates them and brings them into fruition. She occupies the third position of the lower vivifying trinity which is the position of reversion and of intellect, which is to say: actuality and perfection – in this case: actuality and perfection of natural-physical life. The third Artemis, commonly revered as Hecate and identified with the moon, extends her divine influence as far below the earth as the underworld powers. She is not only linked with, but actually contained in, the procreative motherhood of earthly Persephone and she presides over the potency and perfection-ability of physical generation and natural coming-into-being.

To gain a fuller picture of Artemis in light of Proclus' whole divine hierarchy we should repeat that our goddess is subordinate to the prime source of life. The prime source of life, be it called Demeter or Rhea, is a mother. The first emergence of life *per se* is the Maiden. The maidenly trinity is also subordinate to the creative triad of the first demiurges. At the first moment of the first emergence of life itself the Artemisian character is revealed for the first time. The first emergence of Artemis shows that the specifically Artemi-

⁴⁰ MARINUS, *Vita Procli*, 13, 329-330 Masullo.

sian aspect of life *per se* stands where it stands because the being of life *per se* precedes the power and the actuality of life. Life *per se* is all the more potent in Artemis because it is hidden in the first member of the maidenly life-generating triad. The second life-generating triad is maternal. In this trinity Artemis occupies the third position because there she, as a tender and caring mother, brings into fruition the formative principles of physical life. On the lower level of encosmic gods the specifically Artemisian aspect is overtaken by the wildness of the most primitive natural life. The maidenly attribute of fertility appears now as Hecate. Hecate and, by implication, the lowest Artemis, archetypically represent the feminine resistance to copulation which is part of the abduction mythology of Persephone. The Hecateic and Artemisian virginity of this last plane of deities relates to the strong aversion to physical (and sexual) subordination that characterizes the most elementary forms of natural life. Hecate, like Artemis, abhors sexual contact and is, in this way, related to Persephone's rape fertility.

In weaving together the diverse threads of a divine account we must look to the integrating principle that will set the loom in motion. In our case this not so hard to find. All the quoted passages testify to the life-generating character of Artemis. The last passage, in particular, specifies the goddess' meaning by spelling out the symbolic content of virginity. In the fabric of Artemis' presence the warp is the first Artemis and the woof is the second. The third Artemis plays in this respect a secondary role since the moon-like Hecateic traits override the strictly Artemisian characteristics. *Artemisian virginity is the hiddenness of the principle of life, which is to say the potent augmentation of vital energy that precedes the actual manifestation of life.*

Artemis has to do with life. She is one of the principles of life. In particular, *she is the principle of the dynamism of life.* Being a principle of life Artemis is life. However, she is neither life as a state of being, nor life as static condition. She is, rather, life as power and as dynamic development. Artemis as life is fertile. But her fertility is not patent fertility but *occult dynamism of generation.* Uncontaminated and immaculate sexuality, which is to say virginity, means unreduced and undiminished sexual potency. It means enhanced fecundity. The latent fertility that Artemis bestows on the things to which she acts as a cause is the *potency of life.* But this Artemisian *élan vital* is not the generic principle of life. It is, rather, the principle of individual forms or species of life.

All gods *are* powers and all gods *have* powers which manifest themselves in the divine activities. The power and the activity proper to Artemis are the power and the activity of natural-physical generation. Artemis contains the formative principles, the *logoi*, of natural life, and as such she stands for the generative dynamism of nature. In the broadest light of Artemisian life, life is not the condition or mode of being of things alive alone, but the dynamism that inheres in all physical things according to their kind. What is of special interest here is that this understanding of the goddess does not stem from the

romantic mind of a nineteenth-century scholar but derives from the culminating point of late pagan thought. The dynamism of nature that is Artemis does not reside in the imagination of a modern antiquarian for whom the strangest and weirdest aspects of antiquity represent the Other of his enlightened existence, but conversely springs from a participant of ancient culture for whom prayers and sacrifices to the pagan gods were still effective. The imagination on which Artemis as dynamic power of natural generation draws is the collective imagination of Hellenism before the withdrawal of the gods. And the sophisticated account of the Proclan Artemis is the result of the operation of this shared and still enchanted world. What has been very pointedly labeled Proclus' hylomorphism, as a peculiar kind of hylozoism, is fully at work in this instance.⁴¹ Whether we are ready to call that kind of *symbolic* thought philosophy depends on us and hinges upon our own apprehension of what philosophy is.

Intermezzo

The confusion caused by encountering Artemis in all her mythical and cultic manifestations was already felt in ancient times. Plato for instance said that she, a virgin with no experience of parturition, was assigned the task of presiding over child-birth: ἀλοχος οὔσα τὴν λοχείαν εἴληχε.⁴² There is a sense of ironical alienation in the passage (intimated also by the peculiar consonance of *lamda* and *chi*), because ἀλοχος means both 'wife' and 'childless'. Moreover, the midwives whom Socrates imitates⁴³ are sterile because they are past their prime, whereas Artemis, the divine prototype of midwifery, 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 called for explanation.

The contrariety immanent in Artemis did not always present rational problems, however. In poetic accounts, like the following Orphic fragment preserved by Proclus, the incompatibility between virginity and parturition is a miraculous sign of Artemis' divinity. Far from undermining it rather confirms the power of the goddess:⁴⁴

ἀτελής τε γάμων καὶ ἄπειρος ἐοῦσα
 παιδογόνου λοχίης πάσης ἀνὰ πείρατα λύει.

Inexperienced in marriage and unbound by wedlock
 she yet dissolves the bonds of all child-bearing labours.

⁴¹ TROUILLARD, *op. cit.* (n. 12), p. 69-89.

⁴² PLATO, *Theaet.*, 149b.

⁴³ Cf. M. BURNEYEAT, *Socratic Midwifery, Platonic Inspiration*, in *BICS*, 24 (1977), p. 7-16.

⁴⁴ *Orph. fr.* 187 Kern [= 137 Abel = *In Crat.*, p. 106, 18-19].

Like the Platonic quotation this passage also uses wordplay." Απειρος means 'inexperienced' but it also means 'unlimited' and 'unbound'. The second verse speaks of the painful bonds (πέτρατα) preceding delivery. The interpretation that springs immediately to mind is to construe the participle of the first verse (έουσα) as signifying concession: notwithstanding the fact..., although... But unlike the Platonic quotation the wordplay with *petra-peras* is not merely a pun. It conveys the profound meaning of Artemisian tension. The virgin goddess is not inexperienced. She transcends matrimonial experience. She does not submit herself to wedlock. Her fertile power is unlimited. She attains to unbound fecundity because she has not reached the end of matrimony (άτελής). And precisely because she stands outside marriage and because her fertility is unlimited she can dissolve the bonds of pre-natal night to help women in labour. The life-generating power of the virgin goddess resides in the womb and is hidden. It manifests itself in what precedes the actual manifestation of life. *Virginity is the occult dynamism of life generation*. Rather than denoting opposition the participle of the first verse signifies the reason of Artemis' being a childbirth goddess: it is precisely *because* she has not consummated and consumed marriage and precisely *because* she is not limited by the experience of wedlock that she can operate in deliveries. "Negations, it seems to me", says Proclus (*P.T.*, II, 5, p. 38, 18-25), "have triple functions and ascribe to things one of the following three properties: sometimes because they are the origins of affirmations they generate affirmations and lead them to completion; sometimes they are on a par with affirmations in which case the affirmation is no more valuable than the negation; and finally sometimes they have a lower nature than affirmations and they are nothing but privations thereof". The negations of the Orphic fragment would be interpreted by Proclus as non-privative, that is to say as the grounding of affirmations and, therefore, more valuable than them.

II. Artemis on Artemis

In the myths and cults of Archaic and Classical Greece Artemis displays two ubiquitous characteristics which go to the core of her nature as crystallized in the pious minds of her worshippers: *virginity* implying not only chastity but also independence, and *wildness* indicating unlimited sovereignty. These two features meet in the notion of *dynamism*. The image that may help us clarify the association of ideas that went under the presence of the goddess is that of a river the natural flow of whose current is arrested by a dam. What the dam performs is enhancing, not diminishing, the potential energy, that is to say the natural dynamism, of the river. Such then is the function of Artemis. Unlike the virginity of Hestia which is a sign of the purity of fire, the Artemisian virginity is not asexual. The power of the goddess is emphatically manifested in childbirth and adolescence (and, occasionally, in copulation) where the sexual element is particularly pronounced. Her role at these phases of life relates to maturation and completion (τελείωσις) seen as

the munificent effect of a divine power. But power can also be destructive. Artemis as the Homeric killer of women, as the divinity that casts madness and drives men crazy according to local myths, and as the huntress of men and wild beasts is the *dark side of this same coin of natural dynamism*.

The two notions that characterize our goddess are present in her mythological repertoire. At the beginning of his *Hymn to Artemis* Callimachus writes (5-22):

παῖς ἔτι κουρίζουσα τάδε προσέειπε γονῆα·	5
«δός μοι <u>παρθενίην</u> αἰώνιον, ἄππα, φυλάσσειν,	
καὶ <u>πολυωνυμίην</u> , ἵνα μή μοι Φοῖβος ἐρίζῃ,	
δός δ' <u>ἰούς</u> καὶ <u>τόξα</u> [...]	9
ἴν' ἄγρια θηρία <u>καίνω</u> .	12
[...]	
δός δέ μοι <u>οὔρεα</u> πάντα· πόλιν δέ μοι ἥντινα νεῖμον	18
ἥντινα λῆς· <u>σπαρνὸν γάρ ὄτ' Ἀρτεμις ἄστυ κάτεισιν·</u>	
οὔρεσιν οἰκήσω, πόλεσιν δ' ἐπιμείζομαι ἀνδρῶν	20
<u>μῶνον ὄτ' ὀξεῖησιν ὑπ' ὠδίεσσι γυναῖκες</u>	
<u>τειρόμεναι</u> καλέωσι βοηθῶον, ...»	

While she was still a small child she said to her father this:
 “Give me, daddy, eternal virginity to have,
 and many-namedness, so that Phoebus does not contest me;
 give me arrows and bows [...] so that I kill wild beasts. [...]
 Give me all the mountains; and assign to me whichever city
 you choose; for it rarely happens that Artemis descends onto a city;
 I shall dwell on mountains, and I shall interfere with the cities of men
 only when women, with the pangs of labour
 stricken, call me for help...”

The scene is both moving and comical, because the young goddess is too short 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 Artemis' humiliation by Hera in the Homeric battle of the gods), grants the favour at once. 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.⁴⁵ Please note the attributes that the young Artemis requests: virginity, a multitude of appellations (we shall come back to that), weapons for hunting, mountains. The goddess announces that she will not frequent human territories. Only when pregnant women are in need of help will she descend to mortal cities. All attributes signify natural wildness. And it is in childbirth that the animality and naturalness of the human animal is most clearly revealed.

⁴⁵ CALLIM., *Ad Art.*, 26-40.

meant to be exhaustively comprehensive. But it is, I think, suggestive enough⁴⁸.

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 natural 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 or, more recently, as a rite-of-passage goddess. 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, and similarly with adolescence and maturation. Yet attention to the *symbolic* content of these functions, once drawn, must be constantly kept in mind as revelatory of the nature of the goddess.

Let us look more closely at the problem raised by the aforementioned partiality. One aspect of the Artemisian 'many-namedness' 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 modern accounts, to the point of giving the impression that Artemis was originally concerned exclusively with animal life. Only to the extent to which her position as Mistress of Animals affected human hunting and cattle-breeding, it is tacitly assumed, was she considered to be a power worthy of religious respect. The overvaluation of the Mistress-of-Animals function of a deity who could be better described as *Mistress of Wildness*, has been primarily due to two reasons. One is the iconographical evidence which depicts a goddess surrounded by animals, or more frequently in the middle of two wild beasts that form a heraldic pattern. Some of it goes back to pre-history thus providing an uninterrupted iconographical motif that is discernible in Minoan art and can be traced further back in time. Such visual representations have usually been taken for what they appear and consequently interpreted at face value. As a result, the symbolic message of the animals has been unduly neglected. So far from conveying a symbolic confirmation of the wide-ranging 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 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 raging on, Artemis reproaches her brother for not daring to face Poseidon in a duel. The poet introduces her castigation with the following

⁴⁸ For a more comprehensive picture see P. BRULÉ, *Le langage des épiclèses dans le polythéisme hellénique (l'exemple de quelques divinités féminines. Quelques pistes de recherche*, in *Kernos*, 11 (1998), p. 13-34, esp. 23 sq.

words that focus on the wild potency of the goddess (Hom., *Il.*, XXI, 470-471):

Τὸν δὲ κασιγνήτη μάλα νείκεσε, πότνια θηρῶν,
"Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρη, καὶ ὀνειδείων φάτο μῦθον.

Here archaeologists thought that they discovered the literary appellation that could serve as a recurring caption 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-ti-ni-ja* of grain, of horses, of the labyrinth, or without qualification (= Athena?)] that appear in the Mycenaean documents⁴⁹ 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 doing so, they have supported the view according to which the depicted goddess was primarily or exclusively venerated as a divinity of the animal kingdom.

According to the insights provided by the Proclan treatment of the goddess which seem to be confirmed by the ancient literary and iconographical evidence, Artemis was a Mistress of Wild Nature. These words grasp the nature of her divine being. In 'mistress' virginity, independence, sovereignty and power are all implied. In 'wild nature' wilderness, cruelty, harshness and force are all connoted. What brings them together is natural dynamism. The territory over which Artemis holds sway is unpredictable, and highly uncontrollable at that. But it is lawful nonetheless. The lawfulness of the unknown ways of nature is warranted by the operation of the Artemisian power. What safeguards the outcome of natural processes like birth, growth and puberty is the fact that Artemis not only supervises but actively controls them. Natural regulation is the effect of Artemis' authoritative surveillance and mastery. The agent of such regulation is a cause: Artemis is a goddess because she is a cause. And she is the particular goddess that she is because she is the particular cause that she is.

⁴⁹ Cf. M. VENTRIS, J. CHADWICK, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, Cambridge, 1973², p. 289, 310, 311.

III. The Paris School on Artemis

Going beyond the commonly accepted theory which sees Artemis as a hunting goddess and a personification of wilderness, the Paris School, and Jean-Pierre Vernant as its best representative,⁵⁰ finally came to the conclusion that Artemis is a *divinity of the margins*. Now and again their interpretations depart from, and focus on, the border zones and the marginal places where distinctions between opposites are blurred and the antithetical poles of assumed polarities become less conspicuous⁵¹:

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.⁵²

The discussion about wild space as the Other of civic life misses entirely the symbolism of wildness. It is based on an erroneous and contradictory application of the polarity between nature and culture. Up to a point the discussion is grounded in Artemis as 'nature' in its opposition to 'culture'. But then the perspective changes and undercuts the foundations on which the new theory is meant to be erected. The ascription of marginality to Artemis is a *petitio principii*. The question can easily be raised: Since margins are by definition borderlines, the border-space between two distinct entities, which is the divinity of wildness – the divine alterity to the civilized space? For, in the end, only the one extreme of the polarity is given in the Vernantian scheme, and that is the public, civic space with its cults and gods in its contact with an unnamed and unspecified Other. Although this Other remains without divine protection, the contact made with it is assumed to be

⁵⁰ 'Vernant *cum suis*' would be a more fair description of the situation in the so-called Paris School: cf. e.g. P. ELLINGER, *Le gypse et la boue I : Sur les mythes de la guerre d'anéantissement*, in *QUCC*, 29 (1978), p. 7-35; ID., s.v. *Artémis*, in Y. BONNEFOY (ed.), *Dictionnaire des Mythologies*, Paris, 1981, p. 70-73; ID., *Les ruses de guerre d'Artémis*, in *RCGO*, II, Naples, 1984 (*Cahiers du Centre Jean Bérard*, 9), p. 51-67; ID., *La légende nationale phocidienne : Artémis, les situations extrêmes et les récits de guerre d'anéantissement*, Paris, 1993; F. FRONTISI-DUCROUX, *Artémis boucolique*, in *RHR*, 198 (1981), p. 29-56; E. LÉPORE, *Epiteta a divinità plurime: Artemide Laphria*, in *Lire les polythéismes 1. Les grandes figures religieuses. Fonctionnement, pratique et symbolique dans l'antiquité*, Paris, 1986, p. 148-156.

⁵¹ I deliberately draw references from several articles and books by Vernant in order to show the recurrence and diffusion of these views.

⁵² J.-P. VERNANT and F. FRONTISI-DUCROUX, *Features of the Mask in Ancient Greece*, in J.-P. VERNANT and P. VIDAL-NAQUET, *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, New York, 1988 [Paris 1972, 1986], p. 189-206 (196-197).

in need of a supervising deity of margins. However, nothing of the sort is at stake according to the Paris School. For, as the following quotation will make it clear, the whole discussion is about society where 'nature' is only an ideological construct.

La fonction d'Artémis 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.*⁵³

The question is rather badly put. It presupposes the polarity between the civilized and (agri)cultural, on the one hand, and the uncultivated and natural, on the other. Only within this context can the problem be raised as to where Artemis should be placed. But the distinction between nature and culture is foundational and essential for the Paris School understanding of Greek culture and is engraved in its sociological approach to religion. The reference to frontiers in the above quotation makes this abundantly clear. For it is obvious that the frontiers of this quotation are social frontiers. They are unstable, hence ambiguous. To respect them is a social imperative drawing on the interests of the ruling class. A deity is assigned to social borderlines in order to punish prospective transgressors. Artemis is conceived as *security force and law enforcement agency*. She reminds people of their limits and she polices the proper functioning of society. Nature has no intrinsic limits. The limits imposed on her are man-made devised for particular social purposes. A conception of nature amounts to a reflection of the social order that sustains this particular conception. It is clear that this view subscribes to the enlightened humanistic stance and relates more to the modern disenchanting world than to the ancient perceptions of reality. Another quotation will better illustrate the point:

[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.*⁵⁴

Here culture is the main concern. 'Culture' stands for 'agriculture' and, by implication, for the social reality which agriculture sustains. Artemis presides over marginal places in order to control social liminality. If the goddess represents anything she represents social anxiety. If she symbolizes anything she

⁵³ J.-P. VERNANT, *Figures, idoles, masques*, Paris, 1990, p. 143 (my emphasis).

⁵⁴ J.-P. VERNANT, *Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays*, ed. F. Zeitlin, Princeton, 1991 p. 197.

symbolizes an aspect of society, namely the aspect that regulates integration of new members into the social nexus. She is part of the totem which society erects, sanctifies and adorns by the name of divinity.

That Artemis was usually worshipped near swamps and lagoons is correct. However, it should be subject to a different interpretation. According to Greek symbolic thinking, water indicates, in actual fact, the fertility manifested in moisture.⁵⁵ Thales who believed that water is the primal substance out of which all beings had been generated was the first reflective thinker to give a philosophical articulation of a commonly-held ancient belief. According to a Stoic interpretation, even the primordial Hesiodic Chaos was meant to signify an aboriginal liquid substance or water⁵⁶, and the Homeric Tethys and Oceanos were the progenitors of all beings.⁵⁷ Several Artemisian sanctuaries and many Dionysian shrines were indeed founded near lakes and rivers⁵⁸ but the various mythological legends which indicate the intrinsic relationship of Artemis and Dionysus with the waterly element and with moisture were taken, in ancient times, to refer to the generative power immanent in water.⁵⁹

Marginality presupposes and results in ambiguity. Marginality is ambiguous because it lacks ontological determination. By being ambiguous marginality also lacks divine supervision. For all deities are ontological boundaries. They are the archetypal limits of being.

(In)Conclusive Remarks

It would be possibly fair to say that any historical era, once it has attained to a sufficient degree of intellectual self-consciousness, develops the sociology of religion that it deserves, were it not for the fact that the sociology of religion is a religion of the modernist era. Until the dawn of the critical spirit manifested in the Age of Reason, the study of religion in the West had been traditionally assigned to theology which was supposed to be the culmination of the philosophical aspirations of mankind. Philosophy as *ancilla theologiae* was preparatory for the proper treatment of the divine designated for and required by the theologians. The subject-matter of the study of religion was assumed to be an existing reality of (or transcending) the world, an assumption which originated with some Christian apologists who in their

⁵⁵ For the association of Artemis with marshy places, rivers and lakes, see Table II.

⁵⁶ *SVF*, I, 103 v. Arnim; cf. G. DI GREGORIO, *Scholias Vetera in Hesiodi Theogoniam*, Milan, 1975 p. 22-24; PLUT., *Aqua an Ignis utilior*, 1 (= *Mor.*, 955e).

⁵⁷ HOM., *Il.*, XIV, 201.

⁵⁸ Cf. THUC., II, 15; ARISTOPH., *Ran.*, 216-217 *cum schol. ad loc.*; STRABO, VIII, 5, 1; HESYCH., s.v. Ἄμυλαι.

⁵⁹ Cf. W. OTTO, *Dionysus: Myth and Cult*, Dallas, 1981, p. 160-170.

polemic against paganism, treated the ancient gods as fallen angels, not as fictitious figments of human imagination.

With the emergence of the Enlightenment the misty concepts that obfuscated, it was believed, the mediaeval mind were forcefully ousted, and the study of religion assumed its characteristically modern stance. Man was placed at the centre of the enquiries concerning the religious phenomenon in all its manifestations, and the study of religion became one branch of the by now victorious humanistic studies. Human agency was for the first time arising in people's consciousness as the sole factor that determines history, a view that led to the historicism of the nineteenth century. By that time philosophy had been fully emancipated from the doctrinal authority of the church. As a consequence of the liberation, religion – being by then only peripheral to the concerns of philosophy – was given over to historiography conceived as a holistic study of man's deeds and thoughts.

It was not until the beginning of the twentieth century that the collective and social aspects of human life could be solidified as the determining factors of the historical process and sociology, hence, emerge as an autonomous discipline. By and large, the study of religion in the twentieth century has been dominated by the valuable insights of Durkheim and Weber, and more recently of Lévi-Strauss. The efforts of a psychoanalytic branch to interpret religion in a more philosophical fashion, quite apart from the social framework of meaning, did not have, in general, much impact on academic communities. These efforts exerted still less influence on English-speaking scholars who have always shown a proclivity towards more empirical approaches. The post-structuralist schools of deconstruction, however, have shown more vehemently and more successfully than previous similar attempts had done, that even the most self-evident truths and the most unquestioned modes of classifying reality, be it natural or historical, are in the end culturally determined. At the close of the twentieth century the students of religion are constantly faced with the dilemma as to whether they should follow the established sociological-historical options of investigation or else take advantage of the controversy about the soundness of the commonly employed scholarly methods and experiment with new approaches instead. In the modern world the study of religion from theological became sociological through the intermediary step of what could be called philosophical anthropology. But the sociological foundations being already shaken by more radical approaches which transcend the social aspect in favour of the all-embracing cultural determination leave once again empty space for exploration.

According to the etymology of the word 'allegory' which reflects the pregnant moment of the original conception of the concept, to grasp an allegory means to provide an authentic interpretation of a (poetic) text. For the author of the original text, to speak allegorically is to speak metaphorically with a view to convey a meaning that could equally well be conveyed in

other ways too. The difference between the allegorical and the non-allegorical is, on this ancient view, not substantial but only nominal. The same content is supposed to be expressed through different words and linguistic utterances in different manners. But the content nonetheless remains the same. Ancient allegory refers to the 'hidden meanings' (ὑπόνοιαι), to what the poet means when he speaks. Speech always attains only an approximation to the reality to which it refers. Therefore it needs interpretation, which is to say allegory, if it is to become clear about the nature of the reality that it intends to communicate. Moreover, once the clarity of the initial utterance has been obscured, allegory becomes indispensable. The same relation holds between the non-allegorical and the allegorical as between a text and any of its genuine interpretations. It is a relation based on the common ground of the identity of meaning.

Every and any interpretation is an allegory of the explanandum.⁶⁰ Proclus' allegorical reading of Artemis is theological. His interpretation is grounded in the divinity, which is to say the honourable nature, of the goddess as a principle constitutive of reality. Vernant's allegorical reading is sociological. His interpretation is based on the assumed polarity between nature and culture along the axis of which Artemis occupies the marginal position between the two extremes as defined by the social structure and the ideology which sustains it: outside that social reality Artemis is reduced to a non-entity because she is essentially a Durkheimian totem in which society sees, reinforces and reveres its own structure. Proclus' theological allegory can be interpreted, which is to say allegorized, in such a way as to be rendered once again intelligible, hence relevant. The interpretation which has been proposed in this paper sees Proclus' theological allegory as a highly sophisticated kind of natural allegory.

The anonymous author of the *Prolegomena to the Platonic Philosophy* relates a dream that Plato allegedly had shortly before his death: he was represented as a swan that gave a very hard time to hunters who could not actually catch him (1, 37-49 Westerink-Trouillard). When Simmias, a disciple of Socrates, heard of the dream he interpreted it in the following way:

[...] he said that all men will try to understand Plato's thought but no one will manage to do so. Instead, each interpreter will put forward an explanation according to what seems to him to hold true by choosing a theological, a physiological or any other interpretation of similar kind. Homer and Plato have this predicament in common.

What applies to Plato and Homer *a fortiori* applies to the ancient gods. The proposed interpretation of Artemis assumes that the two explicitly mentioned allegorical kinds of the anonymous author belong together: theology

⁶⁰ Cf. N. FRYE, *s.v. Allegory*, in A. PREMINGER (ed.), *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, Princeton, 1965, p. 12-15.

is physiology in disguise or, which is the same, physiology is theology in disguise. "The mode of mythology", says Proclus (*P.T.*, I, 4, p. 21.7-12), "is an ancient mode of exposition that indicates the divine things by means of allusions; it sheds many veils on truth and displays images of nature which (nature) produces perceptible, material and divisible replicas of intelligible, immaterial and indivisible things and which creates images and copies of true things." The divine myths are founded on the contemplation of nature and give rise to the discourse on the divine. Theomythy, if I am allowed to use that term, is intimately connected with, and leads to, theology because both theomythy and theology are based on an understanding of the nature of things. One could think of that kind of interpretation of ancient religion as an application of what I would like to call 'historical theology'.

Spyridon RANGOS

International Center for Hellenic
and Mediterranean Studies, ATHENS
University of Crete, RETHYMNON

TABLE I

The Trinitarian Theology of Proclus

A. The One

B. The Transcendent Gods

- (i) Intelligible (3 triads) – the level of being
- (ii) Intelligible-and-Intellectual (3 triads) – the level of life
- (iii) Intellectual (1 hebdomad = 2 triads + 1 monad) – the level of intellect
 - (a) Paternal triad: intellectual being, or pure intellect (Cronus)
intellectual **life** (Rhea-Demeter)
intellectual intellect, or creative intellect (Zeus)
 - (b) Immaculate triad: Kouretes
 - (c) Separative monad: the castration of Ouranus

C. The Worldly Gods

- (i) Hypercosmic
 - (a) Paternal and Creative triad: Zeus, Poseidon, Pluto
 - (b) **Life-generating triad (Kore): ARTEMIS₁**, Persephone, Athena
 - (c) Reverting triad (Apollo)
 - (d) Immaculate triad (Korybantes)
- (ii) Hypercosmic-and-Encosmic
 - (a) Creative triad: Zeus, Poseidon, Hephaestus
 - (b) Protective triad: Hestia, Athena, Ares
 - (c) **Life-generating triad:** Demeter, Hera, **ARTEMIS₂**
 - (d) Elevating triad: Hermes, Aphrodite, Apollo
- (iii) Encosmic
 - [...]
 - Life-generating triad (Kore): ARTEMIS₃? (=Hecate)**, Persephone, Athena
 - [...]

TABLE II

Cultic Epithets of Artemis

Moisture	Flora	Fauna
<i>Rivers, Lakes etc.</i>	<i>Trees, Plants etc.</i>	<i>Wild Beasts, Birds etc.</i>
Λιμνάτις ⁶⁰	Καρυάτις ⁶¹	Καπροφάγος ⁶²
Λιμναία ⁶³	Κεδρεάτις ⁶⁴	Λυκεία ⁶⁵
Στυμφαλία ⁶⁶	Δαφναία ⁶⁷	Ἐλαφιαία ⁶⁸
Ἀλφειαία ⁶⁹	Λυγοδέσμα ⁷⁰	Ἐλαφηβόλος ⁷¹
Ἐλεία ⁷²	Φακελίτις ⁷³	Ταυροπόλος ⁷⁴
Θερμία ⁷⁵		Πολυβοία ⁷⁶
(Νηοσσός) ⁷⁷		Εὐρίππα ⁷⁸
		Ὀρτυγία ⁷⁹
		(Ἄγροτέρα) ⁸⁰
		Λαφρία ⁸¹
Dark Light	Kourotrophos	Childbirth
<i>Moon, Dawn etc.</i>	<i>Children, Adolescents etc.</i>	<i>Pregnant Women, Labour etc.</i>
Φωσφόρος ⁸²	Παιδοτρόφος ⁸³	Λοχία ⁸⁴
Αἰθοπία ⁸⁵	Φιλομείραξ ⁸⁶	Λυσιζωνος ⁸⁷
Σελασφόρος ⁸⁸	Κορυθαλία ⁸⁹	Χιτώνη ⁹⁰
Σελασία ⁹¹	Κορία ⁹²	Ἰφιγένεια ⁹³
Προσηψία ⁹⁴	Κουροτρόφος ⁹⁵	Εἰλειθυία ⁹⁶
Πυρωνία ⁹⁷	Ὀρθεία ⁹⁸	
Ἐκάτη ⁹⁹	Τρικλαρία ¹⁰⁰	
		Βραυρωνία ¹⁰¹

⁶⁰ PAUS., III, 23, 10; IV, 4, 2; VII, 20, 7-8; VIII, 53, 11; TAC., *Ann.*, IV, 43.

⁶¹ PAUS., III, 10, 7; SERV., *Ecl.*, VIII, 29 (cf. POLLUX, IV, 104; PLOTIUS, s.v. καρυάτεια).

⁶² HESYCH., s.v. καπροφάγος.

⁶³ PAUS., II, 7, 6 (cf. EUR., *Hipp.*, 228; STRABO, VIII, 4, 9).

⁶⁴ PAUS., VIII, 13, 2.

⁶⁵ PAUS., II, 31, 4 (cf. VIII, 36, 7).

⁶⁶ PAUS., VIII, 22, 7.

⁶⁷ PAUS., III, 24, 8; STRABO, VIII, 3, 12.

⁶⁸ PAUS., VI, 22, 10.

⁶⁹ PAUS., VI, 22, 8; VI, 22, 10 (cf. V, 14, 6); STRABO, VIII, 3, 12; ATHEN., 346b (cf. PIND., *Nem.*, 1, 1-6; *schol. ad PIND.*, *Pyth.*, 2, 12).

⁷⁰ PAUS., III, 16, 11.

⁷¹ SOPH., *Trach.*, 213; *Et. Magn.*, s.v. ἐλαφηβολιών (cf. PLUT., *Mor.*, 244e).

⁷² STRABO, VIII, 3, 25; HESYCH., s.v. ἐλεία.

⁷³ PROB. ad VIRG., *Ecl.*, 3 Keil.

- 74 SOPH., *Ajax*, 172; EUR., *Ipb. Taur.*, 1457; STRABO, IX, 1, 22; *Et. Magn.*, s.v. ταυροπόλος.
- 75 ARISTID., *Or.*, 50, 4.
- 76 HESYCH., s.v. πολυβολία.
- 77 APOLL. RHOD., I, 569.
- 78 PAUS., VIII, 14, 5.
- 79 SOPH., *Trach.*, 212; DIOD. SIC., V, 3.
- 80 HOM., *Il.*, XXI, 470; ALCAEUS, fr. 304, col. i, 9 Lobel-Page; XEN., *Hell.*, IV, 2, 20; ARIST., *Athen. Rep.*, 58, 1; PAUS., I, 41, 3; VII, 26, 3; VIII, 32, 4; PLUT., *Mal. Herod.*, 27 (= *Mor.*, 862c); AEL., *Var. Hist.*, II, 25; POLLUX, VIII, 91; *schol. ad ARISTOPH., Equit.*, 657.
- 81 PAUS., VII, 18, 11-13.
- 82 PAUS., IV, 31, 10; CLEM ALEX., *Strom.*, 418 P; DIONYS. BYZ., *Anapl.*, fr. 27; *schol. ad THEOCR.* 2, 12 (cf. *Anth. Pal.*, IX, 46).
- 83 PAUS., IV, 34, 6.
- 84 EUR., *Suppl.*, 958; PLUT., *Quaest. Symp.*, 659a.
- 85 STEPH. BYZ., s.v. αἰθόπιον; HESYCH., s.v. αἰθοπία.
- 86 PAUS., VI, 23, 6.
- 87 HESYCH., s.v. λυσίζωνος; *schol. ad AP. RHOD.*, I, 288.
- 88 PAUS., I, 31, 4.
- 89 ATHEN., 139 a-b.
- 90 CALL., *Ad Art.*, 235; ST. BYZ., s.v. χιτώνη; ATHEN., 629e.
- 91 HESYCH., s.v. σελασία.
- 92 CALL., *Ad Art.*, 234.
- 93 PAUS., II, 35, 1; HESYCH., s.v. Ἰφιγένεια.
- 94 PLUT., *Themist.*, 8.
- 95 DIOD. SIC., V, 73.
- 96 PLUT., *Quaest. Symp.*, 659a.
- 97 PAUS., VIII, 15, 5 (cf. SOPH., *O.T.*, 206).
- 98 CIC., *Tusc. Disp.*, II, 34; PAUS., III, 16, 7-11; LUC., *Anach.*, 38; PLUT., *Lyc.*, 18, 2 (= 51b); SEXT. EMP., *Pyr. Hyp.*, III, 208; PHIL., *Vit. Apoll.*, 6, 20; XEN., *Lac. Rep.*, 2, 8; PLAT., *Leg.*, 633b-c *cum schol. ad loc.*
- 99 AESCH., *Suppl.*, 676; *schol. ad EUR., Med.*, 396; *schol. ad ARISTOPH., Plut.*, 591; *Suda*, s.v. Ἐκάτη.
- 100 PAUS., VI, 19, 1 – 22, 11.
- 101 STRABO, IX, 22, 1; PAUS., I, 33, 1; ARISTOPH., *Lys.*, 645 *cum schol. ad loc.*; HARPOCR., s.v. ἀρκτηῦσαι; HESYCH., s.v. ἀρκτος and ἀρκτηία; *Anecd. Bekkeri*, I, 206, 4; I, 444.