

JAHRBUCH  
FÜR  
ANTIKE UND CHRISTENTUM



JAHRGANG 19 · 1976

---

ASCHENDORFFSCHE VERLAGSBUCHHANDLUNG  
MÜNSTER WESTFALEN

## THE EPHESIAN ARTEMIS AS AN OPPONENT OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY\*

The ancient metropolis of Ephesus was one of the leading cities in the eastern Roman Empire. It was situated on land and water routes which were integral parts of the commerce and travel of the Roman Empire<sup>1</sup>. Because Ephesus was the nexus between East and West, its population, economic prosperity, and physical boundaries were ever growing<sup>2</sup>. It is quite easy to understand how its location on the Ionian coast made it a melting pot for a multitude of Graeco-Roman and Eastern religions. Since these ingredients of population, propitious location, and cosmopolitan atmosphere made Ephesus such a fertile field, a veritable hotbed, for the expansion of religions and cults, it comes as no surprise that Christian missionaries acted speedily and made Ephesus a major mission point at an early date in the church's history<sup>3</sup>.

A θύρα μεγάλη και ενεργής was a phrase used by a Christian evangelist to describe the opportunities in Ephesus (1 Cor. 16.9). The same evangelist, St. Paul, also admitted, however, that the activities of the Christians in Ephesus did not go unchallenged (1 Cor. 15.32, 16.9b). The many idolatrous religions in Ephesus did not submissively watch the expansion of Christianity. Pagan cults were usually pluralistic and tolerant of other religions, but they would not forever brook teachers and missionaries who deprecated the gods and preached that idols were no gods at all. Some of the Ephesian cults could, quite understandably, offer a longer lasting and more forceful opposition to Christianity than others. Sometimes the resistance was in the form of overt attacks; at other times the resistance could be measured in terms of the influence and power a deity held over its devotees, i. e. the strength of their commitment.

Though not the only opponent in Ephesus, by far the most formidable opponent to the Christian religion and the devotees of Christ was the powerful and long established religion of Artemis of Ephesus. Unfortunately, most New Testament scholars and historians

\* This article is an expansion of sections in »A Historical Commentary on the Missionary Success Stories in Acts 19.11-40« (unpubl. diss. of Princeton Theological Seminary, 1974). The research necessary for this article would not have been possible without the generous financial assistance of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and constant access to the resources of the F. J. Dölger-Institut zur Erforschung der Spätantike an der Universität Bonn. Professor W. Speyer of the Dölger-Institut was especially kind to me, and his advice was always beneficial.

<sup>1</sup> In regard to Ephesus' location on major highways and waterways see D. MAGIE, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton, 1950), 39 ff, 786 ff; T. R. S. BROUGHTON, *Roman Asia Minor*, in: *An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome*, Vol. 4 (Baltimore, 1938) 599 ff (henceforth cited as ESAR), W. M. RAMSAY, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London 1890, repr. Amsterdam, 1962) 27/62, 164 ff; M. P. CHARLESWORTH, *Trade Routes and Commerce of*

the Roman Empire (Cambridge, 1924, repr. Hildesheim, 1961) 75/97, 256/60; for the route of the southern road which was used by those travelling between East and West see Strabo 14.2.29.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesus had a population of over two hundred thousand, so ESAR 813; Apollonius of Tyana said that Ephesus was larger than any cities in Ionia or Lydia, Philostr. v. Apoll. 8.7.8. Ephesus' economic prowess is reflected in the fact that the *conventus civium Romanorum qui in Asia negotiantur* was in Ephesus, D. KNIBBE, *Ephesos: PW Supplementum* 12. 259/60; Strabo 14.1.24 wrote of Ephesus ἡ δὲ πόλις . . . αὐξεται καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν, ἐμπορίων οὖσα μέγιστον τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν τὴν ἐντὸς τοῦ Ταύρου.

<sup>3</sup> The New Testament does not explicitly name the founder of the Ephesian church. Iren. haer. 3.3.4 claimed that the church in Ephesus was founded by Paul and is followed in this judgement by, among others, A. HARNACK, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*<sup>4</sup>, Vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1924) 83/4.

of early Christianity have chosen to treat superficially or to ignore the dynamics, nature, and significance of the protracted conflict between the devotees of Christ and Artemis in Ephesus<sup>4</sup>. It is this conflict and resistance to Christianity by the cult of the Ephesian Artemis that will be the subject of this study. However, before we narrow the focus of our attention to Artemis of Ephesus, a brief catalogue of some of the other prominent pagan cults at Ephesus is in order.

The goddesses Demeter and Kore were worshipped in Ephesus. One inscription reads *εὐχαριστοῦμεν . . . Δήμητρι καὶ Δήμητρος Κόρη*<sup>5</sup>, and Strabo mentions τὰ ἱερὰ τῆς Ἐλευσινίας Δήμητρος in Ephesus<sup>6</sup>. The Thesmophoria was celebrated by women devotees at Ephesus as early as the time of Herodotus<sup>7</sup>, and these worshippers were still to be found in Ephesus in the period contemporary with early Christianity. An Ephesian inscription dating from about A. D. 84 demonstrates the importance of *μυστήρια καὶ θυσίαι* which καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν ἐπιτελοῦνται ἐν Ἐφέσῳ Δήμητρι Καρποφόρῳ καὶ Θεσμοφόρῳ . . . ὑπὸ μυστῶν μετὰ πολλῆς ἀγνείας καὶ νομίμων ἐθῶν<sup>8</sup>.

The cults of several prominent Egyptian deities were also well established in Ephesus when Christianity arrived there<sup>9</sup>. Exemplary is the inscription dedicated to Σαράπ[ιδι], Ἴσιδι, Ἀνοῦβιδι, θεοὺς συννάοις<sup>10</sup>. Two indigenous Ephesian deities who were frequently mentioned together are Ἐστία Βουλαία and Πῦρ ἄφθαρτος<sup>11</sup>. Worshippers of Ἀπόλλων Κλάριος<sup>12</sup>, Θεὸς Κίναϊος<sup>13</sup>, Θεμέλιοι<sup>14</sup> (who upheld the earth's foundations, thereby

<sup>4</sup> Only marginal attention is given to the Ephesian Artemis in commentaries by H. CONZELMANN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Tübingen, 1972), E. HAENCHEN, *Die Apostelgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1970), and F. F. BRUCE, *The Acts of the Apostles* (London, 1956). A. WIKENHAUSER, *Die Apostelgeschichte und ihr Geschichtswert = Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen 8* (Münster, 1921), K. LAKE and H. J. CADBURY, *The Beginnings of Christianity*, Vol. 5 (London, 1933), and J. B. LIGHTFOOT, *The Apostolic Fathers*, Pt. 2, Vol. 2 and 3 (London, 1890) are more informative, but still selective, in their presentation of the backgrounds of the Ephesian Artemis. F. MILTNER, *Ephesos. Stadt der Artemis und des Johannes* (Wien, 1958) and V. SCHULTZE, *Altchristliche Städte und Landschaften II. Kleinasien, Zweite Hälfte* (Gütersloh, 1926) 86/120 virtually ignore the religion of Artemis in favor of various ruins and Christian buildings there. P. BAMM, *Frühe Stätten der Christenheit* (München, 1960) 124/48, K. GSCHWIND, *Der ephesische Johannes und die Artemis Ephesia. Wanderung im Raum des antiken und frühchristlichen Ephesus* (Basel, 1965), S. STAHR, *Ephesos. Ein Beitrag Österreichs zur Paulusforschung: TheolPraktQS 100* (1962) 193/208, M. M. PURVIS, *Archaeology and St. Paul's Journeys in Greek Lands. Ephesus: BiblArch 8.3* (1945) 62/73, F. V. FILSON, *Ephesus and the New Testament: BiblArch 8.3* (1945) 73/80, and, to a lesser extent, W. M. RAMSAY, *The Church in the Roman Empire Before A. D. 170* (London, 1893) 112/45, and id., *The Letters to the Seven Churches of Asia* (London, 1897) 210/50 are popular in their presentation. The possible exception to this neglect is the older work by Fr. RAPHAEL TONNEAU,

O. P., *Éphèse au temps de Saint Paul: RevBibl 38* (1929) 5/34, 321/63.

<sup>5</sup> F. MILTNER, XXII. Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Ephesos: *JhhÖArchInst 44* (1959) Beibl. 292<sub>66</sub>.

<sup>6</sup> Strabo 14.1.3.

<sup>7</sup> Herodotus 6.16.

<sup>8</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 820. 1/6; HICKS, *BMusInscr 595*. 3/6 (p. 218) correctly associates these devotees of Demeter with those belonging to the organization in Ephesus known as οἱ πρὸ πόλεως Δημητριασταὶ καὶ Διονύσου Φλέω μύσται.

<sup>9</sup> The existence of various Egyptian cults is documented and discussed by W. DREXLER, *Der Isis- und Sarapis-Cultus in Kleinasien: NumZ 21* (1889) 78/94 and id., *Nachtrag zum Isis- und Sarapis-Cultus in Kleinasien: NumZ 21* (1889) 390; J. KEIL, *Denkmäler des Serapiskultes in Ephesos: AnzWien 91* (1954) 217/28; F. DUNAND, *Le culte d'Isis dans le bassin oriental de la méditerranée Vol. 3 = Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain 26* (Leiden, 1973) 66 ff and L. VIDMAN, *Sylloge inscriptionum religionis Isiacae et Sarapiacae = RGVV 28* (Berlin, 1969) 296/304.

<sup>10</sup> VIDMAN, *ibid.*, 296. 1/3.

<sup>11</sup> MILTNER, *Vorläufiger Bericht*, 292<sub>66</sub>. See J. KEIL, *Kulte im Prytaneion von Ephesos*, in: *Anatolian Studies presented to W. H. Buckler*, ed. W. M. CALDER and J. KEIL (Manchester, 1939) texts 3.2/3, 5.6/8, and 6.5/6.

<sup>12</sup> MILTNER, *Vorläufiger Bericht*, 292<sub>66</sub> and KNIBBE, *op. cit.*, 286.

<sup>13</sup> MILTNER, *Vorläufiger Bericht*, 292<sub>66</sub>.

<sup>14</sup> D. KNIBBE, *Epigraphische Nachlese im Bereiche*

preventing earthquakes), Ζεὺς Πατρῶος<sup>15</sup>, and Θεὸς Ὑψιστός<sup>16</sup> have likewise left testimony to their veneration of these deities.

In his ›Chronicles of the Ephesians‹ the ancient author Creophylus mentions a temple of Athena and a temple of Pythian Apollo at Ephesus<sup>17</sup>. The latter is also known through an inscription which gives the name of a ἱερεὺς Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθίου<sup>18</sup>. The healing god Asclepius was also worshipped at Ephesus; epigraphical sources mention his doctors, temple, and priests in Ephesus<sup>19</sup>. Indicative of pious devotion to the god Zeus is the following inscription recorded on a small altar dating from a period contemporary with early Christianity: Σοὶ τόνδε βωμόν, Δέσποτα Ζεῦ Κτήσιε, Κορνηλιανὸς εὐζάμενος εἰδρύσατο<sup>20</sup>.

The cult and festivals of Dionysus also played an important role in the religious life of Ephesus. The famous festival of Dionysus known as καταγῶγια is mentioned in an inscription from the Ephesian agora<sup>21</sup>. It was probably during this festival that Mark Antony arrived in Ephesus and was met by women dressed like Bacchanals and by men and boys dressed like Satyrs and Pans. The city of Ephesus was appropriately decorated in ivy and thyrsus-wands, and Mark Antony was hailed as the personification of Dionysus amid the din of music coming from harps, flutes, and pipes<sup>22</sup>. A later Christian work, the ›Martyrdom of St. Timothy‹, records a mortal clash between the preaching of Timothy in Ephesus and the devotees of Dionysus during the celebration of this festival<sup>23</sup>.

Several important individuals were also worshipped in the city of Ephesus, always because of their significant contribution to the welfare of the city. There was a certain Pixodarus, a shepherd, who reportedly discovered the marble quarry from which the Ephesians took the marble for the temple of Artemis. The city of Ephesus decreed him honors and changed his name to Evangelus, presumably for announcing his discovery to the city officials. The architect Vitruvius concludes his account of Pixodarus by relating that the city magistrate is legally punished if he fails to go to the location of the marble quarry and sacrifice to Evangelus at the appointed times<sup>24</sup>.

Another individual who was venerated by the Ephesians was Apollonius of Tyana who, as his biography makes clear, performed important wonders on behalf of the city of

der ephesischen Agora: JhhÖArchInst 47 (1964/5) Beibl. 41/2 and notes.

<sup>15</sup> J. KEIL and G. MARESCH, Epigraphische Nachlese zu Miltner's Ausgrabungsberichten aus Ephesos: JhhÖArchInst 45 (1960) Beibl. 75/6.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 77. For the use of ὕψιστος in antiquity see A. D. NOCK, C. ROBERTS, and T. C. SKEAT, The Guild of Zeus Hysistos, in: A. D. NOCK, Essays on Religion and the Ancient World, Vol. 1, ed. Z. STEWART (Oxford, 1972) 414/43; in connection with early Christianity see G. BERTRAM, Ὑψιστος: ThWbNT, Vol. 8 (Stuttgart, 1969) 613/9. A. T. KRAABEL, Ὑψιστος and the Synagogue at Sardis: Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies 10 (1969) 81/93 challenges the commonly held notion about a close tie between the epithet ὕψιστος and the influence of Jewish thought.

<sup>17</sup> Athenaeus 8.361E.

<sup>18</sup> Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 2, 30B. 21/2.

<sup>19</sup> Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 2, 30B. 22 mentions a certain ἱερεὺς Ἀσκληπιοῦ; for the Ἀσκληπιοῦ

ιερόν see J. KEIL, XII. Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Ephesos: JhhÖArchInst 23 (1926) Beibl. 263/4; the evidence for the doctors is given by J. KEIL, Ärzteinschriften aus Ephesos: JhhÖArchInst 8 (1905) 128/38.

<sup>20</sup> J. KEIL, Drei neue Inschriften aus Ephesos: JhhÖArchInst 35 (1943) Beibl. 106.

<sup>21</sup> D. KNIBBE, Epigraphische Nachlese, 29/30: τῆ τῶν καταγωγῶν ἡμέρα. See M. P. NILSSON, Katagorgia: PW 10.2 2459 for this festival of Dionysus.

<sup>22</sup> Plutarch. v. Ant. 24.

<sup>23</sup> This text is given in Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 1, 272 (p. 257) and is discussed by J. KEIL, Zum Martyrium des heiligen Timotheus in Ephesos: JhhÖArchInst 29 (1935) 82/92 and H. DELEHAYE, Les actes de Saint Timothée: Anatolian Studies Presented to W. H. Buckler, 77/84.

<sup>24</sup> Vitr. 10.2.15 Ita statim honores decreverunt ei et nomen mutaverunt . . . Hodieque quotmensibus magistratus in eum locum proficiscitur et ei sacrificium facit, et si non fecerit, poena tenetur.

Ephesus<sup>25</sup>. The thaumaturgic rescue of the city of Ephesus from disease may well have been the basis for the veneration of Apollonius which is mentioned by the Christian writer Lactantius: Apollonium . . . eum dicas »et adoratum esse a quibusdam sicut deum et simulacrum eius sub Herculis Alexicaci nomine constitutum ab Ephesis etiamnunc honorari«<sup>26</sup>.

Of the many deities and heroes worshipped in Ephesus under the Roman Empire, Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσία (Diana Ephesia) was the most popular and thus most formidable opponent of Ephesian Christianity<sup>27</sup>. She is never mentioned in the typically introspective Christian epistolary sources of the first two centuries. Since Paul's »Letter to Ephesus« was in fact not addressed to Ephesus, Artemis' absence there is understandable. She does, however, play an important role in the Christian *acta* literature. Both the canonical Acts of the Apostles and the apocryphal »Acts of John« vividly portray the conflict between the worshippers of Christ and the worshippers of Artemis<sup>28</sup>.

Before moving to the conflict between the Christians and the followers of Artemis, a brief comment about the origin and character of Artemis is in order. In regard to her origin, Artemis »gehört ohne Zweifel zu der Reihe der kleinasiatischen Göttinnen, deren bekannteste Vertreterin die Große Mutter oder die Bergmutter ist«<sup>29</sup>. When the Greeks came to the Ionian coast they imposed the Homeric Artemis upon the indigenous Mother Goddess whom they found there, and thereby gave birth to the Ephesian Artemis<sup>30</sup>. Because of the intense syncretism involved in this merger of the Greek Artemis and the Anatolian Mother Goddess, it is difficult to define precisely the character of the Ephesian Artemis vis-à-vis the categories »Greek« and »Anatolian«<sup>31</sup>. Frequent-

<sup>25</sup> Philostratus v. Apoll. 4.1/4; 4.10; 7.21; 8.7.8; 8.26; 8.30.

<sup>26</sup> Lact. inst. 5.3.14. Alexicacus was an epithet for Hercules in antiquity (ThesLL Vol. 1, 1538 s. v.). The probable origin for this association between Apollonius and Hercules Alexicacus is to be found in an episode preserved in Philostratus v. Apoll. After saving Ephesus from a pestilence Apollonius is questioned about the miraculous method he used to save the city. To this question Apollonius responded ὅτω δ' εὐξάμενος, δηλοῖ τὸ ἱερὸν, ὃ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ὑπὲρ τοῦτου ἰδρυσάμεν, Ἡρακλέους μὲν γὰρ Ἀποτροπαίου ἐστί, ξυνεργὸν δ' αὐτὸν εἰλόμεν, 8.7.9; see also the notes ad Lact. inst. 5.3.14 (SC 205 [Paris, 1973] 54). One cannot know with assurance whether the veneration of Apollonius still existed in Lactantius' lifetime. On the one hand, as Prof. Wolfgang Speyer pointed out to me, the formulae *nunc, etiamnunc*, and cognate expressions were often used as a literary device and should not be understood literally (see W. SPEYER, *Bücherfunde in der Glaubenswerbung der Antike = Hypomnemata*, 24 [Göttingen 1970] 82/3 and bibliography there). On the other hand, we know that the veneration of individuals could exist long after their death. There is for example an inscriptional reference to the veneration of Alexander the Great which comes from the period of the Roman Empire, J. KEIL, XII. Vorläufiger Bericht, 8/9.

<sup>27</sup> There exists no single collection of all the ancient evidence for the Ephesian Artemis. To my know-

ledge the best collection of literary evidence is that of R. C. KUKULA, *Literarische Zeugnisse über den Artemistempel*, in: *Forschungen in Ephesos*, Vol. 1, 237/74; KUKULA's brief collection of *Inchriftliche Zeugnisse über das Artemisium in Forschungen in Ephesos*, Vol. 1, 278/82 is outdated (an updated bibliography of Ephesian inscriptions is given by D. KNIBBE, *Ephesos: PW Supplementum* 12, 248/51); the numismatic and archaeological evidence for the Ephesian Artemis has been most recently treated by R. FLEISCHER, *Artemis von Ephesos und verwandte Kultstatuen aus Anatolien und Syrien = Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain* 35 (Leiden, 1973); the most comprehensive treatment of the cult of the Ephesian Artemis is C. PICARD, *Ephèse et Claros* (Paris, 1922).

<sup>28</sup> Act. 19.21/41; Act. Joh. 3, 37, 39, 42, 43, 46.

<sup>29</sup> M. P. NILSSON, *Geschichte der griech. Religion*, Vol. 1<sup>a</sup> (München 1967) 497/8.

<sup>30</sup> PICARD, *op. cit.*, 452/74.

<sup>31</sup> B. KÖTTING, *Peregrinatio religiosa. Wallfahrten in der Antike und das Pilgerwesen in der Alten Kirche = Forschungen zur Volkskunde*, 33/5 (Münster, 1950) 33 depicted this syncretism when he described Ephesus as a place »wo kleinasiatische Religiosität und griechische Gottesvorstellungen und Kultformen sich verklammerten und schließlich ganz miteinander verschmolzen«. The diverse forms in which Artemis was depicted in antiquity provided grounds for Christian ridicule, Minucius Felix Octavius 22.5.

ly, however, it is declared that the »Anatolian« characteristics dominated over »Greek« ones. Indicative of this attitude is the judgment of WERNICKE who wrote, »Der Charakter des Kultes (of Artemis) war im Gegensatz zu griechischen A.-Kulten ein wilder, orgiastischer«<sup>32</sup>.

This judgment by WERNICKE is correct only for the early history of the Ephesian Artemis. When describing the Ephesian Artemis contemporary with early Christianity, this attitude and its supporting evidence must be seen in the light of other, often overlooked, facts. It is known for example that in the Roman period the Ephesians appropriated and emphasized mythology which was unique to the Greek Artemis<sup>33</sup>, and, furthermore, they brought certain aspects of the cult of Artemis into »conformity with Hellenic and Roman ideals«<sup>34</sup>. The evidence about the orgiastic tendencies of the Ephesian Artemis, which is in itself quite fragmentary, must be tempered with the tone set by the inscription dedicated to τὴν κυρίαν . . . παρθένον [Ἄρτεμ]ιν Ἐφε[σίαν]<sup>35</sup>, the sexual purity of the priests of Artemis<sup>36</sup>, and the absolute exclusion of prostitutes from the temple of Artemis<sup>37</sup>. Ever since the early Christians claimed, wrongly, that the egg-shaped objects covering the front of the statues of Artemis were in fact breasts, Artemis has been misunderstood vis-à-vis her relationship to fertility and sex<sup>38</sup>. The best evidence against this gross misunderstanding is the paucity of ancient evidence that supports the idea that Artemis was a multi-breasted fertility goddess<sup>39</sup>.

Outside of the evidence from Christian sources nothing is explicitly known about the conflict between the Christian community in Ephesus and the worshippers of the Ephesian Artemis<sup>40</sup>. This silence from the pagan sources is striking in the light of the quantity

<sup>32</sup> WERNICKE, Artemis: PW 2.1 1372/3.

<sup>33</sup> The worshippers of Artemis stressed that the Ephesian Artemis was the sister of Apollo and the daughter of Leto, two facts which are central in the mythology of the Greek Artemis. Tacitus (ann. 3.61.1) reported that when the Roman Senate began to check the religious credentials of the Greek temple asylums, *primi omnium Ephesii adiere, memorantes non, ut vulgus crederet, Dianam atque Apollinem Delo genitos: esse apud se Cenchreum amnem, lucum Ortygian, ubi Latonam partu gravidam et oleae, quae tum etiam maneat, adnissam edidisse ea numina*. Even the birthday of the Ephesian Artemis was celebrated on the same day as the Greek Artemis, W. SCHMIDT, Geburtstag im Altertum = RGVV 7.1 (Gießen, 1908) 94 ff. Some scholars still choose to ignore the implications of this and similar evidence. H. LIETZMANN, Geschichte der Alten Kirche, Vol. 1 (Berlin, 1932) 162 stresses the difference between the Ephesian Artemis and the Greek Artemis in spite of the recognized evidence which points to their identification.

<sup>34</sup> J. H. OLIVER, The Sacred Gerusia = Hesperia Supplement, 6 (Baltimore, 1941) 82.

<sup>35</sup> IG 14.964.

<sup>36</sup> Strabo 8.13.1; cf. 8.5.11.

<sup>37</sup> Artemid. onir. 4.4 ἑταίρα ἔδοξεν εἰς τὸ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰσεληλυθέναι καὶ ἡλευθερώθη καὶ κατέλυσε τὴν ἑταιρείαν· οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν πρότερον εἰσελθοί, εἰ μὴ καταλύσειε τὴν ἑταιρείαν.

<sup>38</sup> FLEISCHER, op. cit., 75 comments on this misno-

mer, »Für die Künstler seit der Renaissance und für die ältere Forschung handelt es sich bei den fraglichen Objekten um zahlreiche wirkliche weibliche Brüste, welche die lebensspendende und nährende Kraft der großen Mutter und Naturgöttin versinnbildlichten. Grundlage für diese Interpretation schienen zwei antike Autorenstellen zu bieten; leider ist uns außer diesen bereits christlichen Quellen keine weitere Angabe erhalten«.

<sup>39</sup> SCHREIBER, Artemis: W. H. ROSCHER, Ausführliches Lexikon, Vol. 1.1, 590, for example, concluded that »die Menge der Brüste auf die segensreiche Natur einer alles irdische Wachstum, Fruchtbarkeit der Tiere und des Feldes befördernden Gottheit hinweisen« with virtually no evidence except the interpretation of two Christian writers.

<sup>40</sup> HICKS in BMusInscr tries to deduce from two Ephesian inscriptions the waning of Artemis' influence as a result of Christian advances. His suggestion (p. 145) that the famous Salutaris inscription marks »a wave of reaction against the advance of Christianity in Asia Minor«, is patently a conjecture with no support. His further attempt (p. 145) to interpret BMusInscr 482 »as an involuntary confession of the subsequent decline of the Artemis-worship under the growing influence of the new faith«, is based upon a lapidary's mistake in the inscription. HICKS himself (p. 294) admitted that his preferred reading »may conceivably be a lapidary's blunder«. The blunder was first brought to light by O. HÖFER, Mythologisch-Epigraphisches,

and quality of ancient information about and from Ephesus. In the earlier centuries this silence stemmed perhaps from an ignorance of the permanence of Christianity and in the later centuries, when Christianity was secure, from fear of it. One fact, however, that the pagan sources make clear is that the religion of Artemis of Ephesus was still a strong and vital force in the city of Ephesus long after Christianity arrived<sup>41</sup>. Artemis' worshippers offered strong and tenacious resistance to the intrusion of Christianity. The later sources clearly show that the success of Christianity against the Artemis cult depicted in Acts 19.23ff was meteoric in nature. The eclipse of Artemis' significance which was so feared by Demetrius the silversmith was not to take place until many generations after his lifetime. Moreover, the final waning of Artemis' glory and influence stemmed as much from the attack upon her temple by the Goths in the third century<sup>42</sup> and acts of violence against her cult by Christians as it did from her own innate weaknesses. In regard to physical violence at the hands of the Christians, the Acts of John depicts the Christian joy over the thought of the destruction of the temple of Artemis<sup>43</sup>. We also possess a Christian inscription which pointedly documents the forceable removal of a part of the Artemis cult by Christians. This valuable inscription reads: [Δαίμ]ονος Ἀρ[τέμιδος] καθελῶν ἀπατήλιον εἶδος Δημέας ἀτρεκίης ἀνθετο σῆμα τόδε· εἰδώλων ἐλατῆρα θεὸν σταυρὸν τε γερέρων, νικοφόρον Χριστοῦ σύνβαλον ἀθάνατον<sup>44</sup>.

Because of the purview of this study, I have chosen to present the multifarious material about the Ephesian goddess under the rubric of the reasons for her tenacious resistance to Christianity. Two important characteristics helped the worshippers of Artemis resist the spread of Christianity. Like most religions which flourished under the Roman Empire the religion of Artemis related to her followers on two levels, the personal and the cultural<sup>45</sup>. That is, the religion and cult of Artemis attracted devotees and supplicants (and in turn was protected and maintained by them) because in various degrees she, as their deity, was both the object and source of their personal religion and an integral, or more accurately, the integrating force of their culture. One cannot always know the precise relationship between these two different but intersecting levels in the lives of her worshippers, but the evidence clearly shows that Artemis was important to her worshippers on both levels. Consequently, in spite of the claim of her followers that the origins of the Artemis cult were radically transcendent, having come directly from

Beigabe zum Jahresbericht des Wettiner Gymnasiums zu Dresden (Dresden, 1910) 30/1 and W. M. RAMSAY, Artemis at Ephesus: Classical Review 7 (1893) 78/9.

<sup>41</sup> Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 3 59.1/6 [... ἱερείαν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερατεύσασαν εὐσεβῶς καὶ κοσμίως ἀνανεωσαμένην πάντα τὰ μυστήρια τῆς θεοῦ καὶ καταστήσασαν τῷ ἀρχαίῳ ἔθει] dates from the beginning of the third century and shows continued support of the cult of Artemis. Writing in the last half of the second century Pausanias observed that Artemis of Ephesus is the most worshipped deity in the ancient world, 4.31.8.

<sup>42</sup> The ancient sources recounting the various destructions of the Artemisium are collected in Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 1, 262/72.

<sup>43</sup> Act. Joh. 42/4 reports the fulminations of the Apostle John against the Artemis cult. As a result of his preaching a portion of the Artemisium fell to the

ground crushing one of the priests of Artemis.

<sup>44</sup> Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 1, p. 103. It is appropriate to cite here MILTNER, Vorläufiger Bericht, 308/9 concerning the condition in which the statue of the so-called beautiful Artemis was discovered. MILTNER reports that this statue of Artemis, dating from the time of Hadrian, appeared to have been carefully buried in the soil. He next remarks, »man wird am ehesten an ihre letzten Anhänger denken, die das vielleicht umgeworfene Bild hier borgen und alle noch auffindbaren Stücke der zerbrochenen Säulchen und Hirschkühe sorgsam dazu legten, während der Bau von den Christen im heiligen Eifer niedrigerissen wurde«.

<sup>45</sup> The cultural significance of Artemis was much stronger in Asia than in other places where she was worshipped because this was the location of her dwelling and major cult center.

Zeus (Acts 19.35)<sup>46</sup>, one must insist that the cult and theology of the Ephesian Artemis sank their roots deeply into the soil of humanity and culture. All attempts therefore, to comprehend her tenacious resistance to Christianity apart from either of these two levels of her religion will be truncated<sup>47</sup>.

### Cultural Significance of Artemis

The clearest evidence for the importance of Artemis to the cultural life of the Ephesians is seen in the claim that there existed a unique, and of course divinely initiated, relationship between the goddess Artemis and the city of Ephesus. A variety of expressions was used to describe this relationship. The most obvious expression to denote this relationship is simply ἡ Ἀρτεμις Ἐφεσίων (Acts 19.28), or the cognate ἡ μεγίστη θεὰ Ἐφεσία Ἀρτεμις<sup>48</sup>. The Ephesian also knew Artemis as [ἡ π]ροεστῶσα τῆς πόλεως ἡμῶν θεός<sup>49</sup>, ἡ προκαθηγε[μῶν τῆς πόλεως θεὰ Ἀρτεμις]<sup>50</sup>, ἡ ἀρχηγέτις<sup>51</sup>, and ἡ πάτριος ἡμῶν θεός<sup>52</sup>.

Ephesus' side of this unique relationship was also expressed in pregnant terms. In the following important inscription which comes from the second century one sees the Ephesian βουλή and δῆμος describing Ephesus as ἡ τροφὸς τῆς ἰδίας θεοῦ τῆς Ἐφ[εσίου]ς<sup>53</sup>. Τροφός (and τροφεύς) was often a terminus technicus in antiquity used to depict deities as »fördernde und lebenspendende Kräfte«<sup>54</sup>, and pointed to »die nährende und wartende Kraft der Gottheit«<sup>55</sup>. Less often, but still as a terminus technicus, it was used to describe a city as the »Wohltäter eines Heiligtums«<sup>56</sup>. In this latter sense it is used to describe the special role of Ephesus in caring for Artemis and her cult.

A second term employed to portray Ephesus' special relationship to Artemis is νεωκόρος. This word is attested in various sources. A coin from the reign of Nero refers to the fact that Ephesus is the νεωκόρος of Artemis<sup>57</sup>. Another source for this motif is the historical testimony of the contemporary Christian writer Luke (Acts 19.35). An inscription dating from the end of the second century or the beginning of the third likewise designates Ephesus νεωκόρος τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος<sup>58</sup>.

To appreciate fully Ephesus' self-designation as νεωκόρος one must remember the various meanings of this term in the religious world contemporary with Christianity. This term was used both in pagan<sup>59</sup> and Jewish<sup>60</sup> literature to designate temple officials

<sup>46</sup> The term employed in Acts 19.35, διοπετής, denoted the transcendent origin of the object. For the religious significance of aerolites in antiquity see A. B. COOK, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, Vol. 3, Pt. 1 (Cambridge, 1940), 881/942.

<sup>47</sup> There is a dearth of studies by New Testament scholars into the sociological and cultural significance of the pagan religions which the early Christian evangelists encountered. Until this significance is better understood, the important questions about the early successes of Christianity cannot be fully answered.

<sup>48</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 27.453/4. Xen. Eph. 1.11.5 uses the expression ἡ μεγάλη Ἐφεσίων Ἀρτεμις.

<sup>49</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 867.29.

<sup>50</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 20.10/1.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.20.

<sup>52</sup> Xen. Eph. 1.11.5; ἡ πάτριος θεὰ Ἀρτεμις is used in Xen. Eph. 3.5.5., and *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 26.17 preserves the expression ἡ πάτριος ἡμῶν θεός Ἀρτεμις.

<sup>53</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 867.42.

<sup>54</sup> K. PREISENDANZ, *Trophos*: W. H. ROSCHER, *Ausführliches Lexikon*, Vol. 5, 1278.

<sup>55</sup> KRUSE, *Trophos*: PW 7A.1 695.

<sup>56</sup> PREISENDANZ, *op. cit.*, 1279.

<sup>57</sup> S. KARWIESE, *Ephesos*: PW Supplementum 12, 330 and MAGIE, *op. cit.*, 1432/4.

<sup>58</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 1, p. 211.11/2 contains schungen in Ephesos Vol. 1, p. 211.11/2 contains νεωκόρο[ς τῆς] ἀγιω[τάτης] Ἀρτέμιδος.

<sup>59</sup> For the religious use of this term see esp. s. v. in J. H. MOULTON and G. MILLIGAN, *Vocabulary of*



in charge of the orderly administration of the temple, the proper performance of sacrifices and other cultic events. It is just these notions and duties which the city of Ephesus assumed in the religion and cult of Artemis when it employed this term *νεωκόρος* for itself<sup>61</sup>. In this way the city of Ephesus performed a special ministry to Artemis as a result of her special gift to them, namely, her selection of Ephesus as the location of her abode.

And finally, the Ephesians also used numismatic motifs to proclaim their special covenant with Artemis. A common motif found on ancient coins is that of a woman holding a temple in her outstretched hand<sup>62</sup>. The woman holding the temple is a personification of the city, and the temple is either the temple of a deity or emperor. The meaning of this numismatic picture is »daß die Stadt als Besitzerin und Unterhalterin des Tempels erscheinen soll, und sie ist also ein passender bildlicher Ausdruck für dasselbe, was die Sprache mit dem Worte *νεωκόρος* bezeichnet«<sup>63</sup>. Although the existence of this motif on Ephesian coins has often been overlooked, it does occur on coins and gives another example of the Ephesians' desire to make known their unique relationship with the goddess Artemis<sup>64</sup>.

In light of the above evidence one can now better understand a statement recorded by Luke in his account of the conflict between the preaching of the early Christians and the worshippers of Artemis. In his account (Acts 19.23ff) some of Paul's associates are dragged by a shouting mob into the city's theater and accused of a variety of offenses (19.27/37). An important city official (*ὁ γραμματεὺς*) comes forward, addresses the shouting crowd, and then assures the Ephesians that Artemis is in no danger from the Christians. The noteworthy part of the speech of the city official is his theological assurance that the Ephesian Artemis is invulnerable. His assurance of Artemis' power to withstand the onslaught of foes stemmed directly from the fact that the city of Ephesus was the *νεωκόρος* of Artemis and her cult image (19.35f). One can see clearly in this episode the importance of the neocorate relationship to the Ephesians and the important role it played in their self-understanding. It gave to them the assurance of divine protection and immunity for their goddess against the Christian attacks.

The most visually impressive manifestation of Artemis' close ties with the city of Ephesus and her pervasiveness in Ephesian culture was her temple, the Artemisium, which was located approximately two kilometers from the main section of the Roman city<sup>65</sup>. The splendor and importance of the dwelling of Artemis were well known in antiquity and were often a topic in literary works. Although none of these larger literary works are extant, they were mentioned by authors such as Diogenes Laertius<sup>66</sup>, Vitruvius<sup>67</sup>, and Athenaeus<sup>68</sup>.

the Greek Testament (Grand Rapids, 1972); Z. TAŞLIKLIOĞLU and P. FRISCH, New Inscriptions from the Troad: ZsPapyrEpigr 17 (1975) 106/9 cite a newly discovered inscription which lists the privileges of the *νεωκόρος* of the god Dionysus.

<sup>60</sup> The Jewish use of this terminology is reflected in Josephus b. Jud. 1.7.6, Philo spec. leg. 1.32, and de fuga 17.

<sup>61</sup> The city's awareness of its obligation to protect the goddess is evident in a number of inscriptions. They often mention the city's endeavors to protect the goddess, by both decrees and actions.

<sup>62</sup> The meaning and significance of this numismatic

motif is discussed by B. PRICK, Die tempeltragenden Gottheiten und die Darstellung der Neokorie auf den Münzen: JhhÖArchInst 7 (1904) 1/41.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>64</sup> B. V. HEAD, Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Ionia (London, 1892), Ephesus 314; 346; 384.

<sup>65</sup> The discovery of the temple of Artemis is recounted by J. T. WOOD, Discoveries at Ephesus (London, 1877).

<sup>66</sup> 9,49.

<sup>67</sup> 7, prooem. 12.

<sup>68</sup> 12.525C.

Unfortunately, little is preserved of the ancient Artemisium itself. The Artemisium contemporary with Christianity was the fifth and last such temple to Artemis in Ephesus<sup>69</sup>, being destroyed in the third century by the Goths. After this attack it never regained its former glory. During the ensuing centuries most of the precious marble from which it was constructed was either stolen or sold. Its complete disuse in later centuries is best seen in the fact that the location of the temple of Artemis was not even known in the modern era until it was discovered about one century ago, after much toil, six meters under the surface of the soil<sup>70</sup>. Since its discovery the excavations at the site of the temple have been impeded by a high water table and underground springs which keep the site continually flooded<sup>71</sup>. The Ephesians, according to Pliny, located the Artemisium purposely upon marshy soil to lessen the shock from the earthquakes which plagued Asia<sup>72</sup>. However, this foresight on their part has greatly hampered modern research. Only for special periods of research has the temple area been pumped dry<sup>73</sup>. Most visitors who journey today to see this sight will see one standing column surrounded by scattered sections of broken columns and a »stagnant pond, inhabited by myriads of frogs«<sup>74</sup>.

Notwithstanding the fact that one can no longer see the temple of Artemis, an impressive picture of it can be drawn for the mind's eye from the extant sources of antiquity. Pausanias, for example, wrote that the temples of Ionia were without competitors in the ancient world, and that the foremost of the Ionian temples was the temple of Artemis at Ephesus, renown for both its size and wealth<sup>75</sup>. In another place he describes this temple with these words: μέγεθός τε τοῦ ναοῦ τὰ παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις κατασκευάσματα ὑπερηκότος<sup>76</sup>. The most scintillating description though comes from the pen of the epigrammist Antipater. He begins his short epigram by mentioning six wonders of antiquity, i. e. Walls of Babylon, Statue of Zeus, Hanging Gardens, Pyramids, Tomb of Mausolus, and the Colossus of the Sun, and then concludes with the following praise of the temple of Artemis of Ephesus: ἀλλ' ὅτ' ἐσεῖδον Ἀρτέμιδος νεφέων ἄχρι θεόντα δόμον, καίνα μὲν ἠμαύρωτο, καὶ ἦν· »Ἰδέ, νόσφιν Ὀλύμπου Ἄλιος οὐδέν πω τοῖον ἐπηυγάσατο«<sup>77</sup>.

While the size and beauty of Artemis' house were of inestimable importance for Ephesus' fame in antiquity, the involvement of the temple in the economic structures of Asia and the entire world was of equal importance for Ephesus' culture and Artemis' domination of Asian life and culture<sup>78</sup>. First, the temple was a central pillar in the bank-

<sup>69</sup> W. ALZINGER, Ephesos: PW Supplementum 12. 1666ff.

<sup>70</sup> WOOD, op. cit., 155.

<sup>71</sup> D. G. HOGARTH, Excavations at Ephesus. The Archaic Artemisia (London, 1908), 23, 35ff tells how this water problem hindered early excavations.

<sup>72</sup> Plin. n. h. 36.95.

<sup>73</sup> The area was pumped out in recent years, thereby allowing further research. The new finds in the Artemisium, particularly the altar, are discussed in a variety of recent publications by A. BAMMER.

<sup>74</sup> J. FINEGAN, Light from the Ancient Past. The Archaeological Background of Judaism and Christianity, Vol. 2 (Princeton, 1959) 349.

<sup>75</sup> Pausanias 7.5.4; BÜRCHNER, Ephesos: PW 5.2

2811 gives other sources which laud the beauty of the abode of Artemis.

<sup>76</sup> Pausanias 4.31.8; BÜRCHNER, op. cit., 2811 notes that the temple of Artemis was one and one half times larger than the Kölner Dom.

<sup>77</sup> Antipatros of Sidon: Anth. Pal. 9.58. Herodotus on the other hand preferred the marvels of Egypt, 2.148. Antipatros' poem reflects a widespread tradition when it lists the temple of Artemis among the so-called wonders of the world. Of the twenty-four ancient catalogues of world wonders assembled by J. ŁANOWSKI, Weltwunder: PW Supplementum 10. 1020/30, sixteen contain a reference to the temple of the goddess Artemis at Ephesus.

<sup>78</sup> Pausanias 7.5.4 notes the importance of the wealth of the Artemisium for its fame. On the topic of Anatolian temple estates see T. R. S. BROUGH-

ing structures of Asia. Large deposits of money were kept in the Artemisium. Several ancient authors refer to the storage facilities provided by the temple of Artemis<sup>79</sup>, but the most comprehensive description comes from Dio Chrysostom. In his speech to the Rhodians he says<sup>80</sup>,

You know about the Ephesians, of course, and that large sums of money are in their hands, some of it belonging to private citizens and deposited in the temple of Artemis, not alone money of the Ephesians but also of aliens and of persons from all parts of the world, and in some case of commonwealths and kings, money which all deposit in order that it may be safe, since no one has ever dared to violate that place, although countless wars have occurred in the past and the city has often been captured.

The economic position and prowess of the Ephesian temple stemmed from more than its competence in caring for others' money. The Ephesian goddess perspicaciously managed her own estate which also contributed to her role in the economic affairs of Asia. In the first place the Artemisium functioned as a bank in loaning money<sup>81</sup>. It is not clear what distinctions existed, if any, between loaning sacred money and the money of depositors, but the integrity of the Ephesians and the comptrolling *γερουσία* insured that the money was properly loaned and promptly repaid<sup>82</sup>. The frequency of loans made by the financial ministers of Artemis<sup>83</sup> is reflected by the reference to sacred loans and related matters in an Ephesian debtor's law<sup>84</sup>.

The personal wealth of Artemis came from many sources. More than one inscription from Ephesus mentions Artemis as heiress in a will<sup>85</sup>. Since this practice of naming a deity heir or heiress could lead to corruption, the Romans prohibited this practice in many instances. According to the Roman jurist Ulpian it was only through means of a *senatus consultum* that Diana Ephesia and a few other deities could be designated heir or heiress in a private will<sup>86</sup>. Artemis' coffer was also filled from private philanthropic donations. The philosopher Damianus donated an expensive portico to the use of Ar-

TON, New Evidence on Temple Estates in Asia Minor, in: *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of A. Ch. Johnson*, ed. P. R. COLEMAN-NORTON, F. C. BOURNE and J. V. A. FINE (Princeton, 1951) 236/50; cf. M. ROSTOVITZ, Notes on the Economic Policy of the Pergamene Kings, in: *Anatolian Studies Presented to Sir W. M. Ramsay* (Manchester, 1923) 359/90.

<sup>79</sup> In addition to the literary sources given in ESAR, 889, one may add the fragmentary inscription from Ephesus which mentions *ἀργύριον ἐν Ἀρτεμισίῳ*, CIG 2953B. 4.

<sup>80</sup> Or. 31.54. Dio is obviously exaggerating the invulnerability of the Artemisium. Many of Artemis' treasures were captured by Mark Antony, along with other temples' treasures, and given to Cleopatra (Strabo 13.1.30; *Res gestae Divi Augusti* 4.24; Plin. n. h. 34.58). A first century inscription mentions *τὴν τῶν προσόδων ἀφθονίαν τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ ἀποκατασταθεισῶν τῇ θεῇ*, *JhhÖArchInst* 23 (1928) Beibl. 283. 5/8; text also given in E. M. SMALLWOOD, *Documents Illustrating the Principates of Caius, Claudius, and Nero* (Cambridge, 1967) 380 col. 4.5/7.

<sup>81</sup> M. HEICHELHEIM, *An Ancient Economic History* (Leiden, 1964), Vol. 2, 73 writes that a text from

the Artemisium gives, »as far as I know, the earliest primary Greek record of loan operations conducted by a temple«; for ancient banking see his detailed six page bibliography, 193/8.

<sup>82</sup> The operation of the *γερουσία* is outlined by BMusInscr, op. cit., 76 ff and OLIVER, op. cit., 9/27.

<sup>83</sup> In addition to *ἱερὸν μισθωτήριον* (*Forschungen in Ephesus* Vol. 3.50), τοῦ ἱερωτάτου συνεδρίου τὸ μισθωτήριον (BMusInscr. 577A. 1/4), and οἱ πρεσβύτεροι (BMusInscr. 481.206/7 and notes ad loc. p. 77) were used to designate the financial officers of the goddess Artemis' estate.

<sup>84</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 742.34 and ESAR, 559/60. There were of course secular banks in the city of Ephesus; *τραπεζεῖται*[ἢ *στ*]οά refers to one such bank, *Forschungen in Ephesus* Vol. 3, 65.8/9.

<sup>85</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesus* Vol. 3, 76/8 and notes pp. 159/60.

<sup>86</sup> *Deos heredes instituere non possumus praeter eos, quos senatus consulto constitutionibusque principum instituere concessum est, sicuti . . . Dianam Ephesiam, Ulpianus, qui heredes institui possunt* 22.6, in: *Fontes Iuris Romani Antejustiniani*, ed. S. RICCOBONO and J. BAVIERA (Florence, 1964), Vol. 2, 285.

temis. This marble portico stretched from the city gate of Ephesus to the temple of Artemis and was given so that worshippers need not stay away from the temple services in case of inclement weather<sup>87</sup>. Artemis may also have received fines from individuals who disturbed the tombs of her suppliants<sup>88</sup>.

Another source of income for Artemis was her property that extended outside of the Artemisium. Her holdings in this regard were large. She owned sacred ponds at the mouth of the Cayster River from which she received great revenues (*μεγάλας προσόδους*)<sup>89</sup>. An inscription dating from the reign of Antoninus Pius reads *τοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ τελώνιον τῆς ἰχθυϊκῆς πραγματευομένοις* and probably refers to the toll collectors of Artemis' sacred ponds<sup>90</sup>. It is not difficult to imagine that Artemis was also able to earn income from the sacred herds (*ἱερᾶς νομῆς λάχος*)<sup>91</sup> that she owned and from the sacred island where she kept sacred deer<sup>92</sup>. And of course Artemis, like a host of other ancient deities, became richer through the gifts of sacrifices and money by her suppliants<sup>93</sup>.

The above evidence makes it clear then that the religion of Artemis was inextricably joined to the economic world of Asia and Ephesus in which early Christianity found itself. In the period contemporary with early Christianity the city of Ephesus was judged to be the economic *ταμιεῖόν τε κοινὸν τῆς Ἀσίας* and *τῆς χρείας καταφυγή*<sup>94</sup>, and a significant part of this reputation rested squarely upon the dependability and availability of funds from the estate of Artemis. So through economic means the religion of Artemis became an indispensable pillar in the cultural structures and life of Asia, and was therefore a crucial factor in the lives of all individuals whom Christianity hoped to convert.

The temple of Artemis likewise played a role in the civic life of the denizens of Ephesus. This civic involvement is evident in the fact the Artemisium sent its own representatives to the Olympic games<sup>95</sup>, was sometimes the site for the dedication of inventions<sup>96</sup>, and above all else served as the archives for a multitude of civic inscriptions<sup>97</sup>. A large number of Ephesian inscriptions contain the directive to inscribe them in the temple of Artemis (*ἀναγράψαι δὲ τόδε τὸ ψήφισμα τοὺς νεωποίας εἰς τὸ ἱερόν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος*)<sup>98</sup>. Since the tenor of the overwhelming number of these inscriptions is civic rather than overtly religious<sup>99</sup>, one can readily grasp the degree to which the Ephesians viewed the Artemisium as the appropriate location for the display of decisions and awards enacted by the

<sup>87</sup> Philostratus v. Philos. 2.23.

<sup>88</sup> SEG Vol. 16, 698.7/9.

<sup>89</sup> Strabo 14.1.26.

<sup>90</sup> BMusInscr. 503.1f and ESAR, 645.

<sup>91</sup> These sacred herds are mentioned in connection with the sanctuary of the Ephesian Artemis established by Xenophon and patterned upon the estate of Artemis is Ephesus, *anab.* 5.3.9. Polybius 4.18.10 relates that Artemis of Lusi also had sacred herds (*θρέμματα τῆς θεοῦ*).

<sup>92</sup> Strabo 14.1.29.

<sup>93</sup> Lucian *Icar.* 24.

<sup>94</sup> Aelius Aristides *or.* 23.24 and BÜRCHNER, *op. cit.*, 2803.

<sup>95</sup> D. KNIBBE, *Neue Inschriften aus Ephesos II: JhhÖArchInst 49 (1968/71) Beibl.* 45/6.

<sup>96</sup> Athenaeus 4.183C.

<sup>97</sup> E. g. the bestowal of citizenship, public acknow-

ledgment of gifts to the city, Imperial letters.

<sup>98</sup> BMusInscr. 447.18/20; 449.7/8; 450.8/9; 451.4; 452.5; 454.6; 455.9; 465.5; 468.4; 471.3/5.

<sup>99</sup> When reading the temple inscriptions one is immediately struck by the lack of aretalogies, thaumaturgic cures, records of revelations, and the like. A possible exception to this may be found in the conclusion of the Greek novel by Xenophon of Ephesus. Here one sees two devotees of Artemis returning to Ephesus after being providentially saved from many disasters. The thankfulness of the two is reflected in the report that *εὐθὺς ὡς εἶχον ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερόν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἦσαν καὶ πολλὰ ἠύχοντο καὶ θύσαντες ἄλλα [τε] ἀνέθεσαν ἀναθήματα καὶ δὴ καὶ [τὴν] γραφὴν τῆ θεῶ ἀνέθεσαν πάντων ὅσα τε ἔπαθον*, 5.15.2. It is noteworthy though that the emphasis is upon what they suffered more than what the deity had done for them.

city's council<sup>100</sup>. The brief inscription which reads ἐν τῷ καινῷ γυμνασίῳ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος<sup>101</sup> depicts even another side of the Artemisium's involvement in the everyday life and culture of the Ephesians.

Lastly, the dwelling of Artemis was an important asylum in antiquity, thereby placing it firmly within the legal sphere of Ephesian city life<sup>102</sup>. From the earliest days of Ephesus' history, so Pausanias reports<sup>103</sup>, the Artemisium offered protection and relief to debtors and the helpless<sup>104</sup>. The best single account for this type of service offered by the goddess Artemis is given in the second century romance entitled ›Leucippe and Clitophon‹<sup>105</sup>:

The shrine was anciently forbidden to free matrons (γυναιξὶν ἐλευθέραις), but open to men and maidens (παρθένους): if any other woman entered it, death was the penalty of her intrusion, unless she were a slave with a legal complaint against her master: such a one was permitted to come as a suppliant to the goddess while the magistrates decided the case between her and the master. If the master were found to have committed no offense against her, he used to take the serving girl back, after taking an oath that he would bear no malice against her on account of her flight: but if sentence were given for the servant, then she stayed there as the goddess's slave (ἔμενον αὐτοῦ δούλη τῷ θεῷ).

Artemis' helping arm did not stop with the indigent and helpless. On occasion her protection came to the rescue of the entire city. Herodotus reports that when Croesus attacked the city of Ephesus the Ephesians dedicated their city to the protection of Artemis (ἀνέθεσαν τὴν πόλιν τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι) by connecting the dwelling of the goddess to the city by means of a rope, thereby including the city within the protecting sphere of Artemis<sup>106</sup>. Polyaeus' account of this story illuminates the ancient mentality regarding the asylum right offered by Artemis: Κροῖσος τιμῶν τὸν θεὸν ἐφείσατο τῆς πόλεως ὥσπερ ἀναθήματος καὶ τοὺς πρὸς Ἐφεσίους ἐπὶ ἐλευθερίᾳ συνθήμας ἐποιήσατο<sup>107</sup>.

As could be expected this privilege of asylum was frequently abused by various individuals. The two main abuses of this right were the increase in the asylum area and the lax standards used to allow fugitives to remain in the asylum. In the case of the former Strabo reports that the size of the asylum was first increased by Alexander the Great and then later by Mithradates and Mark Antony<sup>108</sup>. This type of abuse was halted under the Principate of Augustus who restored the boundaries to their original location<sup>109</sup>.

The task of purging the asylum of Artemis of its parasites and criminals was osten-

<sup>100</sup> The inscriptions are most frequently issued by the βουλή and δῆμος of Ephesus.

<sup>101</sup> J. KEIL, XII. Vorläufiger Bericht, 281/2.

<sup>102</sup> STENGEL, Asylon: PW 2.2 1881/6 and NILSSON, Geschichte der griech. Religion, Vol. 2, 88/90.

<sup>103</sup> Pausanias 7.2.7. Numismatic attestation to the asylum right of the Artemisium »wird erstmals mit der Legende ΑΣΥΛΟΥ auf einer Münze der Domitia erwähnt«, KARWIESE: PW Supplementum 12.331.

<sup>104</sup> Certain aristocratic individuals also sought asylum in times of political upheaval. An influential Chaeremon of Nysa, a friend of Rome, εἰς τὸ τῆς Ἐφεσίας Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν καταπέ[φευγεν] in an attempt to escape from Mithridates, DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 741.30; see the commentary ad loc. in C. B.

WELLES, Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period. A Study in Greek Epigraphy (New Haven, 1934), 294/9. This right was sometimes violated; so report Athenaeus 13.593B and Josephus ant. Iud. 15.89.

<sup>105</sup> Achilles Tatius, Leucippe and Clitophon 7.13. 2/4, taken from the translation of S. GASELEE = LCL (Cambridge, Mass.-London, 1947), 381/2.

<sup>106</sup> Herodotus 1.26.

<sup>107</sup> Polyaeus strat. 6.50; cf. also the account of Aelian var. hist. 3.26.

<sup>108</sup> Strabo 14.1.23.

<sup>109</sup> Strabo 14.1.23; CIL 3. Suppl. pt. 2 14195 Imp. Caesar Augustus fines Dianae restituit. Tiberius continued Augustus' policy, Suet. Tib. 37.3 abolevit et ius moremque asylorum, quae usquam erant.

sibly taken care of under the Principate of Tiberius. The Roman Senate, as Tacitus reports the incident<sup>110</sup>, tried to eliminate this abuse by revoking the asylum rights of many of the temples. This threatening action probably caused most of the temples to be more responsible with their asylum rights. However, if the so-called Epistles of Apollonius of Tyana are accurate, this problem reemerged in the Artemisium. One of these letters contains a caustic attack upon this misuse of Artemis' dwelling. He fulminates that As one worshipper of the Ephesian goddess replied, »the goddess has never loosed a criminal from his chains or rescued a condemned felon from his deserved fate; her altars are for the unfortunate, not for the guilty«<sup>112</sup>.

All of the above evidence about Artemis and her sanctuary makes clear two facts about their role in Ephesian life and culture: their roles were both crucial and diverse. Consequently the worshippers of Artemis in Ephesus would not brook any serious threat to the well being of the goddess and her temple (naturally they would not be alarmed by the arrival of a new deity if it would quietly take its place among the many other deities who were jointly worshipped in Ephesus). An Ephesian inscription dating from the pre-Roman period provides a brief but illustrative example of the Ephesians' reaction to open assaults made against Artemis and her cult<sup>113</sup>. For the background of this attack upon the temple of Artemis it must be remembered that the Artemisium in Ephesus was over several smaller temples of Artemis which were located in nearby cities or the suburbs of Ephesus<sup>114</sup>. Whenever a problem arose or it was time for a special ceremony, the Ephesians would send an appointed delegation to attend to the matter. One such group of delegates was called *θεωροί*, and they, as L. ROBERT has shown, »sont des ambassadeurs sacrés, comme d'ordinaire, nommés pour chaque mission a remplir quand l'occasion où la nécessité s'en présentait«<sup>115</sup>. It is *θεωροί* which appear in this important account of the attack upon Artemis and her cult. From this inscription one learns that one of the ancient processions and rites of Artemis consisted of the city of Ephesus sending ambassadors to Sardis to deliver sacred garments to the shrine of the Ephesian Artemis there<sup>116</sup>. At the end of one such procession the Sardinians defiled the *ιερά* and *τὸ ἱερόν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος* and mistreated the ambassadors (*τοὺς θεωροὺς ὑβρισαν*). In retaliation for this sacrilege the advocates of the goddess (*οἱ προήγοροι ὑπὲρ τῆς θεοῦ*) sentenced the offenders, whose names appear in the inscription, to death.

In view of the profound cultural significance of Artemis for the city of Ephesus and the fervor of the Ephesians' dedication to their patron goddess, one can now better appreciate the historical dynamics at work in the brief scene in Acts 19.23ff where

<sup>110</sup> Tac. ann. 3.60.2 *Crebrescebat enim Graecas per urbes licentia atque impunitas asyla statuendi; complebantur templa pessimis servitiorum; eodem subsidio obaerati adversum creditores suspectique capitalium criminum receptabantur*, and see the notes ad loc. in E. KOESTERMANN, *Cornelius Tacitus Annalen* Vol. 1 (Heidelberg, 1963), 536.  
<sup>111</sup> Epist. 65. Achilles Tattius Leucippe and Clitophon 8.8.11 records a similar charge against the Artemis asylum: *ἡ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος οἰκία μοιχῶν γέγονε καὶ πόρνης θάλαμος.*  
<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 8.8.9, translation by GASELEE, p. 417.

<sup>113</sup> This important inscription is discussed by D. KNIBBE, *Ein religiöser Frevel und seine Sühne. Ein Todesurteil hellenistischer Zeit aus Ephesos: Jhh-ÖArchInst* 46 (1961/63) 175/82 and F. SOKOLOWSKI, *A New Testimony of the Cult of Artemis of Ephesus: HarvTheolRev* 58 (1965) 427/31.  
<sup>114</sup> L. ROBERT, *Sur des inscriptions d'Ephèse: Rev-Philol ser.* 3, 41 (1967) 36/40.  
<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 36.  
<sup>116</sup> *Θεωρῶν ἀποσταλέντων ὑπὸ τῆς πόλεως ἐπὶ χιτῶνας Ἀρτέμιδι κατὰ τὸν νόμον τὸν πατέρων.*

Christianity is in pitched battle with the worshippers of Artemis. The inflamed and riotous reaction of the Ephesians stemmed directly from the suggestion that the magnificence and glory of Artemis were in jeopardy from the spread of Christianity. If Christianity went unchecked even the temple of Artemis might come to nought (Acts 19.27 *τοῦτο κινδυνεύει . . . τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι*). The deepseated emotions of zeal for Artemis and trepidation at the thought of the waning of her power were a direct result of the goddess' complete permeation of the culture of Ephesus. No ancient source better articulates in so few words the Ephesians' own sense of pride, devotion, and reliance upon the Artemisium than an inscription contemporary with the riotous scene painted in Acts 19.23ff. In this record one finds the following words<sup>117</sup>: *τότε τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἀντιῆς ἱερὸν, ὃ τῆς ἐπαρχείας ὅλης ἐστὶν κόσμος*. How radically different is the attitude behind this proclamation and the attitude embodied in the words and actions of the Christians! One group praised the dwelling of the goddess as the *κόσμος* of the province of Asia while the other patently worked toward and dreamt of its destruction<sup>118</sup>. It is within this atmosphere of irreconcilable hostility that one gains a better perspective both of the cultural and sociological importance of the goddess Artemis to the Ephesians and the inexorable social process which led to the anti-Christian disparagements of *odium humani generis* and *tertium genus*<sup>119</sup>.

#### Religious Significance of Artemis

It would be completely misleading to leave the impression that the Ephesian Artemis and her cult were only sociological phenomena with a religious facade. The facts explicitly confirm that this was not the case. The veneration and glory of Artemis stemmed also from her abilities to satisfy the religious, emotional, and spiritual needs of her devotees. Accordingly one must investigate the goddess in terms of piety as well as sociology in order to understand fully the tenacious resistance of her worshippers to the spread of Christianity.

Notwithstanding the fact that many pitfalls beset the task of investigating categories of personal piety and attempting to learn in what ways a deity fulfilled the religious longings of his suppliants, it is just these tasks which must be undertaken if we hope to appreciate the more personal and subjective sides of the appeal of the goddess Artemis<sup>120</sup>. Moreover, since »all the emotions which our own history leads us to associate with the Christian's attitude towards God and towards Christ as Savior may be found in the feelings which men and women of the older religion entertained«<sup>121</sup>, it becomes even more imperative to appreciate fully these feelings of religious emotion in the worshippers of Artemis.

Adequate information about the cultic practices and festivals is a decisive key to a thorough understanding of any religion, and the religion of the goddess Artemis is no exception. Unfortunately, while much is known about the temple of Artemis very little is known about her festivals and cultic rites<sup>122</sup>. We do nevertheless know the following about her important festivals and cultic practices.

<sup>117</sup> SMALLWOOD, *op. cit.*, 380, col. 4.1/13.

<sup>118</sup> Act. Joh. *passim*.

<sup>119</sup> For the use of these designations with early Christianity see HARNACK, *op. cit.*, Vol. 1, 259/89.

<sup>120</sup> See esp. KÖTTING, *op. cit.*, 45/8.

<sup>121</sup> C. BONNER, *Some Phases of Religious Feeling in Later Paganism*: *HarvTheolRev* 30 (1937) 138.

<sup>122</sup> M. P. NILSSON, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig, 1906) 243.

The best known festival of Artemis was the Artemisia, an annual festival held in the month of Artemision in honor of Artemis<sup>123</sup>. The entire family would come to this festival and there participate in the various activities and competitions<sup>124</sup>. Day and night large crowds filled the market place, and, as could be expected, the agora was filled with drunken celebrators<sup>125</sup>. The Artemisia was not, however, solely an opportunity for the more gregarious worshippers of Artemis to assemble. On the contrary, it was intended to be a time of solemn religious observance. Financial contributions to Artemis and the usual sacrifices were integral parts of the activities<sup>126</sup>. The solemnity of this festival is most strongly painted in an inscription dating from the end of the reign of Antoninus Pius<sup>127</sup>. There one reads that during the Artemisia the days of the month were considered by the Ephesians to be holy and dedicated to Artemis. Furthermore, it was regarded as impious and illegal to transact secular business during these holy days<sup>128</sup>. Even the Proconsul of Asia was severely chastised when he violated these holy days<sup>129</sup>.

The two following inscriptions make it clear that the cult of Artemis also involved the performance of certain mysteries, though the brevity and lacunae of the inscriptions prevent one from connecting them with certainty to one specific festival or rite: Οὐλπίαν Εὐοδίαν Μουδιανήν τὴν ἱέρειαν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος . . . ἐκτελέσασαν τὰ μυστήρια<sup>130</sup>; [ἱέρειαν τῆς Ἀρτέ]μιδος ἱερατεύσασαν εὐσεβῶς καὶ κοσμίως, ἀνανεωσαμένην πάντα τὰ μυστήρια τῆς θεοῦ<sup>131</sup>. While there is no certain evidence for the cultic background of these mysteries of the Ephesian Artemis, there is good reason to suggest that the proper background may be given in a section from Strabo<sup>132</sup> where he mentions an annual festival of Artemis (πανηγυρις δ' ἐνταῦθα συντελεῖται κατ' ἔτος) that is held at the same time that a special college of the priests of Artemis, the Curetes, συνάγει συμπόσια, καὶ τινὰς μυστικὰς θυσίας ἐπιτελεῖ<sup>133</sup>.

In this account Strabo prefaces his remarks about the Curetes by relating the geographical location and significance of the site of the festival held in connection with the συμπόσια and τινὲς μυστικὰς θυσίαι. This site, a grove known as Ortygia, was the holy place (ἅδyton) where the mythical nativity (ἐνταῦθα γὰρ μυθεύουσι τὴν λοχείαν) of Artemis occurred. Next Strabo briefly recounts the nativity story of the goddess. He relates that Hera tried to slay Leto shortly before the birth of Apollo and Artemis, and that the Curetes helped the endangered Leto escape destruction. Brief mention is also made of Ortygia, the nurse of the two children. He then concludes by noting the existence of many temples located in the geographical area of the original nativity which were decorated with scenes related to the nativity, e.g. Leto with a sceptre and the nurse holding Artemis and Apollo<sup>134</sup>.

<sup>123</sup> STENGEL, Artemisia: PW 2.2 1442 and HICKS, in: BMusInscr. p. 79.

<sup>124</sup> Dion. Hal. ant. Rom. 4.25.4 and Xen. Eph. 1.2.2 ff.

<sup>125</sup> Achilles Tatius Leucippe and Clitophon 6.3.2.

<sup>126</sup> Xen. Eph. 1.3.1 and Lucian Icar. 24.

<sup>127</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 867. Consult also the notes ad BMusInscr. 482.

<sup>128</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 867. 14/6, 45/50.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. 3/7. The Ephesian Artemis was known at times to kill her devotees if they neglected her ceremonies; so it is reported s. v. Δακτίς in Etymologicum Magnum. L. ROBERT: Hellenica 1 (1940) 71

published an inscription whose author was ἐνωλημένη [ὄπ'] Ἀρτέμιδος Ἐφεσσίας, though the reason is not given.

<sup>130</sup> CIG 3002.

<sup>131</sup> Forschungen in Ephesos Vol. 3, 59.1/6.

<sup>132</sup> Strabo 14.1.20.

<sup>133</sup> On the role of the Curetes see PICARD, op. cit., 277/87, 423/30.

<sup>134</sup> This nativity related scene appeared on coins of Ephesus; SyllNummGr Vol. 22 (Ionia) 500 (Pl. 12) (Copenhagen, 1945) depicts Leto holding the children Apollo and Artemis.



It is at this point in the account that Strabo mentions the festival that is held each year on the site of the nativity. And although he does not state the reason for the celebration, one can assume that it was to celebrate the nativity of Artemis. From other sources it is known that Artemis' birth was celebrated by many<sup>135</sup>, and it is only logical to assume that since the Ephesians claimed a special relationship to Artemis<sup>136</sup> and that Ephesus was Artemis' birthplace<sup>137</sup>, that Ephesus would have sponsored the appropriate nativity celebrations. Thus we see that it was the nativity celebrations held by the devotees and worshippers of Artemis which provided at least one of the major occasions for the performance of the *μυστήρια τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος*<sup>138</sup>.

In addition to the illumination about the religious aspects of Artemis which emerge from an investigation of institutional events such as festivals, mysteries, and sacrifices, much can be gained from an investigation of the more personal, and often more insightful, indicators of religious attitudes. These include items such as epithets, adjectives, etymologies, brief formulae and statements used in conjunction with the goddess by her pious worshippers.

The ancients' manipulation of the name Ἀρτεμις is quite revealing. The word Ἀρτεμις was understood quite early to be a revelation of Artemis' character. As early as Plato<sup>139</sup> it was suggested that the name Ἀρτεμις came from the Greek word ἀρτεμές, thereby showing that the goddess Artemis was by nature healthy, well ordered, and a lover of virginity. By the period contemporary with Christianity, however, a shift had taken place in the use of this etymological reasoning. This shift is clearly seen in Strabo where he explains that the word Ἀρτεμις comes from ἀρτεμής<sup>140</sup>, thereby indicating that Artemis makes her worshippers safe and happy. The later writer Artemidorus passes on a similar understanding in his statement Ἀρτεμις τοῖς φοβουμένοις ἀγαθή· διὰ γὰρ τὸ ἀρτεμές, ὅπερ ἔστιν ὑγιές<sup>141</sup>. It is clear that in the period of time from Plato to Strabo the function of this etymology had shifted from a theological statement about Artemis' nature to a soteriological statement about her benefits for others. This etymological reasoning (the process of reasoning from etymology to soteriology was known in early Christian writers<sup>142</sup>) shows clearly that the worshippers of Artemis believed that their fate was in the hands of a deity who by nature was providentially benevolent to mankind.

The Greek novel ›Leucippe and Clitophon‹ furnishes concrete examples of Artemis' loving and guiding care for her suppliants<sup>143</sup>. A woman suppliant testifies in this novel that when her unjust death was imminent, she was reassured by means of a revelation of Artemis that all would turn out good in the end. Through comforting and victorious word Artemis tells the weeping suppliant μὴ νῦν . . . κλαῖε· οὐ γὰρ τεθνήξῃ· βοηθὸς γὰρ

<sup>135</sup> In an Ephesian inscription dating from the time of August the author remarks τὴν γένεσιν δὲ θεᾶς ποιήματα πλείονα] ἐτυξεν, J. KEIL, Die zwei Lebenswege in einem ephesischen Epigramm: Bulletin de l'institut archéologique Bulgare 16 (1950) 213/7. Artemis' birthday is also mentioned several times in the famous Salutaris inscription. The Act. Joh. mentions (38) the γενέθλιος τοῦ εἰδωλείου. However, this is the only reference from antiquity to a birthday of Artemis' temple; cf. A. STUIBER, Geburtstag: RAC 9, 223.

<sup>136</sup> See above pp. 30/31.

<sup>137</sup> Tac. ann. 3.61.1.

<sup>138</sup> PICARD, op. cit., 287/302.

<sup>139</sup> Plato Crat. 406B.

<sup>140</sup> Strabo 14.1.6.

<sup>141</sup> Artemid. onir. 2.35.

<sup>142</sup> Mt. 1.21.

<sup>143</sup> Other deities play a role in this story. There is every reason to believe that the view of Artemis presented here is indicative of that held by most of her worshippers.

ἐγὼ σοι παρέσομαι<sup>144</sup>. The intensity of Artemis' care for the fate of those who sought asylum in her home is also portrayed in this novel. In a dramatic scene a suppliant of Artemis is assaulted in front of the very altar of Artemis. The suppliant tells his opponents that the blows struck against him are actually falling upon Artemis herself (ἐπὶ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν αἱ πληγαί)<sup>145</sup>.

A concomitant belief of the worshippers of Artemis was their trust in Artemis' faithfulness. In one episode a follower of Artemis expresses doubt about her providential graciousness and is quickly reassured by a fellow believer with the claim θάρρει . . . ἡ Ἄρτεμις οὐ ψεύδεται<sup>146</sup>. An even stronger affirmation of the assurance of Artemis' faithfulness in listening to and responding to the prayers and needs of her suppliants is patently demonstrated is their use of the graphic term ἐπήκοος<sup>147</sup>. This term occurs frequently in antiquity and is a concise declaration by the user that his deity is attuned to his problems and attentive to his prayers and petitions. If the users of this term had not experienced in their lives what they regarded to be answers and solutions to prayers, one can be sure that they would have not continued to use the term. And finally, the occurrence of the εὐχαριστῶ formula in Ephesian inscriptions dedicated to Artemis contributes a certain vividness to the evidence that the worshippers of Artemis were confident that their goddess answered their petitions<sup>148</sup>.

The veneration of the Ephesian goddess did not come solely from her ability to be sympathetic and involved in the human problems and predicaments of her worshippers. This aspect of her character was equally matched in the eyes of her suppliants by her transcendent power. As we shall shortly see, her ability to help her worshippers stemmed, in fact, from her awesome power. It was because of her supra-natural powers that she could intercede between her followers and the cruel fate which plagued them. To those who called upon Artemis she was Savior (Σώτειρα)<sup>149</sup>, Lord (Κυρία)<sup>150</sup>, and Queen of the Cosmos (Βασιληῖς κόσμου)<sup>151</sup>. She was a heavenly goddess (οὐράνιος θεὸς Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσία)<sup>152</sup>, whose being and character could only be described in superlatives: μεγίστη<sup>153</sup>, ἀγιωτάτη<sup>154</sup>, and ἐπιφανεστάτη<sup>155</sup>.

The clearest demonstration of this belief in Artemis' supra-natural and cosmic powers comes to us through a non-literary source which vividly portrays the hopes of her devotees. It is well known that in the religious mentality of the Roman Empire the ultimate foe of human existence was often painted in terms of astrological fate, a fate

<sup>144</sup> 4.1.4.

<sup>146</sup> 7.14.6.

<sup>147</sup> On the general use of this term see JESSEN, *Epekoos*: PW 5.2 2731/2; A. D. NOCK, C. ROBERTS, TH. C. SKEAT, *The Guild of Zeus Hypsistos*, in: A. D. NOCK, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, ed. Z. STEWART, Vol 1 (Oxford, 1972) 421; S. E. JOHNSON, *A Sabazios Inscription from Sardis*, in: *Religions in Antiquity*, ed. J. NEUSNER: *Studies in the History of Religions (Supplement to Numen)* 14 (Leiden, 1970), 549; M. AVI-YONAH, *Syrian Gods at Ptolemais-Accho*: *Israel Exploration Journal* 9 (1959) 5/7; and O. WEINREICH, *Θεοὶ ἐπήκοοι*, in: *Ausgewählte Schriften*, Vol. 1, ed. G. WILLE (Amsterdam, 1969) 131/95 from whom the above sources draw heavily. The specific sources which use this term for the Ephesian Artemis are given in

<sup>145</sup> 8.2.2/3.

WEINREICH, 138f nr. 24/6.

<sup>148</sup> BMusInscr. 578C. 2/3; 579A. 2; 588B.2/3. For the general use of the εὐχαριστῶ formula see L. ROBERT: *Hellenica* 10 (1955) 55/62.

<sup>149</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 20.6, 20.

<sup>150</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 27.112, 363; BMusInscr. 578C. 2/3. and 588B 2/7.

<sup>151</sup> J. KEIL, *Artemis als Göttermutter und Himmlskönigin*, in: *Charisma. Festgabe zur 25jährigen Stiftungsfeier des Vereines klassischer Philologen in Wien* (Wien, 1924), 20/7.

<sup>152</sup> *Tituli Asiae Minoris* Vol. 3, 390 (p. 139).

<sup>153</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 27.224, 324.

<sup>154</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 1, p. 211; Vol. 3, 6.1/7, 72.2.

<sup>155</sup> *Forschungen in Ephesos* Vol. 2, 27.385 and PICARD, *op. cit.*, 362/4.

determined by the mechanics of the cosmos<sup>156</sup>. Furthermore, it was the practice of most of the mystery religions to assert that their deity had overcome this ubiquitous enemy and could consequently offer salvation from this fate to those who were devotees. What interests us here is the visual means employed to affirm this religious belief in antiquity. One of the most important ways that this concept was depicted was, »daß diese Weltengottheit etwa das Band der Tierkreisbilder um die Brust trägt oder in ganzer Gestalt in dem Kreis der Tierkreisbilder steht«<sup>157</sup>. It is this very pregnant symbolism which is frequently found on the cult statues of the Ephesian goddess Artemis<sup>158</sup>. By the very fact that the zodiacal signs were so prominently depicted on the goddess one can be confident that all who came to the goddess for assurance about the safety of the future went away comforted. It was probably in this same connection that the suppliants sought oracular advice from the goddess about their future plans and fates<sup>159</sup>. It is often asserted that Artemis was not a giver of oracles<sup>160</sup>, but the following inscription seems to confirm the ancient and modern judgment that Artemis did give oracles<sup>161</sup>. In this inscription the office of oracle seems to fit quite naturally with the other two offices mentioned<sup>162</sup>, and we know that these offices were held by officials in the temple hierarchy<sup>163</sup>: [Τ]ὸ προσφιλέστατον τ[ῆ] ἀγιωτάτῃ [Θ]εῶ Ἄρτεμιδι συνέδριον [τ]ῶν ὑμνωδῶν [κ]αὶ θεολόγων [κ]αὶ θεσμοδῶν.

We have seen then in this section that Artemis of Ephesus was able to relate to the needs of her devotees on many levels and on many sides. On the one hand she could be depicted in terms of great care and concern, while on the other hand she offered to her worshippers the confidence that she was the Ruler over evil cosmic powers. And one can well imagine that in the long history of troubles that plagued Asia, e. g. earthquakes, hunger, death, political turmoil, foreign oppression, before and after Christianity arrived, many worshippers went into the Artemisium for help and found peace of mind, salvation, and much more before the altar of the Ephesian goddess Artemis.

A final religious reason for the obdurate resistance of the religion of Artemis to the spread of Christianity was the »missionary«<sup>164</sup> emphasis of the Artemis cult. Two ancient sources, quite distinct in origin and orientation, reveal how important it was to the adherents of the Artemis cult to insist that the worship of Artemis was spread throughout the entire world. The first source is an Ephesian inscription already discussed for its contribution to our knowledge of the festival Artemisia<sup>165</sup>. A large portion of this inscription is a statement from the Ephesian city government composed in response to a derelict attitude toward Artemis by the Proconsul of Asia. The intention of this decree is to defend the rights of Artemis against this type of sacrilege. Therefore, this decree must be

<sup>156</sup> M. P. NILSSON, *Geschichte der griech. Religion*, Vol. 2, 280, 506, 599.

<sup>157</sup> W. GUNDEL, *Sternglaube, Sternreligion und Sternorakel* (Heidelberg, 1959) 48.

<sup>158</sup> H. GUNDEL, *Zodiakos*: PW 10 A. 1 546, 642; FLEISCHER, *op. cit.*, 70/2 and 410 for his criticism of GUNDEL.

<sup>159</sup> This idea is presented in greater detail in E. HEINZEL, *Zum Kult der Artemis von Ephesos*: *Jh-ÖArchInst* 50 (1972/73) 248/51.

<sup>160</sup> JESSEN, *Ephesia*: PW 5.2 2761.

<sup>161</sup> HEINZEL, *op. cit.*, 249.

<sup>162</sup> On the offices of θεολογοὶ and ὑμνωδοὶ see HICKS,

*in*: *BMusInscr.* p. 87 and PICARD, *op. cit.*, 249/50, 251/4.

<sup>163</sup> This inscription is given by J. KEIL, *Ephesos und der Etappendienst zwischen der Nord- und Ostfront des Imperium Romanum*: *AnzWien* 92 (1955), 165. 1/7.

<sup>164</sup> I use the term missionary here in the broadest possible sense, not at all suggesting that the devotees of Artemis had the same fervor or intolerance in their missionary theology as the followers of Christ had.

<sup>165</sup> See above p. 38.

seen as an apologia for Artemis in the face of sacrilegious and blasphemous actions. A prominent theme in this brief official statement is the worldwide dissemination of Artemis' cult and influence. This creed is epitomized in the claim that: θεὸς Ἄρτε[μις οὐ μόνον] ἐν τῇ ἑαυτῆς πατρίδι (ιδί)α τιμᾶται . . . [ἀ]λλὰ καὶ παρὰ [Ἑλλησίν τε καὶ [β]αρβάρ[ο]ις], ὥ[στε πολλ]αχοῦ ἀνεῖσθαι αὐτῆς ἰε[ρὰ καὶ τεμένη, ναοὺς δὲ] αὐτῇ τε εἰδρῦσθαι καὶ βωμοὺς<sup>166</sup>.

The second example of the use of this missionary claim appears in the Acts of the Apostles. In conjunction with the above decree it is clear what function this assertion has in the episode reported in Acts 19.23ff. In Luke's account this statement that Artemis is worshipped throughout the world is found on the lips of her defender. Just as in the previously mentioned decree, the rights and majesty of Artemis have been threatened. Here, as before, her defenders and supporters rally to her rescue. Demetrius the silversmith takes the position of apologist for Artemis and quickly states this theological missionary slogan about the worldwide dissemination of her cult. With the statement that the deity whom the Christians are attacking is Artemis ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται (19.27) he hopes to rout the Christians.

It should be noted in passing that any doubts about the basic historical reliability of this claim made by the worshippers of the goddess quickly vanish in the confirming light of other ancient sources. The widely travelled Pausanias, for example, reports Ἐφεσίαν δὲ Ἄρτεμιν πόλεις τε νομίζουσιν αἰ πᾶσαι καὶ ἄνδρες ἰδίᾳ θεῶν μάλιστα ἄγουσιν ἐν τιμῇ<sup>167</sup>. Strabo testifies that her cult was established as far west as Massilia and Carthago<sup>168</sup>. The informative article by WERNICKE lists numerous sites where the cult of Artemis had been planted in the ancient world<sup>169</sup>.

This missionary claim by the followers of Artemis was not unchallenged by the Christians for the Christians made a similar claim about their deity's worldwide influence. In the Christian religion this belief was voiced by different writers from various parts of the Roman Empire<sup>170</sup>, and this Christian profession is attested by even the pagan opponents of Christianity. Accordingly, there can be no serious question about the reality behind this claim by the Christians that they were spreading the knowledge of Christ throughout the entire world<sup>171</sup>. What is noteworthy for our interest here is that the Christian example *par excellence* of this belief comes to expression in a Christian document, 1 Timothy, that purports to reflect the problems and attitudes of Christianity in Ephesus. The following concise creed (3.16 ὁμολογουμένως) demonstrates that the Ephesian Christians, like their counterparts in the religion of Artemis, took seriously the importance of the doctrine that their deity was known throughout the entire world<sup>172</sup>:

καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον·

ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί,  
ἐδικαιώθη ἐν πνεύματι,  
ὤφθη ἀγγέλοις,  
ἐκηρύχθη ἐν ἔθνεσιν,  
ἐπιστεύθη ἐν κόσμῳ,  
ἀνελήμφθη ἐν δόξῃ.

<sup>166</sup> DITT. Syll. 2 nr. 867.29/34.

<sup>167</sup> Pausanias 4.31.8.

<sup>168</sup> Strabo 4.1.4/8; 3.4.6.

<sup>169</sup> WERNICKE, Artemis: PW 2.1 1385/6.

<sup>170</sup> Mt. 28.19; Col. 1.23.

<sup>171</sup> Tac. ann. 15.44.10.

<sup>172</sup> For the liturgical nature of this formula see M. DIBELIUS — H. CONZELMANN, Die Pastoralbriefe = HdbNT 13<sup>4</sup> (Tübingen, 1966), 49/50.

One may even extrapolate that this doctrine was often part of the verbal ammunition used by devotees of Artemis and Christ in their unending attacks and counterattacks upon one another's religion.

A final factor that gave impetus to the missionary endeavors of the Artemis religion was that the goddess herself was personally involved through revelation in the spread of her cult<sup>173</sup>. She did not, according to our ancient sources, leave the spread of her cult solely to the political and social forces of natural history. Rather, she both initiated and directed the missionary operation through various means of supernatural revelation. One of the richest accounts of this involvement is preserved by Strabo and is given here in its entirety<sup>174</sup>.

When the Phocaeans were sailing from their homeland an oracle was delivered to them, it is said, to use for their voyage a guide received from the Ephesian Artemis; accordingly, some of them put in at Ephesus and inquired in what way they might procure from the goddess what had been enjoined upon them. Now the goddess, in a dream (*κατ' ὄναρ*), it is said, had stood beside Aristarcha, one of the women held in very high honour, and commanded her to sail away with the Phocaeans, taking with her a certain reproduction which was among the sacred images; this done and the colony finally settled, they not only established the temple but also did Aristarcha the exceptional honour of appointing her priestess; further, in the colonial cities the people everywhere do this goddess honours of the first rank, and they preserve the artistic design of the »xoanon« the same, and all the other usages precisely the same as is customary in the mother-city.

A second example of this missionary guidance comes from the life of Xenophon<sup>175</sup> and deals with his establishment of the cult of Artemis in his homeland. We are told that when it came time to erect an altar and temple to Artemis, Xenophon was directed to the correct plot of land by divine revelation (*ἔπου ἀνεῖλεν ὁ θεός*)<sup>176</sup>.

When the earliest Christian missionaries arrived in Ephesus they found in the Ephesian goddess an opponent who had been active in the missionary enterprise for centuries, and whose worshippers were adept in many of the same missionary techniques which the Christians used. An obvious parallel between the missionary methods of Artemis' worshippers and the Christians was the role of revelation in making missionary decisions. In the words of Strabo (4.1.4) Artemis stood beside the suppliant Aristarcha in a dream (*κατ' ὄναρ*) and commanded her to go to Massilia and establish her cult there. Xenophon is likewise lead by revelation. In the Christian missionary stories one thinks immediately of the account in Acts 23.11 where the Lord stood beside Paul and commanded him about the direction of future missionary activity in Rome. One can also read in Acts 16.6/10 that the specific itinerary of Paul's missionary work was controlled *ὑπὸ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος* and *ἔραμα*<sup>177</sup>. Moreover, the city of Ephesus probably drew strength and support from the scores of missionary sites throughout the world where worshippers patterned their local Artemis cult on the model of the Ephesian cult. All these factors taken together with the theological emphasis upon the worldwide dissemination of the

<sup>173</sup> PICARD, op. cit., 362/4 for the revelations of Artemis.

<sup>174</sup> Strabo 4.1.4, translation from LCL, Vol. 2, 173.

<sup>175</sup> Xen. anab. 5.3.4/13.

<sup>176</sup> Anab. 5.3.7, cf. Strabo 8.7.5.

<sup>177</sup> On this common religious worldview between Christianity and its religious environment see A.

WIKENHAUSER, Die Traumgesichte des Neuen Testaments in religionsgeschichtlicher Sicht, in: Pisciculi F. J. Dölger dargeboten, ed. TH. KLAUSER and A. RÜCKER (Münster, 1939) 320/33; see also J. J. WETSTEIN, Novum Testamentum ad Mt. 1.20, and A. OEPKE, "Ὀναρ": ThWbNT Vol. 5, 220/38.

worship of Artemis provided many obstructions to the religious conquest of Ephesus and Asia by Christian missionaries.

#### Conclusion

This study has shown that a proper understanding of the spread of the Christian religion in the ancient city of Ephesus is impossible without due attention to the cult of the Ephesian Artemis, in all of its ramifications. Any work which treats the relationship and conflict between Christianity and its pagan environment in Ephesus but ignores Artemis of the Ephesians is truncated in the extreme. It is also evident that the dynamics and character of this hostility and conflict are both complex and multifarious, encompassing items such as personal piety, civic pride, and regional economic stability. And finally, the very tenacity and commitment which characterized many of Artemis' devotees are proof of the fact that the religious force of idolatrous cults in the Graeco-Roman world should never be underestimated.

TÜBINGEN / HOUSTON, TEXAS

RICHARD OSTER