

# ORPHEUS

**Journal of Indo-European and Thracian Studies**

**Volume 18**

**2011**

Publication of the Institute for Balkan Studies & Center of Thracology  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Sofia

Editor-in-chief: Svetlana Yanakieva

Curator: Irina Shopova

The Editorial Advisory Board is composed  
by the Members of the International Council  
of Indo-European and Thracian Studies

**ORPHEUS**

Journal of Indo-European and Thracian Studies

18 (2011)

Publication of the Institute for Balkan Studies & Center of Thracology  
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences  
Secretariat of the International Council of  
Indo-European and Thracian Studies  
ISSN 0861-9387

Sofia

**ORPHEUS**  
Journal of Indo-European and Thracian Studies  
18 (2011)

**CONTENTS**

**Articles**

<i>Kamen Dimitrov</i> , Economic, Social and Political Structures on the Territory of the Odrysian Kingdom in Thrace (5 <sup>th</sup> –first half of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> century BC) .....	5
<i>Swetlana Janakiewa</i> , Die thrakische Hydronymie in Kleinasien .....	25
<i>Ricardo Blanco López</i> , Pueblos indoeuropeos: los Bálticos y los Eslavos a través de las fuentes literarias clásicas .....	33
<i>Vanya Lozanova-Stantcheva</i> , Byzas, Zeuxippos Helios and the Re-foundation of Byzantion .....	39
<i>Plamen Petkov</i> , Die Beziehungen zwischen den Antigoniden und ihren Verbündeten, den Bastarnen (Geten), in der ersten Hälfte des 2. Jhs. v. Chr. ....	51
<i>Ruja Popova</i> , The Cult of Artemis-Iphigenia in the Tauric Chersonesus: the Movement of an <i>AITION</i> .....	57
<i>Kalin Porozhanov</i> , The Ancient Ports of Sozopol and the Impact of the Sea-Level Oscillations on the Pre-Greek Thracian Settlement .....	69
<i>Miroslav Vasilev</i> , Herodotus 8, 137–139 and the Foundation of Argead Macedonia .....	75
<i>Kiril Jordanov</i> , Les souverains Odryses jusqu’ au IIIe s. av. J.-C. ....	83
<b>Review</b>	
<i>Mirena Slavova</i> , “Thracian Hydronymy” by Svetlana Yanakieva .....	89
<b>Bibliography</b>	
<i>Irina Shopova</i> , Selected Bibliography of Thracology in Bulgaria (2005–2009) .....	93

**THE CULT OF ARTEMIS-IPHIGENIA IN THE TAURIC CHERSONESUS:  
THE MOVEMENT OF AN *AITION***

*Ruja Popova*

The present article will deal with the attested cult of the Goddess Παρθένος as represented in the Tauric Chersonesus<sup>1</sup> in the iconography of which the Greek *apoikioi* saw their Artemis without ever giving her that name. Of course, the questions aroused shall be more than the answers found since the attention here is focused upon the emergence and the development of the cult in these parts of the Black Sea area compared to the images on the artifacts and the epigraphic monuments.

At this stage the study of the Tauric Chersonesus is precluded with the well-known “not many things are clear in the study of the relations between Greeks and natives... especially for the Northern Black Sea”<sup>2</sup> (translation mine, R.P.). Most of the conclusions about the ethnic contacts and interactions have been reached without taking into consideration the historic and cultural situation in the area and in the metropolis; as to the so-called religious problems<sup>3</sup>, they have never been looked up within the context of the concrete political situation. As a result, the phenomena pile up and appear isolated, independent from each other.

The early studies do not doubt the contacts and the ensuing interactions at the time of the emergence of this new social and cultural milieu. Latyshev is the first to adopt such an approach: according to him the founders of Chersonesus, for some political reasons borrowed from their neighboring Taures the cult to a female deity, called by the name of Παρθένος as an image summarizing the evolution of the different aspects of Artemis<sup>4</sup>.

Many researchers accept Latyshev’s thesis. There is an allegation that the Chersonesites considered the deity as a local one and not as Artemis<sup>5</sup>. Other authors, more involved with the Tauric antiquity, are more circumspect. Tolstoy, who studied the cult of Achilles both on the island of Leuce and in Tauris, assumes that a goddess under the name of Παρθένος might be a local one and adopted by the Hellenes who, however didn’t keep her original name (?) – one issue that is not developed any further in his monograph<sup>6</sup> but worthwhile to be kept in mind. He seems to be inclined though to accept that in her essence the goddess is Artemis.

Most categorical in his statement is Rostovtzeff. Many a time he has criticized the superficial study of the cults in the Northern Black Sea area: for him it is unacceptable to consider the

<sup>1</sup> Русяева 2000: 75-76 is right to indicate that the translation of the epiclesis as Virgin as used sometimes in the literature makes impossible to understand the cult’s meaning.

<sup>2</sup> Tsetskhladze 1998a: 44.

<sup>3</sup> Сапрыкин 1986; cf. Русяева, Русяева М. 1999.

<sup>4</sup> Латышев 1909: 158-159; Латышев 1914: 206-214.

<sup>5</sup> Орешников 1913: 112-115.

<sup>6</sup> Толстой 1918: 116-117.

developments within the process of colonisation as assimilation or solely as influence over the locals by the Hellenes. He is one of the earliest researchers on colonisation who do not think that the Hellenes came to inhabit uninhabited territories; in his works he appeals to always keep in mind the local situation, the origin of the *apoikoi* and the opportunities that come with them. As to the colonisation as such – to be considered as a bilateral process where the settlers were not conquerors.<sup>7</sup>

Reviewing Tolstoy's work, Rostovtzeff considers the Greek Παρθένος as a female deity "which is older than the Hellenes and Hellas, but perceived, poeticized and connected to the Greek myths and legends" (translation mine, R.P.). The practice of not taking into consideration number of facts in the early history of cults is criticized in general, for it deprives the studies of profoundness. For him, of highest significance is the cult of the local Great Goddess, "called by many names and nameless and bearing here the impersonal name of Virgin"<sup>8</sup> (translation mine, R.P.). Rostovtzeff himself has repeatedly declared that he was not an expert on history of religions, but the directions he gave at the beginning of the 20th century seem relevant even today when the reinterpretation of the so-called peripheral cultures begins.<sup>9</sup> However, the doubts regarding the pre-Hellenic origin of the Goddess of Tauris are dissipating.

In the literary tradition the earliest evidence about a goddess worshipped by the Taures, i.e. in Tauris, appears in Herodotus (Hdt. IV, 103). The historian introduces the Athenian public to the temperament of the cruel and bellicose Taures who sacrifice to the Virgin/Παρθένος shipwrecks and Hellenes, caught in the open sea. Here in Herodotus, for the first time, this bloody ritual is directly associated with the name of Iphigenia, Agamemnon's daughter.

After a couple of years Euripides in his play *Iphigenia in Tauris*, supposedly written in 412 B. C. (possibly even earlier) brings back the same subject. In both sources special attention is paid to the deity and the human sacrifices offered to her.<sup>10</sup>

In Pseudo-Scymnos (831–844), who paraphrases Ephorus, more data is added that is absent in Herodotus. This leads to the conclusion that Ephorus repeats the evidence given by a witness to the events. The facts in Ephorus and Herodotus about the cruel cult coincide, but they are more detailed in the latter.

We owe the late Greek tradition very interesting information on this cult in Tauris. It is possible that the data in Strabo (7, 4, 2) and Pseudo-Apollodorus (*Epit.* VI, 26) was unrelated to Herodotus and Ephorus as well as the other way round, that they both had access to the same source of information.

In Homer Iphigenia is mentioned as Ἰφιάνασσα<sup>11</sup> (Hom. *II.* IX, 145, 287), an ancient and undoubtedly pre-Greek the name which reappears also in Sophocles (*El.* 157), meaning ruling by force<sup>12</sup> – obviously closer to her primary functions as a goddess. As Iphigenia, she is seen closer to Artemis and Illitia in her *hypostasis* of „helper in childbirth“. Hommel reckons that although these are Greek names they undoubtedly indicate a pre-Greek goddess with functions of a Mistress.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Ростовцев 1918.

<sup>8</sup> Ростовцев 1918: 195-197; see the critique in Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 6.

<sup>9</sup> Бондаренко 2003 gets back to the concept of the local nature of the goddess; see critique in Зубарь 2005: 202 with lit.

<sup>10</sup> Guldager Bilde 2003: 166.

<sup>11</sup> About *wanaks* and its feminine form *wanassa* as non-Greek forms see Palaima 2006: 53-71.

<sup>12</sup> Hajnal y Palaima 2006: 56 where the translation is: she who secures profit by force. The entire discussion with the literature on Ἰφιάνασσα and Iphigenia see in Palaima 2006: 53-71.

<sup>13</sup> Хоммель 1981: 69, No. 88.

Pausanias has left us two sources that identify Artemis with Iphigenia: in one of them he mentions a temple of Artemis at Hermione in Argolis where this goddess is called Iphigenia (Paus. II, 35, 1), i.e. testifies of a cult of Artemis-Iphigenia; in the other – a temple of Artemis with a statue of Iphigenia in Aigira, Achaea, which according to the explanation of the periegetes meant that in ancient times the temple had been dedicated to Iphigenia (Paus. VII. 26. 5).

In Herodotus the sanctuary on the rock where the Taures performed their blood ritual is associated directly to the name of Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon as he explains himself (Hdt. IV, 103). In the testimony of the historian from Halicarnassus she is called *δαίμων* instead of *θεός/θεά* used by him. The term inspired interpretations according to which the goddess from Herodotus' text that was offered blood sacrifices was defined as a minor deity that could not measure up to the idea of a Great goddess of Tauris; she could only be conceived as the main deity of the Taures.<sup>14</sup>

The problem of qualifying Iphigenia as a *δαίμων* is worth of an independent research. As it seems it deserves some particular attention by philologists and by the historian's commentators. Herodotus had hardly had in mind to reduce in rank the deity of the Taures, apart from the Hellenes' *Παρθένο*. I wouldn't also agree that the historian, who knew well who Iphigenia was, used her image for politic reasons (?),<sup>15</sup> and wouldn't name the goddess Artemis if he recognized her. I would assume that in Herodotus Iphigenia appears as a translation-appellation of the Goddess in whose honor rituals were performed and of which he had been informed.

In sanctuaries in caves in the highlands of the Crimea (the Tauris Mountains) are discovered artifacts from the 7th and 6th centuries BC.<sup>16</sup> The human bones amongst them are interpreted as proof of a blood ritual accompanied by human sacrifices performed by the natives. In the Alexandrine tradition, Pseudo-Apollodorus (E 6, 26) testifies that the Taures who were a Scythian tribe, practiced killing aliens and disposing of their bodies in the flames of the sacred fire. That fire gushing out of Hades, burned near a rock in a sacred area. Apparently the sanctuary was situated in a cave.<sup>17</sup>

On the territory of the Bosporan kingdom, in the outskirts of Phanagoria, an inscription dated to the middle of the 4th century BC bears witness to a cult of Artemis *Ἀγροτέρα* by the lake Ahtanizov.<sup>18</sup> This inscription was discovered after an earthquake caused the eruption of a volcano.<sup>19</sup> Judging by this finding one could assume that in the vicinity there had been a sanctuary dedicated to "the goddess of the outdoor world", as Burkert defines Artemis *Ἀγροτέρα*.<sup>20</sup> According to Ustinova possibly the area around Phanagoria, with its gorges, precipices, cliffs and active volcanoes deeply impressed the Greek settlers as suitable milieu for the worship of a "terrible" goddess.<sup>21</sup> Regretfully in the area where the inscription was found no studies had been conducted and no traces of rituals registered (neither traces of the sanctuary known only by this inscription). One could assume that they were not identified.

The geophysical study of the Taman Peninsula and especially the area around Phanagoria

<sup>14</sup> Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 25.

<sup>15</sup> Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 18-28.

<sup>16</sup> Мещеряков 1979: 110 with lit.

<sup>17</sup> Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 21.

<sup>18</sup> Rostovtzeff 1919: 464.

<sup>19</sup> CIRB=КБН No. 1014 with commentary.

<sup>20</sup> Burkert 1983: 65-66; cf. Русяева 1992: 107, according to whom this is an agrarian cult.

<sup>21</sup> Ustinova 1999: 61-62; see the same author on the direct (?) transfer of the cult from Athens, for there is no evidence of it in Ionia.

prove that the landscape hasn't changed for the last three thousand years.<sup>22</sup> The modern geological researches confirm the ancient authors' testimonies of volcano activity in the area.<sup>23</sup> For the Tauris area though, such studies are not known to have been conducted. But the described in Pseudo-Apollodorus practices would have fitted to perfection in similar surroundings; he even left us information about sacrificing rites near an eventual geyser or volcanic crater. Still, the possibility for rituals performed near or in caves shouldn't be eliminated.

Not long ago bones of many animals – probably sacrificed – on a cliff in the Southwestern part of the Chersonesus were found.<sup>24</sup> No osteological analysis had been made in order to define the species.

The archaeological facts considered together with the data given by the Hellenistic source indicate that on the highlands of Tauris is attested a cult in a cave, probably dedicated to a chthonic goddess with the functions of *πότνια* to whom blood offerings were made (not necessarily all of them human). In the late written tradition she, of course, is called by the most widely known name – Artemis. A text in Pomponius Mela (II, 1, 4-5) narrates the legend that the town of Cherson was founded by the goddess Diana and was famous with its Cave of Nymphs.<sup>25</sup>

Testimonies originating in continental Greece suggest that Iphigenia had been worshipped in a cave sanctuary. The sanctuary at Brauron on the Eastern coast of Attica (Eurip. *Iphig. Taur.* 1446-1467) near the mouth of the river Erasinos was initially a cave with a small heroon of Iphigenia with a *bothros* from the Geometric age.<sup>26</sup> The archaeological data prove that it was preserved in its original state until the end of 6th century BC and functioned as Iphigenia's sanctuary-heroon up to the middle of the 5th century BC.<sup>27</sup>

In Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Tauris* Brauron is mentioned together with another sanctuary of Artemis, lying to the north, near Halai and domain of Artemis *Ταυροπόλος*. On the cliffs of Cape Karystos, in the lands of Cecrops, Orestes was ordered by the Goddess to build a sanctuary for her *xoanon* stolen from Tauris. In this image precisely the mortals were supposed to acknowledge their goddess and hail her as *Tauropolos* (Eurip. *Iphig. Taur.* 1448-1454). Artemis instituted the ritual in these words: on the day of the temple festival the priest was to touch a man's throat with a sword until it let blood, the blood sacrifice being a consolation to the Goddess. Artemis appointed as keeper of the keys to her sanctuary at Brauron her priestess Iphigenia who was to be buried there as a virgin; after her death she was to be worshipped with the clothes of women dead in childbirth. For her the Goddess kept the sanctuary in Halai which was to be dyed with the blood of the sacrifices.

Euripides' text marks the "relocation" of a literary *topos*, representing an ancient *aition*, from an alien milieu, beyond the limits of Classical Greece to its centre. Furthermore, the myth/*aition* about human sacrifices in honor of a Goddess from the remote lands of the Taures, brought back to Attica creatively presented inevitably preserves memories of pre-Greek times. More important is that the Hellenes themselves from the Historical period most probably believed that these events had happened sometime.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>22</sup> The Ahtanzivov Lake is dominated by Mount Sts. Boris and Gleb which is actually a volcano crater. The volcano is active and from the fissures at its feet fumes permanently come out.

<sup>23</sup> Марченко 1960: 103-104.

<sup>24</sup> Новиченкова 1994.

<sup>25</sup> On Nymphs, bees and high priestesses as aliases of one and the same image of the Great Goddess-mother and on the "Cave of Nymphs" cf. Фол В. 2007: 184-187 with sources and literature.

<sup>26</sup> Kahil 1988: 800 with quoted literature.

<sup>27</sup> For more details on the cult of Iphigenia in Brauron see Lloyd-Jones 1983: 91-96; Fol V. 2007: 129-130 with lit.

<sup>28</sup> Lloyd-Jones 1983: 89.

There is not much to be said about the cave complexes in the region of the Chersonesus for lack of publications. With time these complexes will give less and less material for thought because the repeated entering changes the situation and the stratigraphy of the terrain. The observations made so far though give me the opportunity to assume the highlands of the Tauric Chersonesus as a rock-cut complex where an anonymous goddess was worshipped most likely in a cave-sanctuary. In Greek translation-appellation she could bare the name Iphigenia (but also Artemis-Hekate) as the most archaic characteristic of the Great Goddess. Whether her worship in this aspect would have anything to do with Herodotus' δαίμων should be a subject of yet another study. However, this area is well integrated in the Pontic contact zone where, among the cliffs, the cult of the Goddess-mother is worshipped, preserving the earliest features of the sacred *topos*.

In Euripides' tragedy *Iphigenia in Tauris* the analysts see a revival of a more ancient mythological layer. We owe him the most detailed version of the myth about the offering in sacrifice of Agamemnon's daughter who, at Artemis' will, has been turned into a doe and carried to the sanctuary in Tauris as a priestess of hers.

When was Agamemnon's daughter associated to the lands of the Taures is not only an interesting but an important problem too, the solution of which would help to understand the cult of Παρθένος in the Tauric Chersonesus. The myth and the image of Iphigenia from Tauris are in direct relationship with the arrival and the development of the cult of the Goddess in Tauris.

Apparently as Iphigenia the name first popped up in some fragmentary data in Hesiod<sup>29</sup> which may lead us to think that she was not yet associated with Tauris. Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (I, 43, 1) has paraphrased the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* where Artemis doesn't allow Iphigenia to be killed and turns her into Hekate. Hesiod's version may well have been borrowed by Stesichoros in his *Orestiada*. (Stesich. Fr. 215 in Philod.).<sup>30</sup>

Shortly after Hesiod, the poem *Cypria*<sup>31</sup> from the Trojan epic cycle, fragments of which are to be found in Proclus' *Chrestomathy* (138-143) for the first time spells out the association of Iphigenia with the Taures. The poem, which will remain the basic source of mythographic conceptions, tells about the beginning of the Trojan War and Artemis' wrath, halting the ships in Aulis. This chain of events is triggered by Agamemnon, the ruler of the Achaeans killing the Goddess' sacred doe, for which she demanded his daughter Iphigenia, accompanied by Clytemnestra her mother to be brought under the pretext of marrying Achilles to the altar fire and sacrificed there. In the last moment however, Artemis took pity on the young woman and imperceptibly replaced her with a doe. Iphigenia was whisked off to the Goddess' sanctuary in the Taures' Land where she became her high priestess.<sup>32</sup>

In the literary tradition a testimony in Antoninus Liberalis (*Metamorph.* 27) and ascending to Nikander from the 2nd century BC tells that in due course Artemis had set her high priestess free in order to put her next to Achilles but yet in another nature – as immortal Goddess, under

<sup>29</sup> In the Iliad Agamemnon's daughter is named Ἰφιγένεια (Hom. *Il.* IX, 145, 287). For a controversial reading in Linear B of the name I-pi-me-de-ja among the names of the gods and its identification with Iphigenia, see Kahil 1990: 706 with lit.

<sup>30</sup> Review and comments over the sources look in Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 12-18.

<sup>31</sup> The poem was created in 7th-6th century BC and usually attributed to Homer, to Stasinus of Cyprus or to Hegesias or Hegesinus of Salamis in Cyprus; it relates the events up the Trojan War.

<sup>32</sup> See Rohde 1928: 70, for whom Iphigenia is unquestionably an epithet of the goddess of the Moon but Hesiod giving the translation of her appellation didn't have a clue about such a possible identification, otherwise, according to Rohde, he couldn't have seen in her Agamemnon's daughter.



the name the name Orsilochia.<sup>33</sup> About the name Orsilochia Ammianus Marcellinus (XXII, 8, 34) says that this is an epithet of Artemis herself in the country of the Taures. Thus the Late ancient tradition not forgetting the *Tauric narrative* explained the deifying of Iphigenia by Artemis, her identifying with the goddess and assuming her functions. Then began the association of Iphigenia and Artemis with Scythia and the Taures fell out of the picture.

The narratives pose the question who these Taures were. According to an aetiological myth retold by Antoninus Liberalis (*Metamorph.* 27) Artemis replaced Iphigenia at the sacrificial altar with a bull calf and thus the people she was sent to were called Taures, i.e. the ethnonym is the result and not the cause for the Goddess' epithet.

In many explorers' opinion the Taures in *Cypria* were not the inhabitants of the Northern Pontus' Tauris.<sup>34</sup> They rally round the opinion that in the poem the mythological Tauris is the island of Lemnos and not the Crimea.<sup>35</sup> As a proof they consider the mentioning of the mythical king Thoas who, in Euripides is associated with the Northern Tauris. In such a late author as Antoninus Liberalis king Thoas is son of Borysthenes in the land called Pontus Euxeinus, where Iphigenia is sent as a priestess of Artemis (Anton. Liber. *Metamorph.* 27).

The myth about Tauris and its inhabitants – the Taures, is originally associated only with the isle of Lemnos<sup>36</sup>, included by the literary tradition in the Thracio-Pelasgian cultural circle.<sup>37</sup> It is very possible that with the Greeks' accumulation of geographical knowledge gathered in the process of colonisation, the myth cult of a female deity had started to move from the Aegean island northwards, attaining new unknown and obscure territories on the Pontus' Northern shores. With time, though, this vivid link between myth and *aition* has faded away.

The ethnonym Taures in the ancient tradition shouldn't be considered unilaterally in any way now.<sup>38</sup> Rostovtzeff<sup>39</sup> has already warned of the danger – after him the link between the registered cult of a female deity in Taurus and the similar ones on Asia Minor's Islands is undoubtedly real.<sup>40</sup> One of the proofs is the intertwining of the myths of Iphigenia and the Tauric Goddess.

Here again the literary tradition comes to the rescue. Pausanias (III, 16, 7-8) is the author who threw some light on the circulation of the Tauric Goddess' cult through various parts of Greece. According to him Sparta and Athens contended with each other as to some versions of the myth. Further on he informs us about “the Cappadocians dwelling on the Euxine” and “the Lydians also who have a sanctuary of Artemis Anaeitis”, and who have got her ἄγαλμα.<sup>41</sup>

Strabo gives a different (at first sight) localization of the Tauric goddess. In his version Orestes and Iphigenia instituted her cult on two sites in Cilicia<sup>42</sup>, in the mountain Taurus (!) –

<sup>33</sup> The mythographer Nikander in the 2nd century restores the link between Iphigenia and Achilles on the island of Leuce as his wife; a version of reading of the name in Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 49; on the direct transfer of the epiclesis from Artemis to Iphigenia and the identification of one through the other see Burkert 1985: 152, 203.

<sup>34</sup> Толстой 1918: 134; Жебелев 1953: 80-81; Скржинская 1991: 33

<sup>35</sup> cf. Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 14-16

<sup>36</sup> On Lemnos and the Thracians see Димитров 2007: 99-102.

<sup>37</sup> Фол 1986: 139.

<sup>38</sup> Соломоник 1976 according to whom the ethnonym Taures originates from the oronym Taurus as a result of its transfer from Asia Minor (Asia Minor's Taurus).

<sup>39</sup> Ростовцев 1918: 195.

<sup>40</sup> Ростовцев 1918: 195.

<sup>41</sup> As to the map of the “vagrant image” (according to the authors' own definition) circulation of Artemis Taurupolos see Guldager Bilde 2003: 166-167.

<sup>42</sup> Beside this Strabo “puts” a sacred image of the Tauric Goddess in the sanctuary of Diana Namorenzis near the Nemi Lake in Central Italy (Strabo. 5, 3, 12). On the sanctuary near Nemi see Guldager Bilde 2004.

in Komana Pontica (Strabo. 12, 2, 3)<sup>43</sup> and in Hieropolis-Kastabala (Strabo. 12, 2, 7). These two locations are very important, because they lay at the foot of the Taurus Mountain, in a place named Kastabala<sup>44</sup> with a sanctuary of Artemis *Perasea*<sup>45</sup>. The epithet derives from the ancient Greek *πέραθεν* meaning “from beyond/opposite”<sup>46</sup> and in Strabo’s text makes us face the island of Lemnos of the mythical king Thoas, founder of Tyana<sup>47</sup> a town also at the foot of the mountain Taurus. Thoas is identified with the Lemnos hero – king of the area where Taurus lied – and who died chasing Orestes and Pylades, while these two were taking away from his kingdom their sister Iphigenia and the *xoanon* of the goddess Παρθένος. On the island of Lemnos Thoas is son of Dionysus and Ariadne (Hyg. *Fab.* 98; 120-121).<sup>48</sup> There his daughter Hypsipyle<sup>49</sup> saved him from Aphrodite’s curse, and dressed as Dionysus she sent him eastwards to Cappadocia.<sup>50</sup> This narrative testifies of the development of the action – the transfer from West to East of the cult of the Lemnian Great Goddess<sup>51</sup> to the area of the Thracio-Pelasgian ethnic and cultural community in which southernmost part – the Taurus Mountain, on the territory of the Thracian Mariandynoi is the sanctuary of Artemis *Perasea* in Kastabala. Strabo, who was born in Amasea, close to Komana Pontica, says that there her priestesses walk barefooted over live coals without any suffering. This imposing scene takes place in the area of interaction where the Taurus Mountain is the Southeastern border of the massifs Ida – Tmolos – Taurus. According to the Orphic Hymns Nos. 48 and 49 the Great Mother-Goddess Hypta and her son Sabazius were worshipped as Orphic deities of equal standing.<sup>52</sup> The epigraphic evidence let us suppose that in the sanctuary of Artemis-*Perasea* Sabazius might have been worshipped too. Strabo localizes in this particular area of compressed ethno-cultural interactions one of the oldest images of Ταυροπόλος.<sup>53</sup>

That’s why, according to Rostovtzeff, accepting the cult of the Great Goddess/The Virgin Goddess of the Greeks on the Tauric Chersonesus represented no difficulty since in Heraclea Pontica the high priests kept close contacts with the native Thracian Mariandynoi inhabiting this territory as reported by Xenophon (*Anab.* VI, 2, 1-2).<sup>54</sup>

In the scientific literature dedicated to the foundation of the Doric colony in Tauris this

<sup>43</sup> Cassius Dio (36, 11, 1-2) also reports on the cult of the Tauric Goddess in Komana Pontica; on the last researches on the territory of Komana (near the modern Tokat) see Erciyas 2009: 289-312, where yet another issue is formulated: weather Komana Pontica is a town or a sanctuary. The earliest artifacts from that area are dated in the Late Chalcolithic but the site continued to live even through the Byzantine period.

<sup>44</sup> On -βαλος, -βαλα as a second component in Thracian onomastic see Detschew 1976: 41-42; see Steph. Byz. s. v. καστάβαλα.

<sup>45</sup> On *Perasea* as an epithet of the Great Goddess as a possible direct borrowing from a local theonym, see Фол 1994: 247.

<sup>46</sup> On the concept *from beyond/opposite* see Dimitrov 2005: 59-65.

<sup>47</sup> According to a legend retold by Arrian (PPE.VI) the initial name of the town was Thoana after the name of its founder.

<sup>48</sup> On the relation Lemnos – Thoas – Dyonissus and Ariadna see Фол 1994: 248; ср. Хоммель 1981: 70.

<sup>49</sup> On that name see Фол 1994: 248.

<sup>50</sup> After Орачев 1990: 359 the road on which Hypsipyle sees her father off coincides with the road Iphigenia took to Tauris carried by Artemis.

<sup>51</sup> On the Great Goddess of Lemnos evoked by many names see Димитров 2007: 106-109 with lit.

<sup>52</sup> Фол 1995: 100-102.

<sup>53</sup> See Guldager Bilde 2003: 168 who examines two separate manifestations: an existing cult of a female deity, a “bull-killer” - Ταυρο-πόλος and on the other hand – a female deity, “worshipped by the Taures” - Ταυρό-πολος, etymologically incorrect creation of Euripides and spread through the whole ancient world as a literary topos presenting an *aition* as local blood rituals. I am not sure that for the referred epoch such a distinction could be right for in both cases the idea of a blood rite is present – in one, in the name as such and in the other – in the literary data.

<sup>54</sup> Фол 1994: 99; about the Heracleian tradition see Иванчик 2005: 131-134.

problem is poorly studied.<sup>55</sup>

The Heracleian historiography is pretty familiar with the Thraco-Asia Minor culture circle, where the main image is that of the anonymous Great Goddess, associated with Dionysus-Sabazius.<sup>56</sup> This could very well be the reason for the appearance of the terrible Goddess Παρθένος often identified with Artemis.<sup>57</sup> In the studies dealing with such topics as the colonisation, the culture, the political development of the Tauric Chersonesus – mostly in Russian – the problem of the localization of its metropolis, Heraclea Pontica, its contacts, religious practices and basic rituals of this Doric colony and its *chora* are poorly researched. Otherwise the question why the name of the supreme Tauric Goddess appears nowhere together with the *epiclesis* would have found its answer<sup>58</sup> It is all about the goddess whose effigy was on coins, on dedication stelae and reliefs from Chersonesus, represented with a torch in her hand in an iconography which gets her close, even identifies her with the chthonic Hekate. In Tauris Παρθένος apparently is not an epithet but a name given on account of the essential characteristic of a nameless Goddess with functions of a Mistress.

In the Tauric Chersonesus the Great Goddess remains anonymous, invoked only as Παρθένος. As an epithet it indeed is associated with Artemis but not exclusively with her – Homer's hymns she is a huntress killer of deers (Hom. *Hymn.* II; IX), in Euripides (*Hippolyt.*; *Iphig. Taur.* 96, 458, 1229, 1396), Callimachus (*Hymn.* III) and Apollodorus (I, 9, 15) the *epiclesis* defines her as a Guardian of virtue. However in all testimonies the epithet follows the name of the goddess, she never appears only with it.

The situation in the Northern Chersonesus is different because there Παρθένος is a naming. There her iconography has the characteristics of Artemis in her stasis of πότνια on one hand and on the other – her growing similarity up to identification with Hekate.

The observations made on the cult of the Goddess (Artemis-Iphigenia-Hekate), called Παρθένος, Ταυροπόλος, Ἐλαφοκτόνος, Ἐλαφηβόλος, reveal its location: the vast seaside territories bordered by the Bosporan kingdom, the Tauric Chersonesus and Komana Pontica – Hieropolis-Kastabala. The Geography of its movement in the Pontic contact zone in its broad sense is thus traced. The epithets associate the goddess with the ritual sacrifice – of a bull in the one case and a deer in one other, seen in particular ethnic milieu as zoomorphic hypostases of the God. On the coins from Chersonesus<sup>59</sup> she is represented with a spear as a deer-killer, or Ἐλαφοκτόνος / Ἐλαφηβόλος (an iconography that is considered as an exceptionally rare and uncharacteristic),<sup>60</sup> or with a torch in the hand – an attribute which identifies her as Iphigenia-Hekate.<sup>61</sup>

On other coins minted in the same centre she can be seen also as Ταυροπόλος with a protome of a bull on the reverse.<sup>62</sup> Some bronze coins from the Chersonesus feature on the averse

<sup>55</sup> Свенцицкая 1967: 81; Фролов 1981: 27-30; Сапрыкин 1986: 22-35 with sources and literature in the light of the social and economic analysis of the development of Heraclea Pontica as future metropolis of the Tauric Chersonesus.

<sup>56</sup> Фол 1994: 98-99.

<sup>57</sup> Русяева, Русяева М. 1999.

<sup>58</sup> Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 68.

<sup>59</sup> A review of the coin types from Chersonesus see in Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 111-122.

<sup>60</sup> Анохин 1977: 26, a coin type dated in 3rd-2nd century BC.

<sup>61</sup> Анохин 1977: 22-24, Nos. 36-56, 66-67 are coins dated about the middle of 4th century BC; cf. Сапрыкин 1986: 96; the discussion about the data of the coin type cf. in Сапрыкин 1980: 43-57.

<sup>62</sup> Анохин 1977: 19: there is an image of Παρθένος, sitting on a rock with an arrow (?)/a spear in her hand and a deer by her side; cf. Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 129 for presenting of Artemis-huntress – a guardian of the polis' limits; see Анохин 1977: 19, that on the reverse of the same coins for the first time there is an image of an attacking bull; cf.

a bull about to kneel on his forelegs, head bent down, a wreath around his neck, ready to be sacrificed; on the reverse – a goddess spearing a deer.<sup>63</sup>

The spread of the iconography<sup>64</sup> and the data on the goddess' worship testify to the appearance of the image in areas of intensive ethno-cultural interactions, in the border areas of contacts between polis and ethnos, seen on the littoral at their best. In the familiar from the written sources cult's manifestations in inland Greece it is more likely to see an echo from the Mycenaean age, i.e. the identification of the Goddess with Iphigenia in one of her oldest hipostasis, namely Hekate,<sup>65</sup> after Hesiod, bearing the characteristics of πότνια. However it is highly probable while the cult moved to the northern Pontic shores this memory to have begun to fade away. Nevertheless, the memory of the Παρθένος as a Ταυροπόλος remained, featured in a painting in a tomb in Panticapaeum from the 2nd century AD where the goddess is riding an ascending bull, facing the Hyperborean Apollo riding a griffin.

This illustration appears at the time of intensive economic and political contacts between the Bosporan Kingdom and the Tauric Chersonesus, when the restitution of the Thracian (Odryasian?) system of names within the ruling Bosporan dynasty takes place and the cult of Sabazius appears and develops in both areas.

## Literature

**Burkert** 1983 = Burkert W. 1983. *Homo Necans. The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*. Berkeley-Los Angelis-London.

**Burkert** 1985 = Burkert W. 1985. *Greek Religion*. Massachusetts.

**CIRB** = CIRB = *Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporiani*, 1965 (=КБН = Корпус Боспорских надписей. (Ред. В. В. Струве, М. Н. Тихомиров, В. Ф. Гайдукевич, А. И. Доватур, Д. П. Каллистов, Т. Н. Книпович) Академия наук СССР, Москва-Ленинград, 1965).

**Detschew** 1976 = Detschew D. 19762. *Die thrakischen Sprachreste*. Österreichische Academie der Wissenschaften. Wien.

**Dimitrov** 2005 = Dimitrov P. 2005. *The Thracians and Their Neighbors*. – In: *Thracia XVI. In honorem X congressus studiorum Thracicorum Graecia 2005*. Serdicae: 59-65.

**Erciyas** 2009 = Erciyas D. B. 2009. *Comana Pontica: A City or a Sanctuary*. – In: *Mithridates VI and Pontic Kingdom*. Ed. J. M. Højte. Aarhus: 289-312.

**Guldager Bilde** 2003 = Guldager Bilde P. 2003. *Wandering Images: From Taurian (and Chersonesean) Parthenos to (Artemis) Tauropolos and (Artemis) Persike*. –In: *The Cauldron of Ariantas. Studies presented to A. N. Ščeglov on the occasion of his 70th birthday* (ed. P. Guldager Bilde, J. M. Højte and V. Stolba). Aarhus University Press: 165-183.

**Guldager Bilde** 2004 = Guldager Bilde P. 2004. *Greek temples of the Black Sea Region: facts and fiction*. – In: *Paper given in Athens at the Danish Institute, 28 March 2004*: [www.poutos.dk/publications/papers-presenteof\\_orally/oral-files/ful\\_temples\\_Atken.pdf](http://www.poutos.dk/publications/papers-presenteof_orally/oral-files/ful_temples_Atken.pdf).

**Kahil** 1988 = Kahil L. 1988. *Le sanctuaire de Brauron et la religion grecque*. – In: *Compt-*

Русяева, Русяева М. 1999: 129-131 on illustrating Heracles' seventh feat on them.

<sup>63</sup> Анохин 1977: No. 260 – dated in 138-161; No. 270 – dated in 161-180.

<sup>64</sup> See Конова 2005: 427-442 about the images in the vase-painting and the image of Artemis-Hekate in Apollonia Pontica.

<sup>65</sup> See Kahil 1988: 809-812 on similarities in the representation of Iphigenia and Hekate in a relief from Brauron; known as *the relief of the gods* dated between the 5th and the 4th centuries BC though the author is in quandary.

es-rendus des séances de l'Academie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, 132/4: 799-813.

**Kahil** 1990 = Kahil L. 1990. Iphigenie. – In: LIMK V. Zürich, München.

**Lloyd-Jones** 1983 = Lloyd-Jones H. 1983. Artemis and Iphigeneia. – JHS 103: 87-102.

**Palaima** 2006 = Palaima T. G. 2006. Wanaks and related power terms. – In: Ancient Greece: From the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer. Ed. S. Deger-Jalkotzy, I. S. Lemos. Edinburg Leventis Studies 3. Edinburg: 53-71.

**Rohde** 1928 = Rohde E. 1928. Psyché. Le culte de l'âme chez les Grecs et leur croyance à l'immortalité. Paris.

**Rostovtzeff** 1919 = Rostovtzeff M. I. 1919. Le culte de la Grande Déesse dans la Russie méridionale. – REG, 32: 462-481.

**Tsetsckhladze** 1998a = Tsetsckhladze G. R. 1998a. Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area: Stages, Models, and Native Population. – In: The Greek Colonisation of the Black Sea Area: Historical Interpretation of Archaeology. (Ed. G. R. Tsetsckhladze) Stuttgart: 9-68.

**Ustinova** 1999 = Ustinova Y. 1999. The Supreme Gods of Bosporan Kingdom. Celestial Aphrodite and the Most High God. Brill–Leiden–Boston–Köln. (=Religions in the Graeco-Roman World. Vol. 135).

**Анохин** 1977 = Анохин В. А. 1977. Монетное дело Херсонеса. Киев.

**Бондаренко** 2003 = Бондаренко М. Е. 2003. Пантеон Херсонеса Таврического. Москва.

**Димитров** 2007 = Димитров П. 2007. Индоевропейски езици и култура. София.

**Жебелев** 1953 = Жебелев С. А. 1953. Северное Причерноморье. Исследования и статьи по истории Северного Причерноморья античной эпохи. Москва, Ленинград.

**Зубарь** 2005 = Зубарь В. М. 2005. Паргенос – Верховная богиня Херсонеса. – В: Старожитностістепового Причерномор'я і Криму. XII. Сборник наукових праць: 202-219.

**Иванчик** 2005 = Иванчик А. И. 2005. Накануне колонизации. Северное Причерноморье и степные кочевники 8–7 вв. до н. э. в античной литературной традиции, фольклор, литература и история. (=Pontus Septentrionalis, III). Москва-Берлин.

**Конова** 2005 = Конова Л. 2005. Образът на Хеката-Артемиди в Аполония Понтика. Бележки към синкретизма в Западнопонтийските двукултурни зони. – В: SAUS, Suppl. IV. Stephanos Archaeologicos in honorem Professoris Ludmili Getov, София: 427-442

**Латышев** 1909 = Латышев В. В. 1909. ПОНТИКА. Санкт Петербург.

**Латышев** 1914 = Латышев В. В. 1914. К вопросу о культе богини Девы в Херсонесе Таврическом. В: Сборник Харьковского историко-филологического общества в честь проф. В. П. Бузескула. Харьков.

**Марченко** 1960 = Марченко И. Д. 1960. К вопросу о культах Азиатского Боспора. – ВДИ, 2: 101-107.

**Мещеряков** 1979 = Мещеряков В. Ф. 1979. О культе богини Девы в Херсонесе Таврическом. – В: Актуальные проблемы изучения истории религии и атеизма: 104-119.

**Новиченкова** 1994 = Новиченкова Н. Г. 1994. Святилище Крымской Яйлы. – ВДИ, 2: 59-86.

**Орачев** 1990 = Орачев А. 1990. Странджанското крайбрежие и Евксинският понт до V в. пр. н. е. – В: Странджа - древност и съвремие. Книга 2, гл. 2. София: 344-365.

**Орешников** 1913 = Орешников А. В. 1913. Монеты Херсонеса Таврического, царей Боспора Киммерийского и Полемона II Понтийского. В: Нумизматический сборник,

---

Москва.

**Ростовцев** 1918 = Ростовцев М. И. 1918. Новая книга о Белом острове и Таврике. – ИАК, 65: 177-197.

**Русяева** 1992 = Русяева А. С. 1992. Религия и культы античной Ольвии. Киев.

**Русяева** 2000 = Русяева А. С. 2000. Культы и святилища в сфере политики демократических полисов Северного Причерноморья в раннеэллинистическое время. – ВДИ, 3: 74-84

**Русяева, Русяева М.** 1999 = Русяева А. С., М. В. Русяева. 1999. Верховная богиня античной Таврики. Киев.

**Сапрыкин** 1986 = Сапрыкин С. Ю. 1986. Гераклея Понтийская и Херсонес Таврический. Москва.

**Свенцицкая** 1967 = Свенцицкая И. С. 1967. Положение зависимого населения в Малой Азии V–IV вв. до н. э. – ВДИ, 4: 80-86.

**Скржинская** 1991 = Скржинская М. В. 1991. Древнегреческий фольклор и литература о Северном Причерномор. Киев.

**Соломонік** 1976 = Соломонік Е. І. Таври і Тавріка (про походження етноніма і топоніма). – Археологія, 20.

**Толстой** 1918 = Толстой И. И. 1918. Остров Белый и Таврика в Понте Эвксинском. Петроград.

**Фол** 1994 = Фол А. 1994. Тракийският Дионис. Книга втора: Сабазий. София.

**Фол** 1995 = Фол А. 1995. Химните на Орфей. София.

**Фол В.** 2007 = Фол В. 2007. Скални топоси на вярв в Югоизточна Европа и в Мала Азия през древността. (=Studia Thracica 10) София.

**Фролов** 1981 = Фролов Э. Д. 1981. Гераклеийские мариандины. (К проблеме взаимоотношений греческих колонистов и местных племен в зоне дорийской колонизации). – В: Демографическая ситуация в Причерноморье в период Великой греческой колонизации. Тбилиси: 27-30.

**Хоммель** 1981 = Хоммель Х. 1981. Ахилл - Бог. – ВДИ, 1, 112-121.